

SOME RECENT SUDANESE BIOGRAPHIES, MEMOIRS,
AND HISTORIES (INCLUDING MUSIC)
A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE¹

R.S. O'FAHEY

The present note presents partial information on a number of recent publications on the Sudan from both within and without the Sudan. The criterion for inclusion has been that the works noticed are primarily of an historical or biographical character. Writings that are overtly political have not been included.

Introduction: The past and the further past

The distance from the independence of the Sudan in 1956 is beginning to impose a change of perspective on the colonial period and how it is perceived. Most of the 'classic' studies of Condominium Sudan (1898–1956), ^cAbd al-Raḥīm, Daly, Warburg, Woodward and so on,² were largely written out of

- 1 The books described here were bought on visits to Khartoum and Cairo in 1993, 94 and 95. These visits were financed by the co-operation programme between the Universities of Bergen and Khartoum and the National Records Office (NRO). As always I am grateful to the programme's co-ordinator, my colleague Anders Bjørkelo, for his support. I should like also to thank Dr. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm, former Secretary-general, and Dr. ^cAlī Ṣāliḥ Karrār, present Secretary-general, of the NRO for their practical help in getting the books to Bergen. Needless to say, these same books are available to *bone fide* scholars in Bergen.
- 2 Mudathir Abd al-Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, Oxford 1969; M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile and Imperial Sudan*, Cambridge 1986 & 1991; Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: the case of the Sudan*, London 1978, and Peter Woodward, *The Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*, London 1979. This by no means exhausts the list of such works. It is perhaps the very richness and articulateness of the British records (as well as the liberal access policy of the National Records Office in Khartoum and the Sudan

British sources, where the actions of Sudanese political figures are largely described and analysed through British eyes. Perhaps not yet, but surely in a decade or so, this new perspective, buttressed by the type of literature discussed here from the last years of colonial rule and the first of independence, will entail a new interpretation of the whole colonial era and its aftermath.

In a similar way, the 'standard' writings on the pre-colonial northern Sudan by Crawford, Hill, Holt, Spaulding, the present writer and many others, will hopefully be modified and deepened by a combination of ethnographic, historical and anthropological studies by Sudanese scholars and others, eventually to lead to a new synthesis of our understanding of the Sudan's complexity. The complexification of pre-colonial Sudanese historiography is in fact well underway.³

In the first category, over the last twenty years or so a number of memoirs and biographies have been published that provide new fodder for the historian of the modern Sudan. Likewise both in the Sudan and in the new Sudanese diaspora, new works of history are being published. These latter fall into two broad categories; 'traditional' tribal genealogically-based works of a type pioneered by the Sudanese historian-*cum*-chronicler, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥīm (see elsewhere in this issue the article by Ibrāhīm, Karrār and O'Fahey). These works usually contain ethnographic and historical data of the greatest value, even if it has to be very carefully evaluated. The second category of historical writings are broadly 'revisionist' and are often produced by Sudanese scholars living outside the country. Often they conceal a political agenda that is not always immediately apparent.

In the case of the memoirs and modern biographies, since I

Archive, University of Durham) that has led to an undue prolongation of an 'imperial bias' in Sudanese historiography. This is ironic, given the equal articulateness of the northern Sudanese intellectuals.

3 See the discussions in Neil McHugh, *Holymen of the Blue Nile. The making of an Arab-Islamic community in the nilotic Sudan, 1500-1850*, Evanston 1994, 1-32, and Albrecht Hofheinz, *Internalizing Islam. Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb, scriptural Islam and local context in early nineteenth-century Sudan*, Chapter two (Dr.philos. thesis, University of Bergen; forthcoming)

am no specialist on the recent history of the Sudan, my purpose here is not so much to pass judgement on the quality of the works noticed here, but simply to record that they exist and give some indication of their contents.

