

Dr. Nancy Berg in her book on Iraqi Jewish writers, who migrated to Israel between 1948 and 1954, examines the role which language played in their literary efforts following their "exile" to their new homeland.

I'll attempt first to understand why al-Tayyib Salih, despite his living in "exile" in England and his perfection of English, has continued to write in Arabic. As to the choice of language, the Israeli-Iraqi writer Samir Naqqash chose a similar course and continued to write in Arabic since he migrated to Israel. In an interview with Miss Berg he noted: "I don't exist in this country, not as a writer, a citizen nor a human being. I don't feel that I belong anywhere, not since my roots were torn from the ground."

Sami Michael, on the other hand, decided, after several years of writing and publishing in Arabic his Mother Tongue, to become a Hebrew author in his country of chosen "exile" namely Israel. Like al-Tayyib Salih, he too became a writer of world renown and his many books have been translated from Hebrew into the most widely known languages and he became famous throughout the world.

One of al-Tayyib Salih's first novels was: *Mawsim al-Hijra ila al-Shamal* (Season of Migration to the North). It was published in English 1966 while I was preparing my dissertation on the "Sudan under Wingate" at the School of Oriental & African Studies, at London University. It was the first

SUDAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN

نشرة جمعية الدراسات



"Kadi of Khartoum," c. 1880, (R. Buchta Collection, Boston)

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue: Research note on the last kadi of Turkish Khartoum; another Tribute to al-Tayeb Salih;; featured articles on Sudan's trades unions, two papers from the Khartoum Student Seminar series; the SSA annual conference and featured speakers; Reviews of Mahmood Mamdani's Soldiers and Saviors and Amal Fadlalla's Embodying Honor, a recent study of Hadendowa women.

SSA Officers

President

Stephanie Beswick
sfbeswick@bsu.edu
Ball State University

President-Elect

Randall Fegley
raf8@psu.edu
Pennsylvania State University

Executive Director

Richard Lobban
rlobban@ric.edu
Rhode Island College

Secretary

Michael Kevane
mkevane@scu.edu
Santa Clara University

SSA Board of Directors

Peter Garretson

Florida State University
pgarretson@fsu.edu

Amir Idris

Fordham University
idris@fordham.edu

Baqie Bedawi Muhammad

Indiana University

Amal Hassan Fadlalla
University of Michigan
afadall@umichigan.edu

Lako Tongun

Pitzer College
Lako_tongun@pitzer.edu

Bulletin Editor

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban
cfluehr@ric.edu

Book Review Editors

Stephanie Beswick
sfbeswick@bsu.edu
and
Jay Spaulding
jspauldi@cougar.kean.edu
Kean University

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

Please note that after more than two decades our

Membership charges have changed according to the recommendation of the Board and acceptance of the members present at the 28th annual meeting at Michigan State University.

Available categories of membership

Regular.....	\$50.00
Life membership	\$400.00
Students.....	\$30.00
Institutional.....	\$500.00

For information about membership,

change of address, registration for meetings, or back issues of SSA publications, please contact the Executive Director. Financial and other Donations: The SSA is legally incorporated as a non-profit making organization. Thus all contributions and other donations are tax-exempt. Your gift is appreciated.

FORMER SSA PRESIDENTS

2007-09 Beniah Yongo-Bure	1990-91 C. Fluehr-Lobban
2005-07 Ali b. Ali Dinar	1989-90 Constance Berkley
2003-05 Michael Kevane	1988-89 Ismail Abdallah
2000-02 Abdallahi Ali Ibrahim	1987-88 Jay Spaulding
1998-00 Ann Lesch	1986-87 James Sultan
1996-98 Ahmed El-Bashir	1985-86 David Sconyers
1994-96 Nelson Kasfir	1984-85 C. Fluehr-Lobban
1992-94 M I Shoush	1983-84 James Hudson
1991-92 Milton Coughenour	1982-83 Ahmed El-Bashir
	1981-82 Richard A. Lobban

RESEARCH NOTES

The Last 'Kadi of Khartoum' from the Turkiyya Muhammad Khojali Hitayk, 1818-1885

By Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (cfluehr@ric.edu)

With commentary by Robert Kramer (rkramer@snc.edu)

This photo, c. 1880, is taken from the Richard Buchta Collection, in the historical photography collection at the Boston Public Library. Buchta was a German traveler to Sudan on the eve of the Mahdiyya. The curator with whom Richard and I spoke did not know how the collection came into the hands of the Boston Public Library. Along with others from this unique collection, it was originally published in the 3rd edition of the *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (2002) by Richard Lobban, Robert Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban. During my recent research on Shari'a after the CPA, I visited the Sudan Judiciary Library and became acquainted with its Director, Muhammad Ibrahim Muhammad. I had a copy of this historical picture with me and he had just completed an illustrated history of the judiciary (*Tarikh al-Qadaiya fi al-Sudan, 1899-2005*). He was fascinated by the picture of this unknown qadi, and we decided to try to find out who he was and his fate, since he was in the employ of the Turkiyya government as the Sharifia judge of Khartoum during the tumultuous years of the Mahdist revolution.

Mawlana Muhammad consulted the Library's copy of Richard Hill's *Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan* (London: Frank Cass, 1967) and learned that one "Muhammad Khujali al-Hitaik ([1818]-1885)" was the last qadi under "Egyptian rule," and that he was killed in the "massacre of Khartoum" in 1885 (p. 262). He was 67 then, and likely about five years younger in this photograph. He was referred to as the *Qadi al-Umum al-Sudan*, (Judge of the Muslims of the Sudan). Further consultation of Muhammad Ibrahim Abū Salīm's *Tarikh al-Kharṭūm* (Beirut: 1991) reveals that Muhammad Khojali al-Hitaik was Qadi of Khartoum from 1857 to 1885, for 28 years from the age of 39 to his death at 67, and that he was killed by the Mahdists while praying. Others, Abu Salim reported, were tied up and thrown into the Nile.



Although Khartoum has become a city of about eight million, much of its personal and familiar character remains, including among the ethnic groups indigenous to the greater Khartoum geographical area. The family name al-Khojali is recognizable as a Mahas name, likely traced to Shaykh Hamad al-Khojali, whose *Qubba* (tomb) is located across from Tuti Island in Khartoum North. Shaykh al-Khojali is mentioned in the *Kitab al-ṣabaqat* of Wad Dayfalla, and the family name is associated with a history of 'ulama (religious scholars) in Sudan. I recall my husband, Richard Lobban, visiting Shaykh Khojali's tomb and meeting descendants of the Shaykh while he was carrying out research in Tuti Island in 1970-72. Mawlana Muhammad Ibrahim inquired at the Judiciary if the family name was known to any of its present members, and indeed, a relative from Burri al-Mahas, the twin city of the Mahas of Tuti Island, was located whom I also met at the Judiciary.

The next day, more proud relatives from Burri al-Mahas arrived at the Judiciary Library, and according to one of them, Zaynab Ahmad Ibrahim Shaykh al-Khojali, and a 1923 map, the al-Khojali family had lived in the same area as the present buildings that now comprise the Judiciary and judicial complex on Shari al-Jama'a.

Robert Kramer and I welcome further information and comments about the presumed "last Qadi of Khartoum" before the Mahdiyya. He would have applied Islamic law under Ottoman governance, and thus followed the Hanafi school of jurisprudence but where was this photo taken and what cultural-legal information does it project.

Commentary on the identity of Muhammad Khojali Hitayk

by Robert S. Kramer

Assuming that Richard Buchta's photograph depicts the last chief qadī of the Turkiyya, as opposed to simply "a qadī in Khartoum," I think Professor Fluehr-Lobban has solved this mystery. What then is known about him?

In his *Biographical Dictionary*, Richard Hill writes the qadī's name as "al-Hitaik," but I could find no one of this name in any of the literature. However the name "al-ḥitayk" yielded an identification.

ʿAwn al-Sharīf Qasim's *Qamus al-lahja al-fi ammiyya fi'l-Sudan* (Cairo: 1985) lists the name "al-hitayk" and says:

"A nickname and man's name made famous by the Shaykh Hamad bin ʿAbd al-Rahīm al-Mahasī al-Mishrifi (*ḥabaqat*, biography 81). Hitayk b, a branch of the Dubasiyyin" (p. 256).

Turning to the *Kitab al-ḥabaqat* edited by Yusuf Fadl Hasan (Khartoum:1985), we find an entry for "Hamad bin ʿAbd al-Rahīm, known as Hitayk al-Mahasī al-Mishrifi" (p. 181). Similar to other entries in the *ḥabaqat*, it mentions his places of birth and burial, his subjects of study and teachers, and his areas of expertise. This would certainly establish a scholarly lineage for Muhammad Khojali al-Hitayk, assuming a linkage between the two (which seems likely).

Information about the life of Muhammad Khojali al-Hitayk must await further research. Having only a draft version available to me of R.S. O'Fahey's *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa* (from the *Arabic Literature in Africa* series edited by J.O. Hunwick and R.S. O'Fahey), I could not consult that work's indices for possible mention of an al-Hitayk. The biographical/cultural surveys of Yahya Muhammad ʿAbd al-Qadir (ʿAl h mish al-aḍḍḥ fi'l-Sudan) and Mahjub ʿUmar Bashiri (Ruwwad al-fikr al-Sudanī) were both unhelpful in this regard, as were general histories of the Sudan. Studies of Sudanese *fiqh* would seem the obvious place to begin looking for information, and a good starting point might be Husayn Sīd Ahmad al-Muftī's *Taḥawwur nia m al-qad' fi'al-Sudan* (Khartoum: 1959).



L-r, two members of the family of Muhammad Khojali al-Hitayk from Burri al-Mahas, center Muhammad Ibrahim Muhammad, Directory of Sudan Judiciary Library, C. Fluehr-Lobban, and xxxx

News and Notes



Former SSA President Abdullahi Ibrahim A Candidate for President of Sudan

Dr. Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim, SSA president from 2000-2002, has announced his candidacy as an independent for the president of Sudan in the February 2010 general elections. Dr. Ibrahim, Professor of History at the University of Missouri has left his academic post in the US for the coming academic year in order to run for president of Sudan. Good luck, Abdullahi, from the SSA!



Another Tribute and Commentary about the Work of al-Tayyib Salih from renowned historian , Gabriel Warburg

*The Choice of Language by al-Tayyib Salih
and Sami Michael*

,Gabriel Warburg
Haifa University



Both al-Tayyib Salih and Sami Michael are well known authors both in their home-countries and elsewhere. I am also aware that the late Ambrose Benny presented a paper on al-Tayyib Salih at a SSA annual meeting several years ago. The novels and stories of these two authors have been translated into many languages. I myself have enjoyed reading them and have met both of them on several occasions. Their voices are in a way "Voices of Exiles", al-Tayyib is an "Exile" from Sudan who has been living in England for nearly 50 years. Sami Michael, on the other hand, is an "Exile" from Iraq who has made his new home in Haifa-Israel. The "Mother Tongue" of both of them is Arabic, it is the language in which al-Tayyib Salih continued to write until he passed away in February 2009. Sami Michael on the other hand, started his writing and publishing in Arabic, as a young man in Iraq, and continued for a few years to write Arabic following his arrival in Israel in 1949. However, in the 1950s he decided to switch to Hebrew and whilst mastering his new language he worked, for 25 years in order to make a living, as a hydrologist, in the Hydrological Service. Since our annual meeting is devoted to the study of "Languages and Cultures of the Sudan", I shall attempt in my paper to examine the choice and the use of language, by these two authors.

