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THE SUDAN-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY:  
A STUDY IN POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

T.H. AL-NUR

A B S T R A C T

The Sudan-Ethiopia boundary stretches from Ras Kassar on the Red Sea to Lake Rudolf which forms the tripoint of the Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya boundaries. The 2,220 km long boundary was established between 1901-1909 by a series of Anglo-Italian treaties. Evidence from these treaties indicates that the boundary was delimited as Egypt's eastern border rather than that of the Sudan. The main objective of the delineators was to secure the Egyptian influence on the Upper Nile. The Sudan as an Independent political entity was not seriously considered in the boundary negotiations and little heed was taken as regards the interests of some border peoples. Thus, after its Independence the Sudan has to face several boundary problems; such problems are at present the core of the Ethiopian-Sudanese relations.

This thesis examines the evolution of the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary from a geographical viewpoint. However, other factors which have affected its location and function are also considered. In the Introduction the place of the political boundaries in geographical studies is mentioned and the varied wealth of literature on boundaries is reviewed and the geographical approach distinguished.

Chapter One is an appreciation of the physique of the area through which the boundary passes and Chapter Two gives a background to the human, cultural and tribal frontiers within the existing border zone. In Chapter Three the main developments and changes in the position of frontiers between the two countries from the earliest period to the present century is discussed. The primary territorial

evolution of the political boundary is critically examined in Chapter Four and the final episode of the boundary delimitation is described in Chapter Five. Chapter Six is a geographical analysis of the boundary as regards to the physical and human landscape of the border zone. In Chapters Seven and Eight the boundary functions are discussed in detail as regards to its effects on settlement, trade (both legal and illegal), population and population movement. Chapter Nine examines the causes, effects and results of the contemporary border problems between the Sudan and Ethiopia and Chapter Ten gives a comprehensive conclusion to the whole thesis and suggests some practical steps to minimize the existing border problems.

Durham, 1971

'THE SUDAN-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY:  
A STUDY IN POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY'

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The Graduate Society

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED  
IN THIS WORK

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- |     |                  |   |
|-----|------------------|---|
| 1.  | A.A.A.G.         | Annals of the Association of American Geographers |
| 2.  | B.F.O.S.P.       | British and Foreign Office State Papers           |
| 3.  | D.D.F.           | Documents Diplomatiques Français                  |
| 4.  | E.L.F.           | Eritrean Liberation Front                         |
| 5.  | F.A.O.           | Food and Agricultural Organization                |
| 6.  | F.O.             | Foreign Office                                    |
| 7.  | F.O. Conf. Print | Foreign Office Confidential Print                 |
| 8.  | F.P.C.S.         | First Population Census of the Sudan              |
| 9.  | I.B.G.           | Institute of British Geographers                  |
| 10. | J.A.H.           | Journal of African History                        |
| 11. | J.B.C.E.         | Joint Boundary Commission for Experts             |
| 12. | J.C.C.M.         | Joint Consultive Committee of Ministers           |
| 13. | M.I.             | Ministry of the Interior                          |
| 14. | O.A.U.           | Organization of African Unity                     |
| 15. | S.G.             | Sudan Government                                  |
| 16. | S.I.R.           | Sudan Intelligence Reports                        |
| 17. | S.N.R.           | Sudan Notes and Records                           |
| 18. | S.R.U.           | Sudan Research Unit                               |
| 19. | S.S.L.F.         | Southern Sudan Liberation Front                   |
| 20. | U.A.R.           | United Arab Republic                              |
| 21. | U.K.T.S.         | United Kingdom Treaty Series                      |
| 22. | U.N.H.C.R.       | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees     |