*Political biography*⁴

For the nineteenth century, we have a very useful recent publication, namely Khalīfa ʿAbbas al-ʿUbayd, *al-Zubayr Basha* (Cairo: Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Sūdāniyya 1995, 120 pp.). This is in fact more a compilation than a monograph. The core of the work is a translation of Flora Shaw's interviews with al-Zubayr Pasha in Gibraltar published originally in *The Contemporary Review* (1887, 333-49, 564-85 and 658-83), plus other original sources, including al-Zubayr's *al-Ajwiba al-sadīda*, reproduced from the only known extant lithograph in the Egyptian national archives.⁵ *Al-Ajwiba* presents a series of letters from al-Zubayr to the sultan of Darfur, Ibrāhīm Qarad (reigned 1873-74) and to various Darfur ʿulamāʾ justifying his invasion of the sultanate; the arguments combine assertions of the sole legitimacy of the Ottoman Sultan/Caliph with insinuations about the soundness of Islam in Darfur.⁶ For its reproduction of *al-Ajwiba al-sadīda* alone, al-ʿUbayd's work would be valuable, but the value of his work is enhanced by copious quotations from the verse in praise of al-Zubayr by the poetess, Umm Misaymis, and some striking photographs of al-Zubayr striding his fields at Jaylī in old age.⁷

Few formal biographies of major political figures of the twentieth century have as yet been published. We still lack full-length published biographies of such figures as the two 'Sayyids', ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī and ʿAlī al-Mīrghani. One major biography is by the veteran Sudanese journalist, Bashīr Muḥammad Saʿīd of Ismāʿīl al-Azharī (1900-69), the first prime

4 All the works referred to here are listed again in the bibliography at end.

5 For full details, see *ALA*, I, 71.

6 For a more detailed analysis, see my 'Al-Zubayr and the Conquest of Darfur in 1874', *Sudan Notes and Records* (forthcoming).

7 See further, *ALA*, I, 87.

minister of the independent Sudan, *al-Za'īm al-Azharī wa-[°]asruhu* (Cairo: al-Qāhira al-ḥadīth li'l-tibā[°]a, Aḥmad Bahī 'l-Dīn al-Kharbūṭī 1990, 511 pp.). Sa'īd, the founder of al-Ayyām Press and newspaper; past President of the Sudan Press Association (1957–58); member of the Sudan's National Constitution Commission (1958), and delegate to the UN, effectively retired from public life under the Numayrī regime (1969–85). In compensation, he has written a number of books, including a somewhat apologetic work in English on the 'Southern question': *The Sudan. Crossroads of Africa* (London: The Bodley Head 1965, 238 pp.) and a biography of the nationalist lawyer, Aḥmad Khayr (see bibliography below).⁸

Although Sa'īd's biography of al-Azharī is a conventional one, it is informed by a deep intimacy between author and subject; the former first met the latter in 1936.

Although its subject never became prime minister, °Uthmān Muḥammad al-Ḥasan's edited collection of the letters and other writings of the late Jamāl Muḥammad Aḥmad throws much light on Sudanese politics in the immediate independence years, and particularly on the Sudan's attempts to find a place for itself in the Afro-Arab World. *Jamāl Muḥammad Aḥmad: rasā'il wa-awraq khāṣṣa* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl 1992, 215 pp.). Jamāl Muḥammad Aḥmad (1915–85) was a Nubian born at Wadi Halfa, who after a distinguished academic career at Khartoum and Oxford, spent the rest of his life moving between the national university and the Foreign Ministry. A prolific writer, in English Aḥmad's best known work is probably his Oxford B.Litt. thesis, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press 1960, xi, 135 pp.). His Nubian background comes to expression in a volume of short stories, *Stories of Serra East* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1985, 89 pp.).⁹

Al-Ḥasan's volume, after a brief introduction, comprises

- 8 His other works are listed in the bibliography; I am unable to give full bibliographical references,
- 9 Again I have listed Jamāl Muḥammad Aḥmad's writings on the basis of al-Ḥasan (p. 27), even when I have no publication details. Dr. °Ārif Jamāl tells me that he has numerous letters of his father that he hopes to publish (personal communication).

selections of Aḥmad's letters to his family (pp. 31–74), to his friends (75–100); letters and other documents from his period as ambassador and, finally articles and lectures from his academic years. The volume is elegantly and movingly introduced by the Sudanese novelist, al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ (pp. 5–17).

Service memoirs – military and civilian

On an altogether more rollicking note are the memoirs of General (‘*amīd*’) al-Ṭāḥir Muḥyī ’l-Dīn al-Najīb, *‘Ālam al-ḍubbāt bayn al-inqilabāt wa’l-ḥarb wa’l-salām, wa’l-thalātha ‘W’ wa’l-thalātha ‘S’* (Omdurman: al-Maṭba‘a al-‘askariyya al-Sūdāniyya 1990, 216 pp.). The tone is set when the author explains that the three ‘W’s stand for ‘War, wine and women’, while the three ‘S’s stand for ‘Security, stability and sacrifice’. Al-Najīb started his military career in a Sudanese artillery battery stationed at Tripoli in North Africa in the Second World War. His book is a mixture of memoirs and general reflections, including a chapter on all the military coups between 1958 and 1985. A final chapter discusses ‘the world of the officers’, *‘ālam al-ḍubbāt*, with such sub-headings *‘ālam al-ḍubbāt wa’l-khamr*, *‘ālam al-ḍubbāt wa’l-nisā’* and so on.