FEATURED ARTICLES



Suppressed but not defeated: Unionism in Sudan

By Thomas Schmidinger email:

Rarely it happens that trade-unions in Sudan are really accorded the value that they deserve. Not only is their role in the independence movement in Sudan but also their contribution against the military regime of Abbud, Numairi and Bashir of great importance.

This paper thus aims to have a fragmentary look at the beginning of unionism as well as some perspectives on the situation of these unions under the contemporary regime.

The founding of the Worker's Affairs Association (WAA)

In 1946 the founding of the Workers' Affairs Association (WAA) already constituted the first organization of Sudanese workers of the mechanic workshops of the Sudanese railway. It was at the same time the first union organization in sub-Saharan Africa outside South-Africa. This first Sudanese Union was established by simple workers with less ideological orientation even before the first communist organization was founded in the region. The establishment of this first union had a role model character for other workers.

In the same year when the WAA was founded the tenants of the Gezira Scheme went on strike to support their demand that the reserve fund of some £E 1.300.000 should be paid to them (FAWZI, 1957: 20). Next nurses, as first female employees, are said to have tried to organize themselves to unions at the same time.

The WAA was the product of a great necessity felt by the workers of the railway economy to demand higher salaries and an improvement of working conditions.

Already some months after its establishment the WAA organized the first big strike of urban workers in Sudan. On 12 July 1947 a delegation of communist workers met with the manager at five o'clock in the evening to ask him to have dinner with them. In one of the interviews that I conducted with one of the then-striking workers, he describes the situation as follows:

"But the police said no, you go to your houses. The police came with sticks and guns and said you must go home. 3 of the workers can

meet the general manager, but all the workers said we all want to stay here. The committee can meet the general manager and come out to tell us what happened. But the police said no and began to use the sticks and the workers used bricks to defend themselves. After one hour of fighting in the street, the workers decided to go to strike." (BASHIR, 2001)

li Muhammad Bashir, one of the co-founders of the WAA and participant of the strikes of 1947, continues his narration that this strike eventually ended with a victory of the workers and the official recognition of the unions. Another strike of the workers lasting for one whole month in fall 1947 finally forced the government to draft a body of labour legislation. (NIBLOCK, 1987: 116). As a result the minimal loans were quadrupled and the maximal loans were a bit less than doubled.

"As a result of bitter agitation for higher wages and better conditions made by the Workers' Affairs Association, early in 1948 investigations were made by the Independent Committee of Inquiry set up by the Financial Secretary and persisted over by a Judge of the High Court." (FAWZI, 1957: 21)

Trade Union Ordinance

The Trade Union Ordinance counts as one of the most important legislative development which was adopted in 1948. Tim Niblock analyzes the position of the WAA on that development:

"The WAA initially opposed the Trade Union Ordinance, mainly on the grounds that (unlike its British equivalent) it required the compulsory registration of trade unions. Following discussions between six representatives of the WAA, six government representatives and three members of the Legislative Assembly (including 'Abdallah Khalil and Muhammad Ahmed Mahjub), however, the government

agreed to some minor amendments to the Ordinance and the WAA agreed to work within its framework. Trade union activities, therefore, could now proceed - in effect protected by a strong legislative framework." (NIBLOCK, 1987: 116)

Consequently to the establishment and the success of the WAA many unions were founded in whole Sudan, especially from workers of the regions who own various modern capitalistic enterprises. The registration process according to the Trade Union Ordinance started in 1949 through the registration of 5 unions. 1951 it were already 86 registered unions and in the following year 99. 1954 there were in total 123, and in 1956 135 unions with a total of 87.3555 registered members.

The establishment of a recognized union movement constituted to an organizational continuity of an active union movement, but canalized the working conflicts and enabled at the same time conflict resolution through negotiation. In the first years of the Sudanese Union movements there were a lot more strikes than after the Trade Union Ordinance came into force. At the same time however the general strikes, that were only made possible through the cooperation of organized unions, grew immensely in the years 1950 to 1952.

The Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation (SWTUF)

In 1950 various Sudanese unions formed an umbrella union organization in form of the Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation (SWTUF). This organization had a more general political orientation, than the previous then existing single unions. Gabriel Warburg characterizes the activities of new Federation as follows:

"In December 1951 the SWTUF decided to take an active part in Sudanese politics. Prompted by the unilateral abrogation by Egypt of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty in 1936, the SWTUF declared that its objective was to defeat imperialism and to achieve for the Sudan the right of self-determination. To achieve this end, >The United Front for the Lib-

eration of the Sudan< was established and all workers' and peasants' unions were called upon to establish national committees in order to function within this Front which was initiated and run by communists." (WARBURG, 1978: 97)

Not only communist and other anti-imperialist parties played a big role in the fight for the de-colonization of Sudan, but also the unions, which in fact established the mass basis for this political objective.

1952 the SWTUF started – not least in the context with this political objective - to organize farmers, land tenants and country workers. Existing land tenant organizations like the *Gezira Tenants' Association*, were rejected by the SWTUF, as they were perceived as government based pseudo-organizations.

Warburg supplements:

"In August 1952, the Northern province tenants held their first conference at 'Atbara, under the auspices of the railway workers. This was followed by the Nuba Mountains cotton cultivators, whose congress, in May 1953, was attended and addressed by the president of the SWTUF. Finally, the Jazira cotton growers joined the ranks of the newly founded 'United Front for the Liberation of the Sudan'." (WARBURG, 1978: 98)

The limits of the previous union movements

The quick expansion of the Sudanese unionism can not disguise the fact, that they did have their limits in terms of gender issues as well as to their regional expansion.

As in the 50ies of the 20th century hardly any women were working in fix labour contracts, the previous union movement was predominately dominated by men. Although the communist dominated parts of the labour movements did have a progressive position towards gender issues in Sudan, this was still an exception in this political field. I do not know of any efforts that were done to integrate and organize women in precarious working conditions, into the previous union movements. Also in the literature on the union move-

ments in Sudan women hardly played a role. In none of the older standard works women are singularly treated within this issue. Positive exceptions are the more recent works, such as that of Sondra Hale (HALE, 1997).

Next to this it is important to highlight that those workers that were organized within these unions were often workers with relatively better working conditions with fix working contracts (often government employees for example). The poorest part of the Sudanese proletariat is hardly represented here.

Even more striking is the regional arrangement of union organizations. This arrangement is primarily limited to the modern sector in norther Sudan. Saad ed-Din Fawzi criticizes:

"Last but not least, the labour movement has so far left southern employees largely untouched, which is hardly surprising in view of the wide differences between the two parts of the country, and the relative isolation of the south owing to poor transport facilities and linguistic and ethnic divisions." (FAWZI, 1957: xii)

Unionists and communists

In the establishment of these unions communists were strongly involved. They were, however, not the only political party in Sudan, that was active in the establishment of unionism. Other national anti-colonial groups, such as the 1943 founded Ashigga-movement, were also supportive to the union movement. (NIBLOCK, 1987: 112)

The most important ideological closeness was however found with the Communist Party of Sudan or more respectively their forerunner organization, the Sudanese Movement for National Liberation (SMNL) (al-haraka as-sudaninya lil-tahrir al-watany). Here it is important to note that the SMNL was rather founded in 1946, supposedly only a few months after the establishment of the WAA and was inspired by the Egyptian DMNL of Henri Curiel. Even before Sudanese students had organized themselves in the DMNL in Egypt, which was now supposed to form the core of the SMNL. Mohammed Nuri el-Amin portrays:

"One reason for this uncharacteristically hasty decision could have something to do with the negotiations that had been in progress between Britain and Egypt over, among other things, the future of

the Sudan; the intense activity on the part of the communists and the leftist Wafdists which had been aimed at obstructing those negotiations; the harsh measures which the government found itself forced to adopt against all its adversaries before things went out of hand; and, finally, the likely decision on the part of the EMNL to have an offshoot in the Sudan in order to be better able to direct the agitation against those negotiations." (EL-AMIN, 1996a: 24)

Another reason for the haste to found a communist organisation in Sudan, is found within the fact, that at this time quite some British communists were active in Sudan. The Egyptian communists around Henry Curile supposedly feared that the *Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB)* would overtake the initiative to found a Sudanese Communist Party, if they were not quick enough.

Interestingly the real date of the foundation of the SMNL is not known or more respectively different indications are being made. Tim Niblock's date of 1944 is most probably too early (NIBLOCK, 1987: 112), the indications of Gabriel Warburg, according to which the first political demonstrations of the SMNL took place in March 1946 and the indication of Ali Muhammad Bashir, with whom I was able to conduct an interview with in Atbara, according to which the Communist Party was founded in October 1946, seem to be more accurate. The varying indications of Warburgs and Bashir could also be related to the fact that the first party cell of the SMNL in Khartoum and Umdurum indeed became active in March, whereas the first party cell in Atbara was only established later. Also the official party history indicates 1946 as year of foundation of the SMNL (AL-HIZB, 1988: 5).

El-Amin correctly ascertains:

"If we begin with a consideration of the exact date at which the SMNL appeared, we shall find that some founders - such as Abdu Dahab, Abd al-Wahhab Zain al-'Abidin, Ahmad Zain al-'Abidin, one of Storey's earliest recruits among the graduates of the

Gordon memorial College and Abd al-Rahim Kududa - believe that it was formed in 1945, though Ahmed Zain al-'Abidin and Abd al-Rahim Ahmad both thought that it could also have appeared early in 1946. Others, like Abd al-Khaliq Mahjub, categorically gave early 1946 as the date of the formation of the SMNL, while Abd al-Aziz Rudwan sticks his neck out for the specific date of 16 August 1946." (EL-AMIN, 1996a: 28f)

The location of the foundation of the SMNL is as well not clear. The indications vary from Cairo to Khartoum, although the indications that state Sudan as founding region prevail. With the name of SMNL this group however manifested itself only in Sudan.

The SMNL played an important role that must not be underrated within the anti-imperialistic fight for the independence of Sudan. The party was however weakened through allocations between fractions and through split-offs. In the core of the inner-party allocations was the question on the accession to Egypt. This matter, however, was settled for the Sudanese Left through Nasser coming into power in Egypt and the persecution of communists in the country. The remaining core of the SMNL eventually acted under the name *al-Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Sudani* (Communist Party of Sudan, CPS or Sudanese Communist Party, SCP). They still remained attractive for intellectuals but was most of the time (with the sole exception of the early Numairi regime) restricted in its political power.

It would break the framework of this paper to deal with the entire history of the CPS. The focus in this paper will lie in the perpetually growing links between major parts of the unions and the CPS. This cooperation has eventually led to the fact that later more authoritarian regimes, from Numairi to al-Bashir, rigorously acted against independent union organizations.

Regime and unionism

After the military coup on the 30 June 1989 the unions eventually became part of the Founders of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which tried to build up an umbrella organization as opposition to the regime of Umar al-Bashir. Conscious of the fact which role the unions played in the fight against previous military regimes in Sudan, all unions were forbid-

den on the second day of the military coup. Nagim Negmadin, the previous secretary general of the doctor's union, describes the measures which were taken from the regime:

"This was one of the first things they have done. Our clubs were closed. Our money has been taken, everything was confiscated." (NEGMADIN, 2001)

Already on the 9 August 1989 eight representatives of the most influential unions, amongst which were the *Association of Civil Servants' Union*, the *Association of Professional and Technicians' Union*, the *Bar Association*, the *Press Association* and the *Union of Khartoum University Lecturers* a memorandum to the RCC demanding a stop of anti-union measures and the permission for unions to act again. The regime consequently responded with a mass arrests of union leaders.