A GLOSSARY OF ARABIC AND OTHER  
NON-ENGLISH WORDS USED IN THE WORK

1.	Ansar	The followers of the Mahdi (see No.24)
2.	Baggara	Cattlemen
3.	Baraka	Supernatural power
4.	Dar	Tribal homeland
5.	Deglal	The chief of the Beni Amer tribe
6.	Doleb	<u>Borassus aethiopicum</u> , the fan palm
7.	Dom	<u>Hyphaene thembaica</u> , the branching palm
8.	Durra	<u>Sorghum vulgre</u> , millet
9.	Fellata	Fullani tribe, hence all the tribes of West African origin in the Sudan
10.	Gabael Ukhra	Other tribes
11.	Gellaba	Trading class from northern Sudan in less arabized parts of the country
12.	Qoz	Sand dune, or higher place
13.	Hariq	Fire (Grass fire)
14.	Hegleg	<u>Balanites aegytiaca</u> , a tree with straight green spines
15.	Inzar	Ultimatum or warning
16.	Jebel	A hill or a mountain
17.	Jihad	Holy war
18.	Khaliefa	The follower, hence Abdu alla et Taishi the follower of the Mahdi (see No. 24)
19.	Khalwa	Native village vernacular school
20.	Khatmia	A religious sect in the Sudan
21.	Khedive	Viceroy
22.	Khor	A short lived water course.
23.	Koran	Muslim holy book
24.	Mahdi	A Sudanese religious leader in the period from 1881-1885
25.	Mahdia	The period from 1881-1898, or from 1885-1898

- |     |               |  |
|-----|---------------|--|
| 26. | Majathieb     | A religious sect in the Sudan  |
| 27. | Malakia       | Non-military   |
| 28. | Mangil        | A Funj title for territorial prince  |
| 29. | Mek           | A chief or ruler of a small political unit   |
| 30. | Mutwahisheen  | Wild and woolly  |
| 31. | Negus         | Ethiopian word for King  |
| 32. | Nazir         | A tribal chief   |
| 33. | Piaster (pt.) | A hundredth of the Sudanese pound (L.S.)   |
| 34. | Sheikh        | A village headman or a leader of a group of nomads in Arabized parts of Sudan  |
| 35. | Shifta        | Band of brigands   |
| 36. | Siretudjar    | Chief merchant   |
| 37. | Sudd          | Obstruction, hence the floating vegetation which may obstruct navigation on the Upper Nile or the swamp regions          |
| 38. | Suk           | Market   |
| 39. | Talih         | <u>Acacia Seyal</u> , a red-breached small tree  |
| 40. | Tarfa         | <u>Tamarix articulata</u> , a dominant vegetation in the Gash area   |
| 41. | Ummah         | Nation (national party in the Sudan)   |
| 42. | Ushar         | <u>Calotropis Procera</u> , the dead Sea apple, a common bush with milky juice and large fruit containing a silky floss. |
| 43. | Wadi          | A river with a sandy bed which flows intermittently in the rainy season  |
| 44. | Woyna Dega    | Temperate lands of plateau level in Ethiopia   |

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

### DEFINITIONS

Any student of political geography must have come across the difficulty over the English language as regards the precise definitions of certain terms and expressions such as frontier, boundary, border, allocation, delimitation and demarcation. The boundary negotiators and commissioners, in the past, used the terms boundary, frontier and border as synonyms to describe an imaginary line on the ground which separates one area or territory from another. A number of scholars, in various fields of boundary studies, have also used the term boundary as a synonym with frontier.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, some writers attempted to make distinctions between a boundary, taken to be a line, and a frontier, which is held to be a zone.<sup>2</sup> Although this distinction is generally accepted among the geographers, it is almost completely rejected among the international lawyers on the grounds that both terms have originally been used in the treaties and agreements as synonyms.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the two expressions delimitation and demarcation, which describe certain stages in the boundary evolution, have been used by the boundary makers as interchangeable. Thus, to avoid such ambiguity, it is necessary to explain certain terms and expressions as used in this dissertation.