A more serious work, also published by the Military Press in Omdurman, is Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Fakī, *al-Quwwāt al-musallaḥa fī ta’rīkh al-Sūdān al-ḥadīth 1935-1975* (Omdurman: al-Maṭba‘a al-‘askariyya al-Sūdāniyya n.d., c. 190 pp.). This is part history, part memoir by the former deputy Chief of Staff (*nā’ib ra’īs ḥay’at al-arkān*) between 1974 and 77. Although no date of publication is given, it must be after 1989 since the book is graced by a preface by ‘Umar al-Bashīr. General al-Fakī’s book is a relatively detailed history whose value is enhanced by the numerous documents and lists of officers, with details of their careers, which are included.

A third, relatively brief, military memoir is that of Muḥyī ’l-Dīn Aḥmad ‘Abd Allāh, *Li’l-ta’rīkh wa-min ajl al-ta’rīkh* (Omdurman: al-Maṭba‘a al-‘askariyya n.d., 94 pp.). The author, born at al-Nuhūd in Kordofan in 1923 into a military family,

gives a very lively account of his career in the Second World War and after.

A fourth military work is by airforce colonel (‘*aqīd tayyār*) Muḥammad ‘Uthmān Aḥmad, *Quwwat difā‘ al-Sūdān, dawruhā wa-āthār ishtirākiḥā fī ‘l-ḥarb al-‘ālamīyya al-thāniyya* (Omdurman: al-Maṭba‘a al-‘askariyya 1990, 214 pp.). This a scholarly well-documented history, with a detailed bibliography, of the Sudan Defence Force’s campaigns in the Second World War. The author notes that he intends to publish a further work, *Dalīl al-bāḥith al-‘askarī*.

A work that is halfway between military and civilian memoirs is Ḥasan Ṣāliḥ Bayyūmī, *Jihāz amn al-dawla: amāma maḥkamat al-ta‘rīkh: tajribat al-Sūdān fī ‘l-amn* (n.p. [Khartoum] 1993, 2nd pr., 207 pp.). The author was head of the Sudan intelligence and counter-espionage services for most of the Numayrī years and the principal architect of the 1978 ‘Qānūn jihāz amn al-dawla’, which he gives in full as an appendix (pp. 197-202). *Jihāz amn al-dawla* is not so much a memoir, but rather an essay on the Sudan’s security and intelligence needs and experiences in which the author explains such terms as ‘cover operation’ and ‘dead letter boxes’. But throughout the book there are titbits that will undoubtedly be of interest to the historian of the contemporary Sudan; for example, he discusses briefly the Sudan government’s involvement in the airlift of the Falasha from Ethiopia to Israel via the Sudan in 1980 (pp. 188-9).

A work reminiscent in tone of the best British Sudan Political Service memoirs¹⁰ is Ḥusayn Muḥammad Aḥmad Sharfī, *al-Adā‘ al-idārī fī ‘l-Sūdān (1942-1973)* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1992, 333 pp.). The author, born and educated in Omdurman, entered the civil service as a *nā‘ib ma‘mūr* in northern Kordofan in 1945, rose through the service to become governor of the Baḥr al-Ghazāl in 1964 and, later, governor of

10 Which works continue to be published, witness Donald Hawley, *Sandtracks in the Sudan*, Wilby (Norfolk): Michael Russell 1995, 160 pp. Sir Donald Hawley served for the last part of his Sudan years in the Legal Department in Khartoum and has much to say of great interest on legal and judicial matters.

Northern Province. The memoirs, evidently based on diaries and contemporary documents kept by the author and written in strict chronological sequence, offer a wealth of detail, blending, as in the best SPS memoirs, informal storytelling with serious discussion of administrative issues. The author notes also that he has also written a book, in English, on the Southern question, which if it has been published is unknown to me, and a guide to the Northern Province, *al-Murshid li'l-mudīriyya al-Shamāliyya*. It seems that the latter is unpublished; judging by the quality of the information and reflections in *al-Adā' al-idārī*, it ought to be published.