„So after we sent this message they started to arrest the trade unionists. First they were sent to Kober-prison and then the majority was sent to Shalla-prison, which is far away from here near Chad..." (NEGMADIN, 2001)

The aim of such a transfer to different prisons with worse prison conditions was to achieve the isolation of unionists, which even in detention, represented a danger to the government. But these measures did not stop the unions. End of November, and in the beginning of December, there was yet another one-week strike of doctors, which led to a new wave of arrests. Most of the doctors were quickly released again, but those most active in political affairs were kept in prison. One of the organizers of the strike, the gynecologist, Dr. Mam'un Muhammad Husain, was even sentenced to death on the 10 December. The leader of the coup Umar al-Bashir declared the call for a strike as high treason and thus rejected to pardon Husain. Only massive protests in Sudan and on international level led to the fact that the government eventually resigned and pardoned Husain in May 1990.

Especially in the first years the regime was not very robust and thus reacted with severe draconian measures against any independent unionism. At the same time the regime made an effort in establishing a pseudo-normality, opened up new yellow unions and placed government officers of the regime within the unions. Nagib Negmadin describes the new unions

which were loyal to the government with following words:

"The governmental trade union is full with security people. They are no trade unionists" (NEGMADIN, 2001)

Indeed the new from the government arranged unions had amongst others the task to supervise the workers in the bigger enterprises.

Nevertheless the work of the left unionist under the regime of Umar al-Bashir was quite successful. For example they managed to arrange strikes although there was ban on strikes. Being part of the NDA the unions also achieved to play an important role within the opposition apart from their complex interest policy.

These successes of left unionism can be led back to the strong roots of unionism within the Sudanese working class and of the worsening of the social conditions of the proletariat. Although the work of the unions did have some success, the hopes of the left unions is perpetually confronted with kickbacks, as was confirmed to me by Nagib Negmadin, general secretary of the doctors' union until the coup of 1989:

"The government is now not the same like before. There is a margin of freedom now. And now we think that we could use these small freedoms for the coming elections of the trade unions, which started two months ago. But we failed. The problem was that we don't have any money. We don't have paper and nothing. For me it is even difficult to move. We wanted to work together with the political parties, but we didn't find any support from any party. Even the Communist Party failed to support its people in the last elections of the unions." (NEGMADIN, 2001)

Nevertheless even the yellow unions began to criticise the economic and social failures of the regime. A staff member of an international organization, which works closely together with the government and thus prefers to be anonymous, explains:

"Of course there are also different wings inside the yellow unions. They are controlled by islamists, but not all of them agree to be fully coordinated by the regime. Inside the islamists there is a small minority that also informs the press and the public about the corruption of the yellow unions. They want to form a real islamist union who is working for the interests of workers. This minority thinks, that the yellow unions are neglecting the interests of workers. For example they complain about the union-leaders that they are not fighting for the interests of workers who were kicked out of their jobs."

Concerning the role of the unions opened by the government in 1992 the voices of oppositional unionists are still ambivalent. The ambivalence created by the loosening of the union interdiction of the regime against oppositional unionists, is described by Ali Khalifa Mahdi, who until 1989 was the general secretary of the union of technicians and who at the same time was the financing consultant of the union of engineers:

"The mass of the trade unionists said that they will not work under these artificial trade unions led by the National Islamic Front. According to my point of view, this is wrong, because trade unions are not political parties. We have to work with these frame, even if it is artificial, so that we can change it, that we can show our protest, that we can struggle and can show our problems. And we can succeed. During a struggle you can succeed."

If it is a movement the things will go forward anyway. But unfortunately most trade unionists said that the workers should boycott the elections of the trade unions. Of course we know that the elections are falsed, everybody knows that. [...] But other trade unionists like me say, we can not boycott it, we will struggle, we will go to vote. And sometimes there are some successes. One ore two real trade unionists are being elected. Of course they are threatened: "Don't nominate yourself, we will dismiss you, we'll take you to prison, you will fail,..". And of course the struggle goes on. Some people win, some not, but there are some successes. I think that even in these last elections we have some people who have succeeded to be in the leadership of the trade unions. And little by little the trade unionists are convinced not to leave these trade unions organisation for them. We will struggle and I'm sure that the time will come that these trade unions will be in the hands of the real trade unionists." (MAHDI, 2001)

The use of the unions as well as wider liberties through unions must not be misunderstood, as the results of official union elections are still being faked and opposi-

tional unionists are still intimidated to candidate in elections. The partial liberties that were accorded to unions in the past years are perpetually threatened and still need to be fought for every other time.

Besides the many years of suppression have alienated the independent unions from the concrete labour fights in Sudan.

Through the ratification of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the integration of the NDA in the peace process of 2005 a positive influence on the situation for independent union work in some regions of Sudan has been achieved. Many large constructions, such as the Merowe-dam have however been build by Chinese forced labourers. In the oil-industry which has become the most important economic sector of Sudan, also a lot of non-Sudanese workers are employed, who have no perspective of any union organization. Sudanese who are even only under slight suspicion of not being on the same side of the regime, have no chance of obtaining such jobs. It is still doubtful whether under such conditions independent unionis can develop or whether the previous unions from 1989 which have been forced to live in underground still can play a role in the overall development of Sudan and and the conflicts within.

Bibliography

AL-HIZB al-Shuyu'i al-Sudani: lamahat min tarih al-hizb al-shuyu'i al-sudany
Khartoum, 1988

EL-AMIN, Mohammed Nuri: The Emergence And Development of the Leftist Movement In The Sudan During The 1930's and 1940's
Khartoum, 1984

EL-AMIN, Mohammed Nuri: The role of the Egyptian Cmmunists in introducing the Sudanese to Communism in the 1940s
in: International Journal of Middle East Studies, 19, November 1987; S. 433 - 454

EL-AMIN, Mohammed Nuri: The Sudanese Communist Movement, The First Five Years I
in: Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 32, No. 3, July 1996a, pp. 22 - 40

EL-AMIN, Mohammed Nuri: The Sudanese Communist Movement, The First Five Years II
in: Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 32, No. 4, October 1996b, pp. 251 - 263

EL-AMIN, Mohammed Nuri: The Sudanese Communist Movement, The First Five Years III

in: Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 33, No. 1, January 1997, pp. 128 – 151

FAWZI, Saad ed Din: The Labour Movement in the Sudan 1946 – 1955
London, New York, Toronto, 1957

HALE, Sondra: Gender Politics in Sudan; Islamism, Socialism and the State
Colorado, 1997

HOLT PM / DALY MW: A history of the Sudan, From the coming of Islam to the present day
Harlow (GB), 2000

MATTES, Hanspeter: Sudan-Chronologie 1956 – 1993
in: Wuquf 7 – 8/1992 – 1993
Hamburg, 1993, pp. 47 - 69

NIBLOCK, Tim: Class and Power in Sudan; The Dynamics of Sudanese Politics 1898 – 1985
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London (GB), 1987

WARBURG, Gabriel: Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a traditional Society, The Case of Sudan
London, 1978

Interview of the Author with

Nagib NEGMADIN, 26.4. 2001 in Khartoum
Ali Khalifa MAHDI, 25. 4. 2001 in Khartoum
Ali Muhammad BASHIR, 28. 4. 2001 in Atbara
One anonymous Sudanese Staff member of an international organization in March 2001 in Khartoum

*Thomas Schmidinger is lecturer at the institute of political science at the University of Vienna, president of the independent lecturers union (IG Externe LektorInnen und freie WissenschaftlerInnen) and has published his work on „Worker movements in Sudan“ (Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main) in 2004.
Website: <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/thomas.schmidinger/>*

»»»<»»»

KHARTOUM STUDENT SEMINAR PAPERS

In the last issue of the Bulletin the Khartoum Student Seminar was announced. Organized by University of Durham graduate student Laura Mann, the SSA Bulletin is pleased to publish two of the papers recently presented in Khartoum. The honor of first place goes to the Seminar organizer, Laura Mann.

Please note that Laura is interested in any feedback regarding her research on ‘finding a job’ in contemporary Khartoum.

***Getting a Job in Sudan: An Exploration into Economic Trust and Social Capita*, Summary of the presentation to the Khartoum Student Seminar Series, May 26th, 2009 By: Laura Mann email:**

This article presents my ongoing research on social capital and trust in the Sudanese labour market. I will examine the extent to which university education acts as a pathway of social mobility for those that lack social connections (or “wasta”). I use an adapted form of social capital theory to distinguish between interpersonal forms of trust on the one hand and standardized or impersonal forms of trust on the other. I want to examine whether the deterioration of university education in Sudan is contributing to an over-reliance on interpersonal forms of trust in the recruitment process.

Social Capital

Social capital is ordinarily defined as social qualities that “improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993: 167). In less academic speak, social capital is a form of economic lubricant, reducing the perceived risks and transaction costs of cooperation between partners. If you know someone well, you need not invest time and effort into acquiring information about that person. To a certain extent you can predict her behaviour based on this information. Additionally there is a compliance mechanism at work; if you both belong to the same moral community and she acts dishonourably, she will be punished by the community. Social capital is all about “who you know” or perhaps more accurately about “who knows you”; in Arabic, social capital is called “wasta” or “vitamin waw”. For my own research, I focus on the informational aspect of trust and social capital. Therefore when I talk about trust, I am not referring to emotional ties; I am talking about whether you believe you can predict someone’s behaviour, reliability and intentions based on previous information about her. It is all about information.

I argue that interpersonal trust has limited scope in terms of social inclusion. You cannot know everyone in society intimately; there are rules of membership. The scope for social mobility is restricted. Standardized or impersonal trust, on the other hand, offers the potential for all members of society to be “known”. It is important to stress that this second form of social capital is not organic. It requires an educational system that produces reliable qualifications about

individuals. It contains industry benchmarks to signal compliance. It requires a legal system that protects individuals from breaches in confidence. It is not “naturally” found in societies. It is created and regulated, and usually requires government.

This second form of trust is part of a much wider social trend towards individualism and social atomization. This process negates special relationships that individuals may have with their own communities and in their place, tries to forge new relationships between individuals and society. The “Australian ballot” election process is probably the most visual illustration of this relationship: an individual goes into a voting booth and marks her ballot in secret, thereby making an individual decision about how she wishes society should be governed (Willis, J. et al., 2009). The secrecy of the act guarantees her individuality. At the same time, this process can be seen as a way of stripping the individual from her traditional belonging. It can therefore be seen as a fundamentally aggressive social change.

Getting a Job

Like most places in the world, getting a job in Sudan is often about knowing the right person. You acquire information about jobs from friends, family members, former colleagues and other acquaintances. Often, these same references will furnish you with a glowing recommendation letter to aid you in your quest. This is not just the case in Sudan. Connections get you everywhere. However in his study of the American job market, Mark Granovetter found that most professionals found their current job through a weak tie (i.e. someone they barely knew or had not seen in a long time) and not someone with whom they had a close relationship. He explains this paradox by arguing that people within our own close social networks tend to have access to the same sort of information that we do; if we want new information, we must reach out to those whom we are not so close. In this sense, acquaintances are more valuable than close social ties when it comes to the job market. I am interested in whether this model also applies in Sudan and if not, why not? From my preliminary research, it seems as though that his model does not hold true in Sudan, that people are more likely to rely on closer relations when it comes to finding a job. This is an interesting divergence.