Throughout this work a frontier or a frontier zone is used as a synonym with a border or a border zone to describe the area at the recognized limits of the state. A boundary describes the imaginary line which is used to separate two areas. Since a boundary could be international, that is separating two state areas, or internal, that

is separating two areas within one state, the term political boundary or international boundary is used to describe the line at which interstate functions are applied.

The expression allocation is used to describe the primary territorial division of lands; delimitation is used to describe the theoretical representation of the boundary in agreements and maps; and demarcation is used to denote the process of marking the boundary on the ground. The boundary is normally demarcated by physical features such as mountain tops, rivers and watersheds. Sometimes other signs like iron pipes, piles of stones and tree trunks are used to make the boundary more precise.

In several parts of this work such terms as 'liberation front', 'freedom fighter', 'outlaw' and 'national rebel', are used between inverted commas to describe the separatist groups in Sudan and Ethiopia. Generally speaking, the first two terms are what the separatist groups would like to call themselves, the third is the name given to them by the Government authorities and the last is a description convenient for other observers.

The expression Eritrea is used throughout this study in its geographical denotation to describe the northern province of Ethiopia. The writer wishes to indicate clearly that the term is not used in its political sense except where reference is made to it in the period prior to 1962. However, the claim of the Eritrean 'national rebels' to an Eritrean state is mentioned in various parts of the thesis.

OTHER WORKS ON BOUNDARIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE  
TO GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES

Since the last decade of the nineteenth century there have been at least a few hundred books and papers published on various fields of the boundary and frontier studies, ranging from the extreme views of Ratzel (1895), which consider the state as a living organism and the boundary as the skin of the living state,<sup>4</sup> to the ideas of Prescott (1965), that regard the boundary as an element of the landscape which marks either the de facto or the de jure limits of the political sovereignty of a state.<sup>5</sup>

The period between the Conference of Berlin (1885) and the First Great War, was a time of considerable boundary making. During this time writers such as Ratzel (1895), Russel (1903), Hill (1906), Curzon (1907) and Geddes (1908) had produced a considerable amount of literature dealing with classification of frontiers and boundaries. Their main interest was on matters of arranging boundaries into 'good' and 'bad' classes from a military point of view. To them, the best boundaries were those which followed effective physical barriers such as mountain ranges, rivers and marshes.

During and just after the First World War the search for the best type of boundary continued to dominate the literature on frontiers and boundaries but with considerable emphasis on the other functions of the boundary. Naturally, the search for the causes of conflicts and frictions between states was the main interest of the scholars in that era. Lyde, in 1915, believed that the best boundaries would be those which would help 'international intercourse' and promote the state's 'maximum homogeneity'.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, Holdich, in 1916, propounded that "boundaries must be barriers" that, in the first place, "they must

be geographical", and where they could only be artificial, then they must be as "strong as military device can make them".<sup>7</sup> Fawcett, in 1918, also paid no respect to the non-geographical boundaries. He believed that the main functions of boundaries were to provide protection to the state so that it could maintain the necessary social and defence services while keeping contacts with the neighbouring states.<sup>8</sup>

It appears that the greatest part of the literature, on general works on boundaries and frontiers, has been produced in the period between the two world wars and the decade that followed the Second Great War. A considerable part of this literature has been written by German writers. For example, Sieger in 1925, Vogel in 1926, Haushofer in 1927, Maull in 1928, and Durach in 1930. A major theme in the studies of the German writers was that "the boundary determined the position and territory of the state, which in turn determined its strength".<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the French writers such as Adami in 1927, and Lapradelle in 1928, studied boundaries and border lands as an aspect of international law. Another group of scholars made considerable attempts to study the problems of 'natural' and 'artificial' boundaries with more emphasis on the functions of boundaries. From this group emerged the so-called 'American School' which have made a considerable contribution to political geography as a whole and the boundary studies in particular. Among others, this group includes Hartshorne, Boggs, Jones and Whittlessey. This group made a significant deviation from the traditional trend of producing general classificatory works on boundaries and frontiers, to a new one of studying particular boundaries, or even parts of boundaries, in much detail. Boggs, in 1902, pointed out that the functions of boundaries change over time.<sup>10</sup> Hartshorne, in 1936, proposed to classify boundaries not according to

physical type but according to their relationship with the cultural landscape at the time of their establishment.<sup>11</sup> Jones, in 1945, noted that, "the process of boundary-making is smoothed by considering each boundary as a special case with individuality more pronounced than resemblance to a theoretical type".<sup>12</sup>