A more purely political memoir is that of the prominent Democratic Unionist Party politician, 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Khalīfa, *Min Turāthinā al-siyāsī bayn al-Kharṭūm wa'l-Qāhira, 1949-1969* (Khartoum 1992, 247 pp.).¹¹ The main focus of the memoirs is the Southern issue as seen through the eyes of the DUP; given the longstanding ties between the DUP and Egypt, al-Khalīfa has much to say on Egyptian involvement in the Southern Sudan issue.

Murtaḍā Aḥmad Ibrāhīm, *al-Wazīr al-mutamarrid. Mudhak-kirāt al-muhandis Murtaḍā Aḥmad Ibrāhīm* ('The rebellious minister. The memoirs of Engineer Murtaḍā Aḥmad Ibrāhīm', Cairo: Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Sūdāniyya 1993, 280 pp.). These are lively memoirs by a onetime minister under Numayrī and include numerous documents.

Al-Ustādh Maḥmūd Muḥammad Ṭāhā. Rā'id al-tajdīd al-dīnī fī 'l-Sūdān (Cairo: Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Sūdāniyya 1992, 141 pp.). This is a volume of essays, written essentially by admirers of the late Maḥmūd Muḥammad Ṭāhā, by Ḥaydar Ibrāhīm 'Alī, 'Abdullāhī al-Na'im, 'Alam al-Dīn 'Umar, Muḥammad Aḥmad Maḥmūd, Ṭāhā Ibrāhīm and Jörgen Rogalski.¹²

To conclude this section, I shall mention two works by the veteran journalist, Aḥmad Muḥammad Shāmūq; the first is an older work, *Dīsimbir 1955* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-ʿāṣima bi'l-Qāhira

11 The book is described as vol. 2 of the author's memoirs.

12 In the case of the last named it is a question of an Arabic *précis* of Rogalski's German MA dissertation.

1981, 122 pp.), which offers a detailed account, with a heavy emphasis on the Egyptian connexion, of the final days of the Sudan's transition to independence. The second work by Shāmūq is a sociologist's delight, *al-Shakhṣiyyāt al-Sūdāniyya al-mu'āṣira* (Khartoum: Bayt al-thaqāfa 1988, 482 pp.). This is a, mainly northern Sudanese, 'Who's Who', providing professional and personal information (family details, addresses, hobbies, and similar) for a goodly proportion of the northern Sudanese elite. For anyone interested in the contemporary Sudan, it is perhaps one of the most informative books published in recent years.¹³

Books on music and of music

A number of books on or of music—a great Sudanese passion—have been published in recent years; here I only notice those that I have in my possession. Two are older studies by the folklorist and musicologist, °Alī al-Ḍaw°. The first is an illustrated inventory in Arabic and English of Sudanese musical instruments: °Abd Allāh Muḥammad and °Alī al-Ḍaw°, *al-Ālāt al-mūsīqiyya al-taqlīdiyya fī 'l-Sūdān / Traditional Musical Instruments in Sudan* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1985, 83 pp.). The second is °Alī al-Ḍaw°, *al-Mūsīqā al-taqlīdiyya fī mujtama' al-Birtā* (Khartoum: Khartoum University 1988, 158 pp.), a detailed study of Berta music and its role in Berta society.

Two other works, although they have much to say about Sudanese music in general, are centred on institutions, in particular the famous Institute of Music, Drama and Folklore, the brain-child of Dr. °Abd al-Majīd Abū Ḥasabū, which was established in 1969.¹⁴ The first is by the well-known singer and writer Dr. al-

13 See further Heather Sharkey's article in this issue of *SAJHS*.

14 He describes its birth in his memoirs, °Abd al-Majīd Abū Ḥasabū, *Mudhākīrat °Abd al-Majīd Abī Ḥasabū*, Khartoum 1987, 256-8. A brief history of the Institute (it has had many names) since its inception until its effective demise under the present regime is given in Khalid Al-Mubarak, 'Muslim Fundamentalism and Arts. The dismantling of the Higher Institute of Music and Drama in the Sudan', in Ḥaydar Ibrāhīm °Alī (ed.), *al-Tanawwu' al-thaqāfī wa-binā' al-dawla al-waṭaniyya fī 'l-Sūdān*, Cairo: Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Sūdāniyya, 1995, 108-16. This book presents papers