Like Granovetter, I have focused on the professional job market because I want to assess the potential for social mobility for those from more economically and politically marginalized communities. On a broader level, I am interested in the effect that these individuals have on the political balance within the country. I argue that university education acts as a substitute for close

personal connections. Through the process of a standardized system, individuals who may have previously been known only as members of their community are transformed into individuals with distinctive academic and technical traits and competencies that allow them to be “known” by strangers. I recognize that everyone has the opportunity to attend university but I have tried to seek out those from less “academically conventional” backgrounds to test this hypothesis. I also recognize that sometimes that the routes to social mobility can become “owned” by certain groups. In the UK, it is generally perceived that Oxford and Cambridge are controlled by the more wealthy sectors of British society and that students from more humble backgrounds are discriminated against in the application process. Similarly in Sudan, university education is generally only available to those with personal wealth, not just in terms of fees, but also in terms of the availability of pre-university education. My original plan to study engineering students had to be changed because of the limited number of students from outside of Khartoum. I was told that Southerners, Darfurians and Nuba do not generally study engineering because they cannot get into such programs. In this sense, university education and the “standardization” that it brings may be influenced by the first kind of trust. I am trying to be sensitive of this fact. Even if it is not entirely true, the fact that it is perceived as such is important.

Educational Quality

Central to my project is the issue of educational quality. If a qualification is to have any meaning for employers, then the university assigning the qualification must retain standards that are recognized by those outside of the university community. If perceptions about quality begin to slip, then the value of the qualification, and accordingly the potential of that qualification to ease social mobility become jeopardized. In this way, the recent deterioration in university education has had serious repercussions not just on its graduates, but on wider society as well. The decline in quality may have weakened standardized forms of trust and corroded social mobility for those that lack personal connections.

Additionally, my preliminary research findings have indicated the extreme importance of English proficiency in the procurement of professional jobs. Practically all professional jobs, both within Sudanese and foreign companies and organizations require some level of English language. For this reason, access to English language educational institutions has become an extremely important factor for communities seeking social mobility. This is particularly salient, given the new educational policies of Southern Sudan.

Conclusion

Too often, social capital is seen as a resource in society. Economists go out and measure it as if it were a plant that grows from the soil or a mineral found in the rocks. The literature is full of references as to how social capital should be "harnessed". This approach goes hand in hand with the recent glorification of the informal economy and Schumacher's philosophy of "Small is Beautiful" which has lately come back into vogue (Schumacher, 1973). The recent promotion of community based credit schemes and self-help initiatives are an indication of this popularity. Because of this conceptualization, people focus on the local. They try to use "existing stocks of social capital" in order to get development off the ground. While I am not trying to discredit community-based development projects in their practical use, I do think they can be problematic in a country like Sudan. At the heart of a lot of Sudan's problems is a reliance on the local, a trust of the known and a distrust of the stranger. By working solely with communities, such programs may be strengthening the first form of trust at the expense of the second form of trust.

This "focus on the community" is a new approach to development in terms of economic history and also in terms of political transformation. After all this is not how "development" was achieved in either the West (Europe, the Americas and Pacific) or the East (South East Asia, China, Japan). I wonder to what extent community based development exacerbates existing barriers. We mustn't forget that this is also how the Anglo-Egyptian colonial state promoted development in Sudan (through indirect rule and native administration). At the same time, what can really be done? Traditionally, the second form of trust has been associated with the development of a strong democratic government, a well-regulated economy and a fairly homogenous social culture.

I am interested in whether there are ways to promote wider forms of trust between social groups that do not require a strong (and trusted) democratic government, a well-regulated economy and a homogenous social culture, especially as Sudan will never have a homogenous social culture (and thank goodness)! Perhaps the private sector might provide this opportunity, with their adoption of more "professional" modes of recruitment. Whether these jobs are only for the very wealthy (and in a sense, well-connected) Sudanese depends in part on whether university access and educational quality are to be strengthened. This is what my project is all.

My research is scheduled to end in February 2010. I would be very appreciative of any feedback from scholars working on similar issues.

Bibliographic References

- Granovetter, M. (1974) *Getting A Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University.
- Putnam, R. D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work. Civic traditions in modern Italy* Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Schumacher, E.F. (1973), *Small is Beautiful* New York: Harper and Row.
- Willis, J., al-Battahani, A. and P. Woodward (2009) *Elections in Sudan: Learning from Experience* Rift Valley Institute.



Khartoum Student Seminar Series #2 Research through Teacher Reflection: Learning about Issues in Adult Education in Omdurman through a Participatory Action Research Project

Paul Fean

pfean@yahoo.com

PhD Student

University of Sussex, UK

(Please do not duplicate or distribute without the author's consent)

1. Introduction to Action Research

This doctoral study follows an action research approach, in which researchers and practitioners reflect on practice to improve a situation, rather than simply describe, understand or explain social reality (Greenwood, 1999). This method is characterised by the interrelation of theory and practice, and of the 'researcher' and the 'researched' (Greenwood, 1999), as well as by its political objectives, namely to improve the "social conditions of existence" (Grundy, 1987, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). Within education, action research may be undertaken by a teacher or teachers, with or without a professional researcher – in this case I, as an external researcher, am facilitating the action research projects of ten teachers from Adult Education Centres in Omdurman. The selection of this methodology results from my belief that research can and should be used as a means to implement positive social change – in this case facilitating the deepening of the teachers' professional knowledge and developing practical teaching and research skills

through their participation in the study – as well as to produce and share knowledge.

2. Schools Participating in the Study

Teachers from six Adult Education Centres in Omdurman, which provide basic level education for teenagers and adults, are participating in the study. I already had professional relations with five of the schools, and permission was provided by the Adult Education Department of Omdurman Locality to implement the project. Standard Sudanese basic level education consists of eight classes (over eight years), though the Adult Education Centres follow a slightly different system, which allows the students to complete the eight basic levels in under four years. At the end of class eight, students sit exams for the Basic School Certificate, a national qualification that allows holders to progress to secondary level studies. Classes in the schools include students of different ages. Most students are in their teens and twenties, though middle aged students are found in some classes. In addition, two of the schools in the study run both an 'Arabic section' which follows this system, and an 'English section' which offers affordable open English language courses to students who range from uneducated young people to university students and graduates. In all the schools, classes are co-educational, with female students usually representing up to a third of the students in the class. The students are generally from impoverished backgrounds, with family origins from Darfur, the Nuba Mountains and south Sudan, as well as other regions of the country. They predominantly live in the outskirts of Omdurman, such as in Um Bedda, Thoura and Alguriya.

3. Research Methods

Phase One

Phase One of the project took place between August and November 2008. At this stage, a total of 19 teachers were involved in the project, though levels of attendance and participation varied. Participants were nominated by headteachers, with three teachers included from each of the six schools. Efforts were made to include teachers from different cultures of Sudan, and for female teachers to participate. Most of the teachers live in the Thoura and Um Bedda areas of Omdurman. They have family origins from northern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, Darfur and south Sudan. They have varying levels of teaching experience, and most have university degrees, in a range of subjects.

During this phase, weekly discussion sessions were held with the teachers, which included techniques from the participatory research approach (Pretty et al, 1995; Chambers, 1997). See the Appendix for a list of the topics discussed during Phase One of the study. In

addition, I visited each school weekly to attend lessons and discuss observations with the teachers. These visits were predominantly classroom-based and closely tied to pedagogy. This phase was essentially the introduction to the action research project, though it took longer than initially envisaged due to other (non-research) commitments. As the 'reconnaissance' period, the aim of this phase was to clarify teachers' "living theories" (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006), namely their conceptions and positions on educational issues. In addition to facilitating the teachers' greater critical awareness of the educational context and the environment it is embedded in, this phase also ensured that I, as an external researcher, understood the views of the teachers before starting the main action research phase.

Phase Two

Phase Two of the project, the main action research phase, is running from January to June 2009. Ten teachers from Phase One have continued with the project, their selection was based on the level of commitment they exhibited during the first phase of the research. The group is composed of four women and six men, all are Muslims. They should be viewed as a research network of education professionals, rather than as a sample attempting to represent the diversity of Sudan.

The format of the research project remains similar to the first phase, including weekly discussion-based research workshops, and weekly visits by myself to the schools. However, the focus of the study has changed – each teacher has selected a topic relating to their teaching, and has engaged in reflective activities and data collection methods to learn more about it. A starting point for action research is "how do I improve my practice?" (Whitehead, 1989, cited in Whitehead & McNiff, 2006, p.19), and these teachers generally selected a topic relating to a problem that they would like to resolve or a situation they would like to improve.

The phase started with structured activities to facilitate reflection on issues in their teaching and guide them in initiating their individual research projects. The initial period of the phase included the following stages:

Week of Project:	Stage of Research Projects:	structured observation notes, questionnaires and diaries. Presentation of the data in weekly research workshops provides an opportunity to draw out the key themes of the data, and subsequent discussion acts as a form of 'participant confirmation', with teachers supporting or questioning the issues raised based on their own professional and personal experience. Action research is formative, as the definition of problems, aims and methodology can change during the process (Greenwood, 1999), regularly teachers raise a point which indicates a tangential area of relevance for the research. Overall, the teachers are predominantly finding out more about their topic, rather than progressing along a clearly demarcated research route towards finding out the answers to their research questions.
1 – 3	Finding multiple starting points	
4	Selection of research topic	
	Identifying issues relating to the research topic	
5	Definition of terms and concepts	
	Research sub-questions	
6	Deconstruct research topic (e.g. identifying issues relating to teaching methods, students etc)	
7	Planning data collection phase	
8 onwards	Collecting data Discussion of data collected and arising themes	Research participants can be (simplistically) divided into 'insiders', those practitioners who own the problem and will live the result of the research process, and 'outsiders', the professional researchers who support the continuation of the research process and provide research skills (Greenwood, 1999, p.32). As 'insiders', the teachers have greater access to students and colleagues, and a greater insight into the environment and experience of the learners, however, reflexivity is required to ensure that personal impressions are questioned during the study. In the project my role is to act as a facilitator, guide, formulator, summariser of knowledge, and raiser of issues (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000), rather than as an external observer and assessor. Principally I ask questions or provide an arena for questions to be asked, which both promote reflection and data about educational processes and the society they are embedded in. In addition to questioning, I provide guidance on the research approach, data collection methods, and occasionally offer pedagogical ideas (predominantly based on my English language teaching experience). The interplay of 'insiders' and 'outsider' in the project requires additional reflexivity on the part of myself and the teachers when reading the data. This is supported by other techniques to assess the validity of the data, such as triangulation with data collected by myself and other teachers. Participant confirmation through discussion of findings and their interpretations.

I provided a limited amount of informal training in research methods, but the focus was on the teachers going out and collecting data.

The topics which are being investigated by the teachers are:

Research Topic:	Teaching Specialisation:
1. Students' concentration	Arabic language (Class 5)
2. The suitability of the curriculum for the students	Arabic language (Class 6)
3. Students' attention in class	Maths, People and the Environment, Islamic Studies
4. Students' writing skills (English)	English language
5. Students' reading skills (Arabic)	Arabic language, Islamic Studies
6. How education affects students	English language
7. Students' understanding	Arabic language (Class 8)
8. Students' 'bravery' (e.g. to perform in public)	Arabic language, maths
9. Teaching English effectively	4. Issues in Youth and Adult Education English language (Class 8)
10. Students' communication skills (English)	English language

Action research is methodologically eclectic (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 1997), a wide variety of instruments have been used to collect the data, such as interviews with students and teachers, structured and un-

Ongoing discussion of the data has revealed many issues relating to the students in the schools and teaching and learning processes. Some of these are discussed below, although it should be emphasised that these findings are preliminary, more detailed interpretations may be elicited following the end of the fieldwork period.