Other scholars in the last twenty years or so (for example Fischer, Alexander, Hampert, Kirstof, Lamb, Barbour, Prescott, Rawlings and Minghi) have studied boundaries and frontiers as elements of landscape which define the limits of the state political sovereignty. They studied the relationship between the boundary and various geographical elements without ignoring the boundary's influence on, for example, society, economy and politics. During this period the political geographers have largely avoided the classification of boundaries from the point of their strength and weakness. Instead, much concentration was made on works aimed at the study of specific boundaries in various parts of the world. One point was clearly realized, "that each boundary is almost unique and therefore many generalizations are of doubtful validity".<sup>13</sup>

Minghi in his paper on 'Boundary Studies in Political Geography'<sup>14</sup> in 1963 distinguished eight categories of boundary studies:

1. Studies of disputed areas
2. Studies of the effect of boundary changes
3. Studies of the evolution of boundary changes
4. Studies of boundary delimitation and demarcation
5. Studies of enclaves and tiny states
6. Studies of offshore boundaries
7. Studies of boundaries in dispute over natural resources
8. Studies of internal boundaries

Minghi made no mention of any studies devoted to the effects of boundaries on the society, culture, economy and politics of the frontier zones. Thus future students of international boundaries in various fields of scholarships might well pay more attention to the study of the functions of the boundaries rather than their position. This is not only because such studies have, so far, been comparatively ignored, but also because, in the writer's view, the coming decades will witness a considerable move towards the achievement of the idea of 'super states'. Even today some 'super states', though still in their embryo stages, are showing themselves. For example, in the Middle East (Sudan, Egypt, Libya and Syria), in Western Europe (the Common Market countries) and in the Scandinavian states. Other examples could be found in Eastern Europe, East Africa and in the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania). It would not be surprising to see Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey and Pakistan one day a part of one 'super state'. The Central American states of Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador, which have already been grouped into a 'common market' since 1960 also might well attempt to form a 'super state'. Within the transitional period, between the present stage of 'national states' and the realization of the coming 'super states', the international boundaries and their problems would be more concerned with the matters of boundary status and function rather than its position.

#### OTHER WORKS ON THE SUDAN BOUNDARIES AND THE REASONS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Some aspects of the Sudan boundaries are briefly mentioned in a considerable number of books and papers on the historical background of the Sudan. These publications hardly discuss the geographical background of the boundaries. There are, however, three papers on the

Sudan-Ethiopia boundary, which is the subject of this study. All of them discuss the impact of the Anglo-Ethiopian boundary treaty of 1902.<sup>15</sup> Dye, in 1903, writing on 'La delimitation de l'Ethiopie', discussed the importance of the above-mentioned treaty as he saw it at that time. This paper was written at a time when competition between France and Britain in North-east Africa was at its highest, and the writer was expressing the French point of view in the Agreement. Thus he did not fail to conclude:

"Tout le traité semble dominé par cette préoccupation de placer entre des mains anglaises ces grands travaux publics qui seront exécutés en pleine Ethiopie au grand profit des intérêts de l'empire britannique. C'est donc, en fait, une intervention très grave d'une puissance étrangère dans certaines régions de l'empire du Négus..."<sup>16</sup>

Allard, another French writer, discussed the same points raised by Dye and argued that the English and the Italian influences in Ethiopia were growing at the expense of French influence.<sup>17</sup>

Some sixty years later Marcus, in his paper on 'The Anglo-Ethiopian Boundary Treaty of May 1902',<sup>18</sup> examined the historical background of the boundary. His main interest was in the political relations between the Sudan Government and the Emperor of Ethiopia at the time when the boundary agreement was concluded.