Fātiḥ al-Ṭāhir, *Ānā° Umm Durmān. Ta°rīkh al-mūsīqā fī 'l-Sūdān* (Khartoum: Maktabat al-Sūdān 1993, 128 pp.). This is an attempt to write a history of Sudanese music in this century, centred on biographies of the principal singers; its value to musicologists is enhanced by its listing (pp. 125-6) of the main protagonists with their dates of their death.¹⁵ The second work is a beautifully-produced monograph, with many musical quotations and photographs of such figures as the poet °Umar al-Bannā°, son of the great poet of the Mahdiyya, Muḥammad °Umar al-Bannā° (d. 1919; see *ALA*, I, 339) and singer Khalīl Farāḥ, by Jum°a Jābir, *al-Mūsīqā al-Sūdāniyya. Ta°rīkh, turāth, huwiyya, naqd* (Khartoum: Sharikat al-Farābī n.d., 397 pp.). Both al-Ṭāhir and Jābir's books are fundamental sources for any serious academic study of Sudanese music.

Finally, Dr. al-Fātiḥ al-Ṭāhir has produced *30 Sudanese Songs Born to Live: arranged for piano and vocal* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1992, 79 pp.). As its title says, this work presents as sheet music thirty well known Sudanese songs; one problem is that it does not give the lyrics.

Histories – traditional and otherwise

°Abd al-Qādir Muḥammad °Abd al-Qādir Dawra, *Ta°rīkh mamlakat Taqalī al-islamiyya* (Khartoum: Maṭba°at al-Markaz al-islāmī al-Ifriqī 1994, 190 pp.) is a splendid example of the Muḥammad °Abd al-Raḥīm tradition of writing, a detailed compilation of oral traditions, genealogies, king-lists and the like. The author, born in al-°Abbāsiyya in 1934, is a member of the dynastic clan of Jabal Taqalī, his fifth ancestor (*jadduhu al-khāmis*) being *makk* Muḥammad b. *al-makk* Jaylī Abū Qurūn. The compilation was begun in the 1960s and the present book is based on a manuscript preserved in the National Records Office

on the theme of ethnicity in Sudanese history and politics presented at a conference in Cairo in April 1995 organised by the Centre of Sudanese Studies there.

15 A point not to be undervalued, since it is often extraordinarily difficult to find the death-date of contemporary or near-contemporary personalities.

in Khartoum. Indeed, the book has a foreword by Dr. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm, the former director of the NRO, who gives, among other reasons, the explanation that the book was published because Dr. Janet Ewald's book on Taqalī was in English and was 'very expensive'.

The book raises the interesting question of the interaction between 'Western' and indigenous scholarship. In his introduction, ʿAbd al-Qādir makes clear his familiarity with the article by the British colonial official, R.J. Elles ('The kingdom of Tegalī', *Sudan Notes and Records*, xviii, 1935, 1-36) and with the researches of Dr. Janet Ewald,¹⁶ 'who stayed with us for three years (*wa-makathat maʿanā thalātha sanawāt*)'. One wonders if the fact of Dr. Ewald's research was the spur to Sayyid Dawra's writing.

A second compilation of tribal traditions seems possibly also to have been a response to Western, in this case colonial, scholarship, namely Ṣiddīq Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Bādī, *al-Qabāʾil al-Sūdāniyya waʾl-tamāzuj al-qawmī*, I, (Omdurman: Maṭbaʿat Umm Durmān 1995, 163 pp.). This is presented as being the first of four volumes on the tribes of the Sudan, tracing where appropriate their ancestry back to Arabia, and Professor ʿAwn al-Sharīf Qāsim in his foreword deliberately draws a parallel between al-Bādī's book and Sir Harold MacMichael, *A History of the Arabs in the Sudan* (2 vols., Cambridge 1922; repr., London 1967). *Al-Qabāʾil al-Sūdāniyya* consists of a series of discrete notices of various ethnic groups or regions; the first volume is weighted towards Kordofan and contains notices (averaging about 10 pages in length) of the following groups: Ngok Dinka; Rizayqāt; Bidayriyya in Kordofan; Jawāmiʿa; Kabābīsh; Shanābla; Misīriyya; Baṭāḥīn; Ḥawāzma; Jammūʿiyya; Ḥasaniyya; Majānīn; Zaghāwa; Nuba; Daju; Kawāhla and Ḥumr.