4.1. Students' Backgrounds

By their nature as students in Adult Education Centres, the learners did not attend or complete basic level education, predominantly due to poverty, displacement and family circumstances. The difference between the 'home environment' and the 'school environment' has been highlighted by the teachers, as has the role of the teachers in providing 'training' for the students about acceptable behaviour. In general, the students, especially those in the lower years, are seen as being not used to the school environment, and should be advised about issues such as punctuality, appropriate clothing, doing homework and revising.

4.2. Students' Work and Studies

Almost all the students in the schools work during the day. Male students predominantly work in the informal sector, such as selling in the market, as labourers and as guards, while female students often have family responsibilities or have informal work, for example as tea sellers and nannies. Students' work is seen as having an effect on their studies, such as having a role in the high level of lateness and absenteeism of the learners. Their work is also seen to cause fatigue, which impacts the level of the students' concentration and participation in class. Students generally say that they are able to balance their work and their studies, though they do not have time to revise their lessons, which causes particular problems in preparation for and performance in exams.

4.3. Students' Reasons for Studying

The reasons given by the students for beginning or returning to studying include both social and pragmatic aspects. These include being able to read and write in order to function effectively in society, such as to read notes and signs, and also in order to get a job for which literacy is required. Students also mention the social pressure to study in order to not be viewed as being uneducated. All students mention their ambition to complete the basic school level, and then progress on to secondary level and university. However, given the disadvantaged nature of the students in the schools, and the deeply embedded system of nepotism and personal contacts ('*wasta*'), even after university graduation they have very limited access to high level jobs in the formal and public sectors.

4.4. Mixed Ability Classes

The schools are open almost the whole year, closing just for official holidays and short exam breaks. Registration is generally open for most of the year, which means that teachers must incorporate new students, who have missed some of the syllabus, into the class. In addition, the schools don't have a formal pre-study

assessment process, so new students can negotiate with the headteacher about which class they will enter, based on their prior studies or academic skills, which means that students who have not yet developed the necessary skills, notably literacy skills, may be found in a class. These processes exacerbate the heterogeneous nature of the classes in terms ability, age and background of the students.

Furthermore, students are assessed in regular and end-of-year exams, and may result in learners progressing to the following class, progressing and skipping a class or classes, or repeating a class. Entry into classes seven and eight are more tightly controlled by the headteacher as students sit the national Basic School Exam at the end of class eight.

4.5. Teaching and Learning

The older age of the learners impacts on pedagogy as they are seen as requiring 'step-by-step' presentation and practice of the learning points. This view is further enhanced by the teachers' perception of the students' limited experience of education. Teaching approaches are highly structured, including a lot of drilling of texts and vocabulary and copying a summary from the blackboard for each lesson – partially resulting from the low level of literacy of the students, particularly in the lower classes. This reliance on didactic teaching and knowledge transmission is supported by the students, who often highlight the fundamental importance of a teacher's ability to 'explain well' in a lesson.

4.6. Students' Background and Culture

The issue of the culture of the students has arisen throughout the project. There is a perception that the students come from 'primitive' backgrounds and become 'civilised' through the education process. This may result from social perceptions of the value of education and the relationship between studies and social status. Indicators of how the students change through education include their way of speaking to and dealing with colleagues and teachers, their self-confidence in participating in class and speaking in public. The issue of how students change through education is being investigated by one of the teachers, though the issue is complex, as indicated by his current inquiry into 'uneducated people who behave better than educated people'.

4.7. School Curriculum

The school curriculum represents the Arab-Islamic culture of the Sudanese government, as indicated in the textbooks by the focus on northern Sudan and Islamic references. However, there are limited references to other tribes in textbooks, predominantly relating to 'soft' cultural points, such as weddings and musical instru-

ments. The students in these schools are excluded from this privileged culture due to their ethnicity and economic status (and in some cases, due to their Christian religion). This cultural focus could negatively affect the students' educational progress, as they do not have the required background information, skills or experience ('cultural capital') which would support their learning and performance in exams.

5. Conclusion

The focus on the teachers' professional practice through their active participation in the research project has led to the expression of the 'living theories' by the teachers (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006), based on their own perceptions and positions, both shared and individual, which respond directly to their needs in their school environments. So far, there have been a few cases of changes in specific pedagogic approaches, though in general the greatest change has been achieved through both the teachers' experience of actively seeking to develop their professional knowledge, including seeking the views of the students, as well as the benefits of obtaining the knowledge itself. In this sense, 'empowerment', an objective of action research, is of a personal and professional nature, resulting from and resulting in reflexive praxis leading to greater criticality of practice, and consequently more engaged and responsive teaching. As further developmental aspects of the research, some teachers have developed their English language skills and several have mentioned their interest in pursuing postgraduate studies in the field of education, resulting from their participation in the project.

In terms of production and publication of knowledge, the results of the study are multi-faceted. The doctoral thesis is likely to focus on the research process, in the form of a case study on the application of an action research approach in this context. This could provide a step towards developing a methodological approach in education research and teacher training which is appropriate to the local context and responsive to local needs (Pryor, 1998). Furthermore, the data from the study will be published in academic forums, providing an occasion for the experiences and views of the 'chalk-face' practitioners to be expressed, albeit through an external researcher. This study is "self-consciously situated in its context" (Griffiths, 1998, p.82), and, as a result, any generalisation of the findings should be queried. However, education practitioners from any background, through a process of 'relatability' (Bassey, 1981 & 1990, cited in Crossley & Vulliamy, 1996), may relate to any contextualised portrayal of this study, which will therefore add to dialogue on youth and adult education in developing country contexts.

6. Bibliography

- Chambers, R. (1997), *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last*, (London, ITDG Publishing).
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2000), *Research Methods in Education*, (Fifth Edition), (London & New York, RoutledgeFalmer).
- Crossley, M. & Vulliamy, G. (1996), Issues and Trends in Qualitative Research: Potential for Developing Countries, *International Journal for Educational Development*, 16, 4, pp.439-448.
- Greenwood, D. J. (1999), *Action Research*, (Amsterdam & Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company).
- Griffiths, M. (1998), *Educational Research for Social Justice: Getting Off the Fence*, (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Pretty, J. N., Guijt, I., Thompson, J. & Scoones, I. (1995), *Participatory Learning and Action: A Trainer's Guide*, (London, International Institute for Environment and Development).
- Pryor, J. (1998), Action Research in West African Schools: Problems and Prospects, *Educational Development*, 18, 3, pp.219-228.
- Whitehead, J. & McNiff, J. (2006), *Action Research: Living Theory*, (London, Sage Publications).



Outgoing SSA president, Beniah Yongo-Bure of Kettering University

SUMMARY OF THE BANQUET TALK BY TIM SHORTLEY,

Deputy Assistant to the US Special Envoy to Sudan, General Scott Gration
May 23, 2009 at the Sudan Studies Association, Michigan State University,
East Lansing

By Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban



[Tim Shortley, a ranking official from the Africa section of the US State Department, addressed the evening banquet at the recent SSA. We are grateful that he took time out of a busy schedule working because of the value he placed upon speaking to the unique composition of the SSA. He has a lengthy experience in the African continent with his portfolio including work in Rwanda, Central African Republic, and eastern Congo.]

Mr. Shortley opened his remarks by noting that Sudan has become the centerpiece of the Obama administration's African policy. Personally he has been working intensively on Sudan since 2005. He summarized the current situation with the observation that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the conflict in Darfur represent both the high and low of Sudanese recent politics. A great achievement has been the establishment of governance in South Sudan, but major stumbling blocks have been the failure of the Darfur Peace Agreement and the inability of UNMIS/AMIS to stabilize Abyei. The major prospect for the immediate future are the 2010 elections.

Mr. Shortley got right to the point of the Special Envoy's mission in Sudan. One clear lesson from the US experience with special envoys is that the envoy needs to be full-time on the ground. Since his appointment in March 2009, General Gration has made three visits (as of the May 23rd talk) which he described as a "look—listen—and learn" tour. Noting that the implementation of the CPA is critical, it was a mistake to be diverted from its centrality by the Darfur conflict.

With General Gration presently en-route to China, Mr. Shortley said that he hoped that the US and China would work together on Sudan. General Gration knows China well, as he does the African continent, having been born in the Congo (Kinshasa) and speaking Swahili. He accompanied Senator Barack Obama on his 2006 African tour that included a visit to Darfur refugee camps in Chad. Regarding multilateral fronts relating to Sudan, the US supports a Chad-Sudan dialogue (he knows the Chadian president Idris Deby), and acknowledges the critical role of Egypt as well as Libya. The international "troika" of the US, UK, and Norway represents the best model for influencing the Government of Sudan (GoS) is "the way to go forward." A planned 23 June 2009 conference in Washington, DC intends to reset the agenda for a Sudan policy focusing on CPA implementation and the Darfur conflict.

Shortley alluded to a "carrot and stick" approach to the GoS on these key issues, but he added that the North is also a concern "for its own sake." Employing the well-known DIME strategy as a means to understand and analyze current conditions in a country—diplomacy, information, military, and economic-- the strategy at present is one of diplomacy. Noting that there are both optimists and pessimists within the Obama administration, there is an expected presidential statement on Sudan coming in the near future, perhaps in July.

Advocacy groups in the US complicate the diplomatic strategy making it difficult to influence a Congress generally committed to more sanctions and punishment of the GoS. Besides his growing diplomatic experience, General Gration has also been centrally involved with the new US African Command, AFRI-COM.

During the lively question and answer period following the talk, Mr. Shortley opined that intensifying sanctions on totalitarian regimes mostly serves to strengthen those governments. A better approach is to strengthen and develop further the CPA 'troika.' The troika failed because some of the personalities involved were not consistent in maintaining their personal ties. The potential for lifting of some US sanctions would

take place on a “tit for tat” basis. Shortley emphasized that the US is interested in a new relationship and dialogue with the North.

In response to a question about US-China collaboration, Mr. Shortley said that the US is not looking for oil, but for a stable, democratic Sudan. He argued that an improved regional approach would be more productive than a single issue, single country model. General Graton sees the eastern Sudan as very important and the development of a comprehensive Sudan policy to be most productive. He valued the importance of involving other African leaders as well, noting the interest of former South African president Thabo Mbeki in the Sudan.

Regarding the elections, there is the fear that they will neither be free nor fair, but will be used to legitimize the continuation of the present government. The US is providing \$90 million in support of democratic elections. He noted that the problems with the recent Census seriously complicate the election process.

The South-South violence in the lead up to the elections in 2010 and the Referendum in 2011 is in urgent need of attention. Particular focus would be on the military situation in Abyei supporting and strengthening the existing UNMIS commitment.

Likewise in Darfur, strengthening UNAMID capacity while sorting out the rebel groups as to their political programs is vital. Taking a regional approach and involving Chad more in resolving the Darfur conflict might also have the benefit of drawing France more into a constructive policy regarding the Deby government.

He concluded this highly focused conversation with a roomful of knowledgeable and concerned people by saying that trying to make a comprehensive policy change in a short period of time is trying a risky and difficult strategy, but a new approach that is worth that try as Sudan heads toward a critical turning point in the eighteen months ahead.