Thus, this thesis could be held to be the first attempt to provide a comprehensive, objective study of the eight international boundaries of the Sudan. The study examines the boundary between Ethiopia and the Sudan from a geographical point of view, but it does not ignore the non-geographic factors involved in the boundary evolution

and its influence on facts of human and national life. Such a study could be useful in two ways: firstly, it illustrates the impact of a boundary on various aspects of the cultural and economic landscape of the border zone. Secondly it offers a better understanding to the current problems of the boundary under consideration and its effects on the wider relations between the two adjacent countries. In other words, the study will endeavour to answer the following questions which are regarded to be the four major considerations in the study of boundaries:<sup>19</sup>

- i - Where does the boundary occur?
- ii - When, and under what circumstances, did it take shape?
- iii - What influenced its location?
- iv - How does it affect the land?

In addition to these, an attempt is made in this study to answer three other questions which are relevant to the boundary under study: Why is there a boundary dispute between the Sudan and Ethiopia? How does this dispute affect the relations between the two countries? and, How could it be solved?

The problem of the boundary under consideration can not be fully appreciated and certainly can not be reasonably solved without the adequate knowledge and understanding of the physical and human factors underlying them. Firsthand knowledge of the boundary and full acquaintance with the geographical background of the border zone is essential in any comprehensive study of boundary problems.

The writer's first acquaintance with the problems of the Sudan political boundaries was when he joined the Secretariat of the Department of International Boundaries, Ministry of the Interior of the Sudan, in

April, 1967, The Department of International Boundaries was itself started in that year as a result of continuous border disputes between the Sudan and its neighbouring countries. Naturally, the present writer has since then been involved in the practical aspects of a number of such problems. It was during this period that the writer noticed the indifference of the politicians and the administrators in the Sudan to the geographical background of the boundary problems.

Much of this thesis is based primarily on firsthand experience with the area under consideration. In the period between June, 1967 and September, 1968 the writer visited many parts of the boundary under question and collected information and materials from the Sudan side of the boundary. However, lack of security along large stretches of the area through which the boundary passes, had considerable limiting effects on the number of sites to be visited. The southern part of the boundary was dangerous because of the activities of the Southern Sudan 'national rebels' and the middle part was virtually a shifra-land. The practically innumerable languages spoken by the different border tribes was another, but a less significant, difficulty which was overcome by the help of tribal chiefs who could understand Arabic.

Part of the field work was done for the Department of International Boundaries by officials of other Governmental departments. For more up to date material, several lists of questions were sent to customs, police and local Government officers and answers were received.

The writer has made use of the Sudan Government documents in the Ministry of the Interior and other Ministries. A number of these documents, classified as confidential and being less than thirty years old, are not ordinarily accessible to scholars. The writer was, how-

ever, fortunate in having access to them as an Official and in being authorized to consult them as a source for this study.

As there is no significant published material on the problems of the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary, it was perhaps unfortunate that the work on this thesis started in a time when the relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia were, and still are, at their lowest, with frequent outbreaks of hostilities, on the problems of boundaries, and other matters of political differences. Under such conditions the search for unpublished material was bound to come against considerable difficulties. In the first place, the writer, as a Sudanese citizen and being in the Sudan Government service, was not able to visit any sites on the Ethiopian side of the boundary for the purpose of field work. Although two Ethiopian frontier towns (Tasseni and Mattema) were visited, no considerable use was made of these visits because any open attempt to seek information on the boundary problems would have aroused the suspicion of the Ethiopians. In spite of this, the present work has been met with relatively fewer difficulties than the writer had anticipated at the start of the study, and a considerable amount of the information required has been collected. For information regarding the Ethiopian side of the boundary, the writer had to depend on the reports of friends in the Sudan diplomatic and consular service, the official reports of the Ethiopian Government and the help of Sudanese administrative officers in Kassala and Upper Nile Provinces. As to the conditions inside Ethiopia, near the boundary, the writer has received help from the tribal chiefs on the Sudan side of the border who frequently cross the political boundary to Ethiopia. Important information was also collected from the Eritrean refugees in the Sudan. Sudanese administrators and police officers, working near the Sudan-Ethiopia frontiers, checked a number of facts received from other sources.