Other works by al-Bādī are listed in the bibliography at the end of *al-Qabāʾil al-Sūdāniyya*; three that are accessible in Bergen are *Al-Shaykh al-Ṭayyib w. al-Sāʾiḥ* (n.p., n.d. [1992], 40 pp.), the hagiography of a noted shaykh (d. 1971) from near al-

16 Published as *Soldiers, Traders and Slaves: State Formation and Economic Transformation in the Greater Nile Valley 1700-1885*, Madison 1990.

Kamlīn who studied at the Badrāb centre at Umm Ḍubbān.¹⁷ The second is a study of the Mahdist *amīr* and poet, °Abd al-Qādir w. Ḥabbōba, who became involved in 1908 in a fracas with the British (rather than an organised revolt, it would seem) that led to the death of a British official and Wad Ḥabbōba's execution, *Lamahāt min ḥayāt wa-thawra wa-madā'ih °Abd al-Qādir w. Ḥabbōba* (n.p. [Khartoum] 1993, 110 pp.).¹⁸ The third is entitled *Ma°ālim wa-ā°lām* (n.p., n.d., 176 pp.) and is a fascinating pot-pourri of anecdotes, biographies, family histories and short histories of towns—p. 76 gives a brief biography, with a pedigree back to Ḥamad al-Nahlān 'Wad al-Turābī' (d. 1116/1704-5)¹⁹ of *qādī* °Abd Allāh Daf° Allāh al-Turābī, the father of Dr. Ḥasan al-Turābī.

Another work, centred on Kordofan and Darfur, appeared earlier than most of those noticed here, but I mention it here both because of its interest and 'scarcity value', Aḥmad °Abdullāhi Ādam, *Uṣūl al-Baqqāra wa'l-Dīnkā wa-qāḍiyyat Abyai* (Khartoum 1984, 236 p.). This is a mixture of oral traditions about the coming of the Baqqāra to the Abyei region, their relations with the Dinka, with an extensive historical description of the political relationship between the two groups. It thus invites comparison with some of the writings of Francis Deng, for example his *Africans of Two Worlds. The Dinka in Afro-Arab Sudan* (New Haven 1978).

Three urban studies have been published in recent years. The first is a detailed history of Ḥalfāyat al-Mulūk, his home town just north of Khartoum, by Professor °Awn al-Sharīf Qāsim: *Ḥalfāyat al-Mulūk: al-ta°rīkh wa'l-bashar* (Omdurman: Omdurman University Press 1988, 314 pp.). Superficially, the book looks like a 'genealogical history' (at the end, the book has a wonder-

17 On which community we have an anthropological study: Idris S. El Hassan, *Religion in Society, Nemeiri and the Turuq, 1972-1980*, Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1993. Despite its title, the monograph is a study of the Badrāb.

18 See further, Alexander Solon Cudsi, *Sudanese Resistance to British Rule, 1900-1920*, M.Sc. thesis, University of Khartoum 1969, 30-44.

19 The pedigree runs °Abd Allāh > Daf° Allāh > Muḥammad > al-Na°īm > al-Bashīr > al-Na°īm > °Abd al-Ḥabīb > al-Na°īm > Ḥamad al-Nahlān.

fully intricate series of genealogies that invite deconstruction), but in fact it is much more, being a kind of *événementiel* micro-history of how Ḥalfāyat al-Mulūk functioned as a community and illustrating with a wealth of detail how dynamic in terms of movement in and out its population was and is.²⁰ *Ḥalfāyat al-Mulūk* is a much more subtle production than it seems. The second urban history is an affectionate and detailed history of Kosti by a journalist and *walad al-madīna*, Naṣr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Shalaqāmī, *Kōstī: al-qīṣṣa wa'l-ta'rīkh* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1991, 241 pp.). Despite a somewhat half-hearted attempt to give Kosti a longer historical pedigree (that is, back to the Romans), the author honestly gives credit to the town's true founder, the Greek trader Kosti (or Kostas), of whom there is an inimitable portrait, a kind of *ṣūra rūhiyya*, on p. 31.