On Being A Sudanese In A Changing World

Address delivered at the Luncheon offered by the Sudanese Studies Association on the occasion of its 28th Conference, East Lansing, Michigan, 24, May 2009

Dr Nureldin Satti

Who exactly is a Sudanese? This question is answered in many conflicting ways even today, one hundred eighty-seven years after the inception of the Sudan in its present borders. The failure to adequately answer this question emanates from the different interpretations that are given to the Sudanese identity and to agree on objective and realistic criteria and parameters for the definition of that identity which continues to be given a reductive and exclusionary definition. That definition, as well as its political, socio-cultural and ethnic applications has resulted in a deep political and social crisis, practically since the Independence of Sudan, which has led to what is now being called the revolution of the “margins” (Alhawamish) which threatens, if not adequately addressed, to lead to the fragmentation and total dislocation of the country. The question which now persistently poses itself is *for how long will Sudan continue to exist in its present borders? In other words, the question now is: the Sudan, to be or not to be?*

The year 2011 is a crucial landmark: it is the year of the Referendum when the Southern Sudanese will probably vote for the secession of Southern Sudan. This will constitute the death of a dream: the dream of unity in

- *Ambassador Nureldin Satti is a retired Sudanese diplomat and Senior UN official. He also served as Acting Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Burundi in Burundi.*



**SUDAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION
28th Annual Conference
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES OF SUDAN
May 12 to 24, 2009
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM**

PANEL #1 Sudan's History: Iron, Slavery and Grave Goods

1. "Slavery and Bari Resistance During the 19-Century Slave-Trading Era, in South Sudan" Stephanie Beswick, Ball State University
2. "The Iron Industry of Precolonial Nubian Kordofan," Jay Spaulding, Kean University
3. Iron and Stone: Social Meaning Found Through The Juxtaposition of Grave Goods from a Napatan Warrior Burial, "George A. Herbst, University of California, Santa Barbara.

PANEL #2 Colonial Criminals, Tagle and Languages of Power

1. "Thank Goodness Habeus Corpus Did Not Run in Nahud": Police Investigations and the Arrest of Criminals in Colonial Sudan, 1924-1956," Will Berridge, University of Durham, England.
2. "Tagle History, Culture and Language – An Insider's View," Marcus Jaeger, University of Koeln, Germany
3. "Talking Hybridity: Languages of Power," Christopher Vaughan, University of Durham, England

PANEL #3 Memorial to Tayib Salih

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Chair

with remarks by Khalid Musa Dafalla and Malik Balla

Panel #4 PANEL TITLE: Education in Sudan

1. "Sudan American Foundation for Education," Lee Burchinal, Methods For Social Researchers in Developing Countries
2. "Lost Girls Find Their Voices," Laura Deluca, University of Colorado, Boulder.

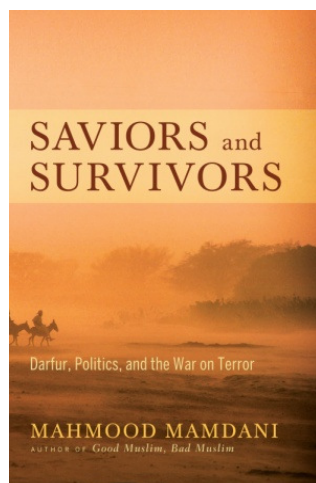
Panel #5 Sufis, Construction of Self and Language and Culture in Courts

1. "Half Baked Truths: Silence in Sudanese Construction of Self," Mohamed H. Mohamed, University of Windsor, Canada
2. "Pious Pop: The Transformation of Sufi Poetic Genres in Contemporary Sudan," Noah Salomon, University of Chicago Divinity School.
3. "Language and Culture of Sudanese Courts," Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Rhode Island College.

PANEL #6 Languages and Cultures

1. "The Perception of Colors in the Sudanese Languages and Cultures," Baqie Badawi Muhammad, Indiana

Review Essay



Mahmood Mamdani, 2009, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War of Terror*. Pantheon Books: New York, 401 pps., index, map, biblio., \$26.95, ISBN 978-0-307-37723-4.

by Richard Lobban, rlobban@ric.edu

**Emeritus Professor of Anthropology,
Rhode Island College;
Adjunct Professor of African Studies,
Naval War College**

This book became instantly controversial, probably more from the Darfur context and conflict it seeks to address than for its detailed scholarship and extensive research. Mamdani's book is nonetheless an important work. It is well known that the author of "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim" does not hesitate to tackle problematic issues, so there should be little surprise about the present book under review. Moreover, the saying about "shooting the messengers" easily comes to mind. There is no question that the discourse over the conflict in Darfur has been highly politicized and polarizing. My guess is that most readers have strong view on the sub-

ject *before* reading this book and are more interested in validating their views or rejecting others based on such *a priori* views. Just like the legalistic issue of 'genocide', the vast majority of people with views on this topic are, frankly, not lawyers or soldiers, are not trained Sudanists. They are rarely familiar with the legal importance of genocidal intent and would be offended if they themselves were charged, found guilty, and sentenced by another other single party, especially if the jury was composed of movie stars, politicians, and individuals with well-known biases. Thus, the first task of this book and its review is to open or reopen the minds of the public about this issue.

Let's see who might agree with Mamdani's latest book. Would some agree that this is a work of scholarship? Would they agree that this is a penetrating analysis of the causes and nature of the conflict in Darfur? Certainly when he gets into the meat of his subject he will find critics, strong supporters, and angry opponents with many shades in between. Thus, it is difficult to be fully objective or neutral about *Saviors and Survivors*.

One finds several groups interested in Sudan and its very complex, diverse and interconnected conflicts. There are veteran Sudanists and there are those with interests spanning a few years, or a few months. There are also peace-seekers, peace-makers, and peace-keepers; there are antagonists, persons in NGO's, politicians, soldiers, political activists, statesmen, apologists, movie stars, strategists, victims, and victimizers, not to mention various rebels, informal militias and various other government and public actors. Practically all have differing points of view about the causes, effects and potential resolution of the war in Darfur, the general and provincial governance of Sudan, and the many other related issues and dimensions if contemporary Sudan. I am a veteran Sudanist anthropologist with four decades of research, I am also a peace-seeker with practical military experi-

ence (military teaching, subject matter expert, and front line war coverage), and human rights work (multiple Sudanese political asylum cases). Any reviewer enters this political terrain with reasonable trepidation, these remarks seek to clarify my background and interests.

Dr. Mamdani sees deep historical roots in the Darfur conflict. These range from the internal dynastic rivalries of kingdoms and states, to conflicts with neighbors, age-old core-periphery issues, and fundamental ideological disputes, as well as their various political objectives. I agree with Mamdani; other observers are more interested in simply projecting a demonical view of Khartoum and either ignoring the rebels or even creating them in a simple image of 'victims' or freedom fighters. Mamdani hopes that all observers see the women, children and displaced non-combatant people of Darfur as the victims of this strife.

Mamdani also sees the conflict in a long evolving climatological context in which global weather changes and desertification are important, but not exclusive causes. Others see that attention to climate change as a cause of conflict is diversionary from those they wish to blame for aggression and/or intransigence. I agree with the Mamdani position.

Mamdani reckons that tens or even hundreds of thousands have died, been wounded, abused, threatened and forced into miserable refugee status. Not only do I agree with this tragic human calculus of this conflict, but I wish the numbers were lower because we are talking about human beings. Some wish or proclaim that the numbers were higher to dramatize the terrible situation. However horrible the numbers were in 2003 to 2005, they are happily much less at present. Indeed, the number of murders in Chicago in 2008 was greater than the number of conflict-related deaths in Darfur in the same period and south-on-south violence in the southern Sudan is showing an alarming upward trajec-

tory, this added to the even greater number of deaths caused by the Lord's Resistance Army in northeastern Congo.

This leads Mamdani to the highly polarized debate about 'genocide' in Darfur. Let's take a closer look at the Nazi-inspired holocaust and the Rwanda for some guidance since these cases have been adjudicated and some punishments meted out. In these two widely accepted instances of recognized genocide the victims (communists, Jews, 'Gypsies,' gays; and Tutsi), were systematically hunted down to exterminate them.

This was the critical genocidal **intent**. There was no sanctuary in Germany or Rwanda for these targeted groups. For the populations of Darfur there *is* sanctuary in IDP camps, in adjoining provinces and nations, and even in the national capitol, which was militarily targeted by one Darfur rebel group. This was not the case in Germany or Rwanda. Furthermore, for the Nazis or Hutu, the genocidal intent was unilaterally initiated. This was not the case in Darfur where joint rebel forces unilaterally attacked government military positions, personnel and equipment. Yes, they had their grievances but taking a military option to represent them has a sorry, but well-known, history in Sudan. Taking up arms to 'protect' your people is an ethical or moral decision of grave implications, as we are in year six of this sustained conflict. This is Mamdani's position in essence. I share it.

Neither Nazis, nor Hutu offered a peaceful or negotiated way out for their victims. They were stopped by military force and prosecuted largely by the later victors. Not only were the Darfur rebels repeatedly offered peace talks, one has signed, others rejected this and return to 'improve' their political positions on the battle fields despite multiple and varied international efforts to get them to formulate a common front and position. Now they are fighting as much with each other and well-intentioned NGO's, as well as with marauding civilians with their warlords. Again,

there is no parallel with Jews, gays, or Tutsis. Personally, I believe that the hallowed nature of the term genocide, a crime so great that it deserves neither casual application nor simple use as an adjective or term of abuse that is applied blithely against your enemies. It is a legal and moral reference of the greatest significance. 'Genocide' has been incorrectly used to describe the post-election violence in Kenya, or at the bloody end to the Sri Lankan insurgency. Having many people die is obviously horrible in human terms, but such cases do not immediately qualify as genocide, and if this fine-tuned legal term is used too loosely, defensively and inaccurately it runs the risk of actually diminishing its true meaning. I'd guess that most modern nation-states, when confronted with armed rebels directly attacking their military would formulate a counter-insurgency strategy as best they could with what recourses they had. The government of Sudan was totally predictable in this respect by just looking at its use of the *murahileeen* long employed in the stalemated 'jihad' in the south. However horrible, however misguided was the use of the *janjaweed* in Darfur, it was from the point of view of Mamdani and this reviewer, entirely predictable from the previous twenty years. The poor and probably illegal application of this force and the terrible miscalculations of the disparate and divided rebel groups contributed fundamentally to the high degree of lives lost, and displaced in the 2003-2005 period especially. Certainly other contributors were poor governance and administration, poor land registry, political and ideological ambitions, and too many people in a vulnerable and deteriorated ecosystem.

In addition, Jerry Fowler and the "Save Darfur" coalition comes under harsh scrutiny by Mamdani, especially for its marketing and fund raising which probably paid for many office and salary expenses in the United States, but it is not clear how many Darfuris it actually 'saved.' Moreover, important human rights groups have refrained from calling

***Embodying Honor, Fertility, Foreignness, and Regeneration in Eastern Sudan*, Amal Hassan Fadlalla, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2007. pp. 210, Index.**

Review by Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban

Amal Fadlalla's book joins a growing body of anthropological studies of women focusing on the symbolic, and real importance of women's bodies in Sudanese culture, including Janice Boddy's *Wombs and Alien Spirits, Women, Men, and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan* (1989). This study of the nomadic Hadendowa and Beja is particularly welcome as there has been a paucity of recent research in the eastern Sudan, a notable exception is William Young's *The Rashaida Bedouin: Arab Pastoralists of Eastern Sudan*, 1996). The Hadendowa are a population at risk resulting from neglect during colonial and post independence periods.