The third urban history comes from the south, namely Stefano Santandrea, *A Popular History of Wau from its foundation to about 1940* (Khartoum: Encounter 1989, Church Memoirs, 1, 200 pp.). This is a meticulous history, the work of a Catholic missionary who has over the years made an extraordinary contribution to the ethnography of the Baḥr al-Ghazāl; like Shalaqāmī's book on Kosti, it is enriched with many fascinating photographs. In fact, the title is misleading in that the book is in effect two works; pp. 1-114 constitute a 'popular' history of Wau—Fr. Santandrea calls it thus because, 'First, it is concerned almost exclusively with people. Secondly, it lacks, on the whole, the backing of official statistics and documentation'. Among the many gems in this section is Santandrea's account of Bishop Stoppani and Fr. Giorgetti's musical experiments in combining already in 1913 Zande and Western music in 'The Brass Band of the Catholic Mission'—an early precursor of the 'World Music' scene. The second part of the book tells the story of the various Catholic mission schools in and around Wau.

Moving from Wau to the eastern Sudan, two books by the late Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Ḍirār (1892-1972) of Sawākin and some-

20 Professor °Awn al-Sharīf Qāsim is presently working on a multi-volume encyclopedia of ethnic groups and place-names of the northern Sudan (personal communication).

time *ʿumda* of the *ʿAjilāb* (a section of the *Milḥitkināb*) and employee of the Eastern Telegraph Company, make a major contribution to our knowledge of the eastern Sudan. Both have been published *a cura* the author's son, Ḍirār Ṣāliḥ Ḍirār.²¹ The first is *Taʿrīkh Sawākin wa'l-Baḥr al-Aḥmar* (Khartoum: Dār al-Sūdāniyya li'l-kutub 1991, 277 pp.), based on the travel literature, archival sources, local documents and oral tradition. It concludes by quoting some verses on his journey from Berber to Sawākin written by an interesting figure of the nineteenth century, the poet Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Farrāsh (d. c. 1883)—his *dīwān* of essentially secular poetry, *Dīwān al-Farrāsh, shāʿir Barbar*, has recently been published (Khartoum: al-Dār al-Sūdāniyya li'l-kutub n.d., 103 pp.).²² The second book is *Taʿrīkh qabāʾil al-Ḥabāb wa'l-Hamāsīn bi'l-Sūdān wa-Iritriyā* (Khartoum: Dār al-Sūdāniyya li'l-kutub 1991, 208 pp.). Like its companion volume on Sawākin, it is very strong on local sources. For other works by Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Ḍirār, see the bibliography at end. Sayyid Ḍirār seems to have written works on virtually all the Beja groups, but seemingly they remain unpublished. An older book, published while the author was still alive, is his *Amīr al-sharq: ʿUthmān Diqna* (Khartoum: al-Dār al-Sūdāniyya li'l-kutub n.d. [c. 1970], 170 pp.).

With regard to the nineteenth century especially, it may be useful to draw attention to a reprint series from Egypt, *Ṣafaḥāt min taʿrīkh Miṣr*, published by Maktabat Madbūlī (6 Ṭalāʿat Ḥarb Square, Cairo); the series comprises reprints of works in Arabic commissioned by King Fuʿād in the 1930s. Two are particularly relevant to the Sudan; the first is *al-Riḥla al-ūlā li'l-baḥth ʿān yanābīʿ al-baḥr al-abyaḍ* (Cairo: Mk. Madbūlī 1993, *Ṣafaḥāt min taʿrīkh Miṣr*, no. 21, 93 pp.), being an Arabic translation from the Turkish by Muḥammad Masʿūd of the diary or logbook of Ṣalīm Qabūdān's first journey up the White Nile in 1839-40. The second reprint is the fundamental work of Prince ʿUmar

21 Himself the author of a general history of the modern Sudan, *Taʿrīkh al-Sūdān al-ḥadīth*, Beirut: Dār maktabat al-ḥayāh 1965.

22 See further ALA, I, 88.

Ṭusūn,²³ *al-Jaysh al-Miṣrī al-barri wa'l-baḥrī* (Cairo: Mk. Madbulī 1990, *Ṣafaḥāt min ta'riḥ Miṣr*, no. 3, 249 pp. with numerous separately paginated appendices). *Al-Jaysh al-Miṣrī* gives much detail on the Egyptian army in the Sudan, including the exact location and size of its garrisons there. Hopefully, Prince Ṭusūn's other works on Egyptian military history will also be reprinted.

A second Egyptian series, put out by the *Markaz wathā'iq wa-ta'riḥ Miṣr al-mu'āṣir*, has produced three works on the Sudan. The first, by Nassīm Maqqār, *Miṣr wa-binā' al-Sūdān al-ḥadīth* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-ʿamma li'l-kitāb 1993, 282 pp.) offers what appears to be a fairly conventional account of Egypt's *mission civilisatrice* in the Sudan,²⁴ underlined by a front-cover picture of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha at his sternest and a back-page cover of a very Sudanese 'dervish' in a multi-coloured *jubba*. More valuable in the same series are two volumes by Yawāqīm Rizq Marqūṣ, *al-Sūdān fī 'l-barlamān al-Miṣrī (1924-1936)* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-ʿamma li'l-kitāb 1989, 178 pp.) and *al-Sūdān fī 'l-barlamān al-Miṣrī (1936-1951)* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-ʿamma li'l-kitāb 1993, 277 pp.). These contain, as their titles imply, extensive documentation and quotation from the records of debates in the Egyptian parliament on Sudanese questions.

A final Egyptian publication that contains much on the Sudan are the memoirs of ʿAbbās Ḥilmī (1874-1944), otherwise the Khedive ʿAbbās Ḥilmī II (Khedive 1892-1914), *ʿAhdī. Mudhakirāt ʿAbbās Ḥilmī al-thāni, khidīw Miṣr al-akhīr* (translated from the original Turkish by Jalāl Yaḥyā, Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq 1993, 312 pp.). ʿAbbās Ḥilmī came into open conflict with the British over the Sudan on several occasions; his memoirs not only describe these episodes from his perspective, but also reproduce documents, both in Arabic and French as well as photographs of the greatest interest.

23 On whose life and writings, see Richard Hill, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Sudan*, London 1967, 365,

24 On the historiographical conflict between Egypt and the Sudan, see Gabriel Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley*, London 1992.

Two veteran Sudanese scholars have recently produced major studies. I shall not discuss here Dr. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm's recent additions to his Mahdist corpus,²⁵ but Abū Salīm has just published vol. 1 of an edition of *qāḍī* °Abd Allāh Aḥmad Yūsuf, *al-Nakhīl* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1995, 349 pp.). *Qāḍī* °Abd Allāh (b. c. 1889; d. 1960s), a Rubāṭābī from Mūqrāt Island and a Tijānī, served as a judge in various parts of the Sudan during the Condominium. Dr. Abū Salīm provides an interesting reconstruction of the *qāḍī*'s life and his family connections which link up with the Sufi tradition of Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1837) through the latter's Sudanese student, Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (d. 1874). *Al-Nakhīl* itself, edited by Abū Salīm from what is obviously an enormous *majmū*'a of material now preserved at the National Records Office in Khartoum (more volumes are, hopefully, to follow) defies classification, being a miscellany of facts, stories, poems, etymologies, *ḥadīths*, and similar items about the date palm and its fruit. The compilation ranges from Andalusia to the Tubu of northern Chad and is a fascinating work to dip into.

Al-Ṭayyib Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib, the folklorist, has produced a major study of the *khalwa* or Qur'ān school in northern Sudanese society, *al-Masīd* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press 1991, 375 pp.). Al-Ṭayyib has produced an immense source-book, organised regionally, on the *masīd* or *khalwa*, reproducing documents that he has found in the course of his researches. One chapter (pp. 248-56) presents brief biographies of women teachers. At the end, he ventures to make some comparisons between the *khalwa* tradition in the Sudan with other Arab countries, especially the Yemen.

Finally, an outstanding example of northern Sudanese revisionist historiography is Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Nuqūd, *°Alāqat al-riqq fi 'l-mujtama' al-Sūdānī* (Cairo: Dār al-thaqāfa al-jadīda; distributed by the Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Sūdāniyya 1995, 444 pp.).²⁶ This is a study by the secretary-general of the Sudanese Commu-

25 See my brief note in *MESA Bulletin*, 29, 1995, 39.

26 Sayyid Nuqūd has recently published a companion volume, *°Alāqat al-arḍ fi 'l-Sūdān*, Cairo 1995—this I have not yet seen.

nist Party of slavery, in a kind of *mentalité* style, within northern Sudanese society. This is an original and important study enriched by numerous facsimiles of documents concerning slavery, especially from the Mahdist period. There must be few documents in the National Records Office from the Mahdist and Condominium periods concerning slavery that Sayyid Nuqūd has not reproduced. The book has its own message, namely that northern Sudanese need to understand the suffering they have inflicted on their fellow Sudanese as part of any future reconciliation.

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