Likewise there are fewer studies of women by Sudanese. his work joins Asma Abdel Halim's book on Sudanese women in the Diaspora reviewed in the last issue of the SSA Bulletin. Her fieldwork was conducted in 1998. Fadlalla introduces the reader early on to the fact that even though she is northern Sudanese, she was nonetheless viewed as *balawait*, a "foreigner." As an "impure" foreigner, Fadlalla was closely scrutinized until she dressed and acted like Hadendowa women covering her face in public and keeping her eyes modestly downcast. Then the women joked that she must have originally been Hadendowa but was captured by a *balawait qabila* (foreign "tribe"). Fadlalla employs a feminist method of giving voice to the women she has studied through the extensive use of personal narratives.

This is a book about reproduction which is basic to women, to society and to the continuation of life itself. Fadlalla explores the Hadendowa's historical origin myth from a hybrid Arab man, "Barakawin" (the fearless) and the daughter of a Beja king, "Hadat" (the lioness), and the original seven lineages that are descended from their seven daughters. Like other comparable studies of 'eastern' women, purity of descent is embodied in women's bodies, in patrilineages, *durarit*, that are responsible for protecting land and human/land/economic capital (camels). Land is seen as a woman who can be captured and violated and must be protected.

Reflecting the Hadendowa's probable matrilineal roots, tent residences are matrilocal and are comprised of clusters of mothers and daughters. The tents are constructed by women and seven mats for the

outer covers represent the fertility of the Hadendowa ancestral mother and her 7 sons. Readers noting the shift from the origin tale might infer an alternate patrilineal retelling of the origin myth. While women construct the tents, the grooms who marry in are the guardians of the tent and its fertility. Wealth in sons enhances the *durarit*, and Hadendowa hang the placenta of a male from a tree outside the tent to symbolize the male lineal principle. Women feel empowered by the number of daughters' tents that surround a mother's tent, a vivid representation of how motherhood is central to ideas of group representation, so central to Fadlalla's thesis.

The purity of the lineage in the female and Pharaonic circumcision (Auqashabi) is performed on girls usually before the age of six and is used as a cultural marker to distinguish Hadendowa from the uncircumcised neighboring Rashaida. The campaign of against female circumcision has not had a major impact on Hadendowa, and Fadlalla argues that the international hyperfocus on the issue had deferred interest in other basic women's health issues. Problems of infertility, infant death, and other feminine illnesses are attributed to various agents of 'foreignness', evil spirits subject to curing. Thus, according to Fadlalla, reproductive suffering—miscarriages, infertility—must be managed (ch. 5).

The Hadendowa and Beja historically have supported the Khatmiyya and DUP, but tensions with this old alliance are evident as little in the way of poverty alleviation been delivered as a result of this support. Open criticism of the DUP has been organized under a group called "Hadat" to signal unity, identity and attachment to the land. The Khatmiyya have countered these arguments using the 'nobility' of their "Ashraf" status as descendants of the Prophet and make an equal claim to the land and resources. Spiritually one of the local saints is Alsharifa Maryam, the granddaughter of the founder of the Khatmiya and a popular local shrine. NIF propaganda has attempted to invade this spiritual space, but it has been fended off by women leaders who say there is nothing wrong with their *auslif* (cultural practices), and they are good Muslims.

Fadalla asks for whom is the "modernity" of the city--Port Sudan and Sinkat--for the Hadendowa? Social change for the Hadendowa has long been the mediating point between the tents and the urban areas where men sell their camels and livestock. Those who are urban dwellers live in segregated, urban slums where the tent, *bidaiqaw*, has been transformed into a timber room, *bukar*. A familiar dilemma is faced by educated Hadendowa women, some may marry outside their lineages and become "balawaitized" while educated men prefer their less-educated cousins who



New SSA president Stephanie Beswick, Ball State University, 2010-2012



Abdelgabar Abdel Wahid from Doha, Qatar speaking at the SSA conference

University



Abraham Madit Majok at SSA conference, MSU May 2009



Dr. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban
SSA Bulletin Editor
Dept. of Anthropology
Rhode Island College
Providence, RI 02908, USA

novel I had ever read about the Sudan and it aroused my curiosity to the extent

Mahmood Mamdani, 2009, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War of Terror*. Pantheon Books: New York, 401 pps., index, map, biblio., \$26.95, ISBN 978-0-307-37723-4.

by Richard Lobban, rlobban@ric.edu
Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, Rhode Island College;
Adjunct Professor of African Studies, Naval War College

This book became instantly controversial, probably more from the Darfur context and conflict it seeks to address than for its detailed scholarship and extensive research. Mamdani's book is nonetheless an important work. It is well known that the author of "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim" does not hesitate to tackle problematic issues, so there should be little surprise about the present book under review. Moreover, the saying about "shooting the messengers" easily comes to mind. There is no question that the discourse over the conflict in Darfur has been highly politicized and polarizing. My guess is that most readers have strong view on the subject *before* reading this book and are more interested in validating their views or rejecting others based on such *a priori* views. Just like the legalistic issue of 'genocide', the vast majority of people with views on this topic are, frankly, not lawyers or soldiers, are not trained Sudanists. They are rarely familiar with the legal importance of genocidal intent and would be offended if they themselves were charged, found guilty, and sentenced by another other single party, especially if the jury was composed of movie stars, politicians, and individuals with well-known biases. Thus, the first task of this book and its review is to open or reopen the minds of the public about this issue.

Let's see who might agree with Mamdani's latest book. Would some agree that this is a work of scholarship? Would they agree that this is a penetrating analysis of the causes and nature of the conflict in Darfur? Certainly when he gets into the meat of his subject he will find critics, strong supporters, and angry opponents with many shades in between.

Thus, it is difficult to be fully objective or neutral about *Saviors and Survivors*.

One finds several groups interested in Sudan and its very complex, diverse and interconnected conflicts. There are veteran Sudanists and there are those with interests spanning a few years, or a few months. There are also peace-seekers, peace-makers, and peace-keepers; there are antagonists, persons in NGO's, politicians, soldiers, political activists, statesmen, apologists, movie stars, strategists, victims, and victimizers, not to mention various rebels, informal militias and various other government and public actors. Practically all have differing points of view about the causes, effects and potential resolution of the war in Darfur, the general and provincial governance of Sudan, and the many other related issues and dimensions of contemporary Sudan. I am a veteran Sudanist anthropologist with four decades of research, I am also a peace-seeker with practical military experience (military teaching, subject matter expert, and front line war coverage), and human rights work (multiple Sudanese political asylum cases). Any reviewer enters this political terrain with reasonable trepidation, these remarks seek to clarify my background and interests.

Dr. Mamdani sees deep historical roots in the Darfur conflict. These range from the internal dynastic rivalries of kingdoms and states, to conflicts with neighbors, age-old core-periphery issues, and fundamental ideological disputes, as well as their various political objectives. I agree with Mamdani; other observers are more interested in simply projecting a demonical view of Khartoum and either ignoring the rebels or even creating them in a simple image of 'victims' or freedom fighters. Mamdani hopes that all observers see the women, children and displaced non-

combatant people of Darfur as the victims of this strife.

Mamdani also sees the conflict in a long evolving climatological context in which global weather changes and desertification are important, but not exclusive causes. Others see that attention to climate change as a cause of conflict is diversionary from those they wish to blame for aggression and/or intransigence. I agree with the Mamdani position.

Mamdani reckons that tens or even hundreds of thousands have died, been wounded, abused, threatened and forced into miserable refugee status. Not only do I agree with this tragic human calculus of this conflict, but I wish the numbers were lower because we are talking about human beings. Some wish or proclaim that the numbers were higher to dramatize the terrible situation. However horrible the numbers were in 2003 to 2005, they are happily much less at present. Indeed, the number of murders in Chicago in 2008 was greater than the number of conflict-related deaths in Darfur in the same period and south-on-south violence in the southern Sudan is showing an alarming upward trajectory, this added to the even greater number of deaths caused by the Lord's Resistance Army in northeastern Congo.

This leads Mamdani to the highly polarized debate about 'genocide' in Darfur. Let's take a closer look at the Nazi-inspired holocaust and the Rwanda for some guidance since these cases have been adjudicated and some punishments meted out. In these two widely accepted instances of recognized genocide the victims (communists, Jews, 'Gypsies,' gays; and Tutsi), were systematically hunted down to exterminate them.

This was the critical genocidal **intent**. There was no sanctuary in Germany or Rwanda for these targeted groups. For the populations of Darfur there *is* sanctuary in IDP camps, in adjoining provinces and nations, and even in the national capitol, which was militarily targeted by one Darfur rebel group. This was not the

that I became fascinated both with the author and with his country the Sudan. In *The Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* the authors state that following the publication of *Season of Migration to the North* he was generally viewed as a "new genius of the Arab novel." Its main innovation in portraying the encounter between East and West is that it tells the story of a Sudanese born to an Arab northern father, who was born in a village on the banks of the Nile north of Khartoum, and a southern slave mother. The young man spends much of his youth and adulthood studying and living in England. When he returns to the Sudan he settles in a Village named Wad Hamed, situated on the Nile in northern Sudan, attempting to give back to the villagers all that he has learnt in England. It is thus a complex story through which one can comprehend the psyche of contemporary African-Arab Sudanese society. Al-Tayyib resides in London and worked at the Drama Section of the BBC, he is a regular contributor to the Arabic language journal *al-Majallah*. He has published several short stories, including the widely translated *Wedding of Zein*, which alongside his more recent novel *Bandar Shah* has also been made into feature-length film.

"Fiction and Reality" are puzzles in many literary products; however, they are of special relevance in the works of al-Tayyib Salih. Mustafa Sa'id, the hero of *Mawsim al-Hijra ila al-Shamal*, receives the news of his mother's death, whilst he is living in England and making love with a native English-born girl, with complete indifference. Is this "sterile and alienated response" the result of the author's own life or that of a fictitious character' the hero of his story, remains unresolved? [147]

It's in the River Nile, that the hero of the book, Mustafa Sa'id, either disappeared or died. The narrator thus uses the river positively to overcome his crisis whereas Mustafa Sa'id uses it negatively. In his novel *Bandar Shah*, the narrator states that his village, Wad Hamid is the place where he wants to die: "I've returned so as to be buried here. I swore I wouldn't give my body to any earth other than that of Wad Hamid." [151] the hot and sunny Sudan, with the Nile and the trees growing along its banks, is where al-Tayyib Salih wants to bury his heroes rather than in alien, cold Britain.

Unlike the late Ambrose Benny, I am neither an expert on Arabic literature nor on Hebrew literature, it's only my knowledge as an Historian of the Modern Sudan and my fascination with the author which have tempted me to undertake this study. Al-Tayyib seemingly likes reading history, just as I like reading his (and others) fiction and in his interview with Dr. Ami Bouskila, in August 2000, [213-32] he stresses this fact and states the following about so-called "new historians and the way they juggle the facts", it is, according to al-Tayyib, "rather similar to the way a novelist juggles fictions which are presented as facts." I happen to

Panel #7: Linguistic Endangerment and Language Wars

1. "An Historical Verdict on the Discourse of Linguistic Endangerment in the Sudan," Ashraf Abdelhay (Cambridge University) and Sinfree Makoni (Pennsylvania State University).
2. "War and Peace in Sudanese Languages," Richard Lobban, Rhode Island College

Saturday Banquet Speaker: **Tim Shortley**, (Deputy Assistant to the US Special Envoy to Sudan, General Scott Gration) Mr. Shortley's remarks are summarized in this issue of the Bulletin

Panel #8 Revamping Anthropological Analysis:

1. "A Story to Make the Goat Laugh," Jay O'Brien, Purdue University
2. "From "Harmful Traditions" to "pathologies of Power,"": Re-Vamping the Anthropological Analysis of Health in Sudan," Ellen Gruenbaum, Purdue University.

Panel #9 Islamism, Language and Education

1. "The National Congress Party Between Islamism & Nationalism," Adel Salam Sidahmed, University of Windsor, Canada
2. "Political Economy of the Islamist State and the ICC: The NIF Regime and the Darfur Genocide in the Sudan," Lako Tongun, Pitzer College
3. "Language and Education in Southern Sudan," B. Yongo Bure, Kettering University

Sunday LUNCHEON SPEAKER

Dr.
Sati,
UN Am-
"Who is

Sati's
appear
sue of
tin)



Nuredine
Sudanese
bassador
a Suda-
nese?" (Dr.
remarks
in this is-
the Bulle-

SSA officers and Board members: l-r: Randall Fegley (president-elect), Baqie Bedawi Muhammad (board), Stephanie Beswick, (president), C. Fluehr-Lobban (editor SSA Bulletin); top row: Beniah Yongo-Bure (outgoing president), Jay Spaulding (board) Richard Lobban (executive director), Lako Tongun (board)

case in Germany or Rwanda. Furthermore, for the Nazis or Hutu, the genocidal intent was unilaterally initiated. This was not the case in Darfur where joint rebel forces unilaterally attacked government military positions, personnel and equipment. Yes, they had their grievances but taking a military option to represent them has a sorry, but well-known, history in Sudan. Taking up arms to 'protect' your people is an ethical or moral decision of grave implications, as we are in year six of this sustained conflict. This is Mamdani's position in essence. I share it.

Neither Nazis, nor Hutu offered a peaceful or negotiated way out for their victims. They were stopped by military force and prosecuted largely by the later victors. Not only were the Darfur rebels repeatedly offered peace talks, one has signed, others rejected this and return to 'improve' their political positions on the battle fields despite multiple and varied international efforts to get them to formulate a common front and position. Now they are fighting as much with each other and well-intentioned NGO's, as well as with marauding civilians with their warlords. Again, there is no parallel with Jews, gays, or Tutsis. Personally, I believe that the hallowed nature of the term genocide, a crime so great that it deserves neither casual application nor simple use as an adjective or term of abuse that is applied blithely against your enemies. It is a legal and moral reference of the greatest significance. 'Genocide' has been incorrectly used to describe the post-election violence in Kenya, or at the bloody end to the Sri Lankan insurgency. Having many people die is obviously horrible in human terms, but such cases do not immediately qualify as genocide, and if this fine-tuned legal term is used too loosely, defensively and inaccurately it runs the risk of actually diminishing its true meaning. I'd guess that most modern nation-states, when confronted with armed rebels directly attacking their military would formulate a counter-insurgency strategy as best they could with what resources they had. The government of Sudan was totally predictable in this respect by just looking at its use of the *murahileeen* long employed in the stalemated 'jihad' in the south. However horrible, however misguided was the use of the *janjaweed* in Darfur, it was from the point of view of Mamdani and this reviewer, entirely predictable from the previous twenty years. The poor and probably illegal application of this force and the terrible miscalculations of the disparate and divided rebel groups contributed fundamentally to the high degree of lives lost, and displaced in the 2003-2005 period especially. Certainly other contributors were poor governance and administration, poor land registry, political and ideological ambitions, and too many people in a vulnerable and deteriorated ecosystem.

In addition, Jerry Fowler and the "Save Darfur" coalition comes under harsh scrutiny by Mamdani, especially for its marketing and fund raising which probably paid for many office and salary expenses in the United States, but it is not clear how many Darfuris it actually 'saved.' Moreover, important human rights groups have refrained from calling the bloodshed genocide. Such is also the case for the main Middle Eastern, Arab, and African political organizations. The three nations particularly focused on labeling Darfur as genocide have found roots in the United Kingdom, the United States, and in Israel, and I suppose that it goes without saying that these three nations have very problematic relations with the Arab world in general. The English were also the last colonial power in Sudan and were responsible for the assassination and overthrow of the last Sultan of Darfur; Israel hosts one of the Darfur rebel groups, has no diplomatic relations with Khartoum and has hostile relations with the Palestinian people it occupies and disperses in numbers exceeding those in Darfur. The United States is struggling to sort out its military, legal, and political problems in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. So the activities in these nations also need to be viewed in this wider context, just to level this complex interna-

tional playing field. With such thoughts in mind, Mamdani sees that the charge of genocide needs a wider lens to see all its dimensions.

Speaking of wider dimensions, there is much more to Sudan than just Darfur. The hard-fought, hard-negotiated Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 has been diverted by the unilateral focus on Darfur. There the territorial unity of Sudan or more war is at stake, not to mention the role of China in Sudan, and the major amounts of oil in the southern Region. The boycott and sanctioning of the Sudan in past years managed to push out all American and Canadian oil companies; now China, India and Malaysia get that oil, the US gets none. The US sanctions against Sudan were exempted for the one item its economy needs, namely Gum Arabic. The United States' effort to block arms purchases has also backfired to the extent that the Sudan is now utterly self-sufficient in arms production from small arms and up to heavy armor, and tanks, everything except for military aircraft that it buys from China with oil proceeds. This was not a major foreign policy success for the US. Beyond that, another less-noticed conflict in the eastern Sudan bubbled over into violence, but the number of external actors in this case was tiny and a peace accord was rather quickly reached and has held. The supernumerary actors in the Darfur conflict have, in fact, created so many more stakeholders that the end of the Darfur conflict has been far more elusive and delayed with more casualties.

Also notable is that the International Criminal Court has indicted Sudan President Omar al-Beshir for charge of war crimes, but has refrained from genocide charges. The legalistic unfolding and outcome of these allegations is still awaited. Africans have noted that neither the Sudan nor the United States are signatories to the ICC, but few Europeans have been charged and several African leaders are under indictment by nations that were former colonial powers. As a long-standing advocate of justice, I applauded the apprehension of Charles Taylor, Hissene Habre, and Fodah Sankoh because they deserve their hearings, but note that they were/are in custody. The indictment of Joseph Kony of the LRA has reduced his incentives for peace negotiation to zero and he responded with more round of killing in the Congo. Not to overlook the cause of justice, perhaps some tactical considerations could be made for the ICC with no police powers.

Mamdani also address the issue of racism in Darfur. Sudan is among the most diverse nations on the planet. Its history is long and its size is vast. There is no question of great achievements and great violence at different times by different actors. Prejudicial attitudes have evolved and do exist there. Amidst conflicts, our human pedigree seeks to 'other' those to whom violence is directed. There is nothing unique about the Sudan on this matter. The issues of marginalization by the Jellaba core and the peripheries of Sudan are certainly part of the foundations of most of the divisive issues of Sudan today. Some journalists and activists try to capture the essence of Sudanese racism with simplistic 'African vs. Arab' polarities, but this reveals more of their ignorance than Sudanese reality. On the one hand, everyone in Sudan is African; the Sudan is in Africa. On the other, through the matrix of centuries of slavery, many in Sudan are both African and Arab. In addition, identity in Sudan is in a state of constant flux and situational reallocation and even those 'arabs' along the Nile could more honestly be considered as Islamized Nubians and the few 'true' 'arabs,' such as the Rashaidya, have almost nothing to do with Darfur. Other 'arabs,' like the Baggara, are generally not participating in the Darfur conflict and, if anything, also suffer for marginalized manipulation by the core for centuries. Maybe simplicities sell papers, generate honoraria, and mobilize followers, but Mamdani does an expert job in demonstrating that this has little to do with socio-cultural reality and with the major issues in political economy, demography and climate in Darfur. And what about the '

share this view and have tended, whenever I (rarely) read "New Historians", to treat them as writers of fiction, especially when they are well written and I was in a position, due to my own knowledge of history, to distinguish with relative ease between "fact and fiction."

In the same interview al-Tayyib claims that his novel: Season of Migration to the North, is "a very objective novel...every historical fact is true." Here, I admit, I am somewhat at a loss, since as an historian myself, I realize that even in **traditional** historical studies one doesn't always distinguish easily between "**true and false** [so-called] **facts**."

Moving to language, al-Tayyib is fully bi-lingual since his knowledge and use of both English and Arabic are perfect. And yet all his works were written in Arabic and were later translated into English and other languages. When asked why he wrote only in Arabic al-Tayyib responded:

"I write in Arabic as a matter of principle." [219] Elaborating further al-Tayyib said: "there are enough problems in writing a novel without writing in a foreign language...I also wanted to experiment with the language...I use a colloquial Arabic which is almost like classical and I use classical which is almost colloquial. Now one cannot have this freedom with a foreign language." [220]

Al-Tayyib adds that he uses colloquial Sudanese Arabic out of "chauvinistic" reasons so as "to put our colloquial in the market place with other peoples'." [223]

In addition al-Tayyib states:

"I sometimes used [colloquial] language to mystify, not to clarify, and if the reader doesn't understand the colloquial he is actually in the same boat as the Sudanese writer who would understand the words, but who would still find difficulties with the meaning. For me that is part of the technique." [224]

In contrast, the Israeli novelist Sami Michael, having migrated from Iraq, via Iran, to Israel in 1949 and in order not to remain a permanent "Voice of an Exile" [in his new homeland!] he made a conscious decision to write in Hebrew only so as to fit into his new "homeland" and its Hebrew-speaking & reading audience. I heard the story directly from him while I was directing the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo, where Sami Michael delivered an occasional lecture to an Egyptian Hebrew-speaking audience. However, it was only in 1974, some twenty five years after he settled into his new homeland's language that his command of his newly mastered language enabled him to publish his first novel in Hebrew.

Al-Tayyib Salih went in the opposite direction and although he migrated to England at the early age of 24, and soon mastered the English language of his new country, he never published his writings in that language but had

others translate his literary output from Arabic. As Elad –Bouskila rightly notes [183-4] it is reminiscent of the Émigré Lebanese writers who settled in the United States and South America in the second half of the nineteenth century, and persisted in publishing their literary efforts in Arabic, in their newly adopted countries and in an English or Spanish environment. In fact *adab al-mahjar* [literature of émigrés] became an important source for the study of the Arabic Literature of that period. However, al-Tayyib Salih, who's English, was perfect already when he settled in England as a young man, "could have written in English but chose not to." [184]

What is central in al-Tayyib's writings is that "the backbone of all his works, was his the Sudanese village...He is able to describe events that are characteristic of the Sudanese village, its custom and tradition, and the legends and folk beliefs current among its inhabitants." Yet the fact that al-Tayyib has "never returned to the Sudan and to the village in which he was born, indicates that he chose not to return." It may also indicate that this very special novelist and writer has felt that his greatest contribution is by preserving the memories of his youth both in his stories and linguistically. But Ami Elad Bouskila concludes his monograph by stating that "in contrast to his own life, his fictional characters do not exercise this choice, [189]

It is nonetheless odd that an excellent writer like al-Tayyib Salih persisted throughout his life to "return to his village without actually being there!?" As an historian who has studied the Sudan throughout his academic career, without visiting the country, nor writing in its language, I may seem at least as odd in my writings on Sudan's modern history, as al-Tayyib Salih. However I am at least in a position to claim that in my case it's not purely a matter of choice: as an Israeli I am not really in a position to visit Sudan, and if I write in Arabic [or Hebrew), rather than English. I will not have an audience of readers. Having chosen English, my audience is spread around the globe and hopefully includes as many Sudanese as others.