One rather irritating problem regarding the geography of the border zone under question is that much of the physical features along the boundary have more than one name. On the other hand, some other features, such as small khors, have no names at all, while there are other cases where one stream has several names applied in different sections of its course. For example, the river, generally known in the Sudan as the Gash, rises at an altitude of about 2000 metres in the Hamasen plateau in Eritrea and flows westwards to the Sudan. Its lower course lies in the plains of Kassala Province. Its upper course, near its source, is called Mareb, its middle section is known as Sona, and it only assumes the name Gash in its lower course. Another river, Baraka, has several names, Mai, Shokonte, Ferfer, and takes the name of Baraka from the vicinity of the political boundary.

Throughout this study the names of the geographical features used are those generally accepted among the border people. Where two names are equally used by the local people, both names are given, usually the less used is in brackets.

The thesis is divided into ten chapters. Chapter One gives a brief account of the Sudan as an entity as well as a general appreciation of the physical geography of the area through which the boundary under consideration passes. Its position, geological structure, climate, relief, drainage, river systems, soils and vegetation are described and the effect of such physical factors on the cultural and human geography is considered.

Chapter Two examines the cultural, human and tribal frontiers of the border region under study with the objective of understanding the characteristics of the different, and often conflicting, attitudes

represented within it. Three main cultural groups are distinguished along this frontier zone. Hamites in the north, Nilotes and Quasi-Masai tribes in the south and, in between these groups, there is an area of cultural no-man's land. Within these main cultural groups there are about twenty tribes and virtually innumerable groups of sub-tribal communities, of which only the largest and the most distinctive tribes are dealt with in this thesis.

Chapter Three considers the pre-boundary frontiers and political units in the region, now between the present day Sudan and Ethiopia, from the early times to the end of the last century when the first territorial divisions were made. It examines the nature and extent of frontiers in four periods: between Abyssinia and Meroe (?-700 A.D.); between the Funj Kingdom of Sennar and Abyssinia (1504-1821); between the western frontiers of Abyssinia and the southern frontiers of Egypt's 'African Empire' in the nineteenth century (1821-1885); between the Mahdist state in the Sudan and Abyssinia (1885-1898).

Chapter Four discusses the delimitation of primary territorial boundaries and the partition of north-east Africa, from 1891-1902, by various European powers as well as the Khedive of Egypt and the Negus of Abyssinia into their respective 'spheres of influence' or areas of potential expansion.

Chapter Five assesses in detail the territorial evolution of the existing boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia with regard to its allocation, delimitation and demarcation.

Chapter Six gives an analysis of the political boundary as described in Chapter Five, from a geographical point of view. It critically examines the various types of boundary used and discusses

the relationship between the imaginary line of demarcation and tribal distribution in the border zone. The relationship between the political boundary and the distribution of population is also mentioned.

Chapters Seven and Eight deal with the effect of the political boundary on the border zone. Chapter Seven deals with the effect of political boundary on settlements, population and population movement, whilst the impact of political boundary on smuggling, pattern of trade and trade routes between the two adjacent countries is examined in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Nine examines the causes, effect and result of the present boundary disputes between the Sudan and Ethiopia, and the last chapter gives a comprehensive conclusion to the study. A special stress is made on the necessity of solving the existing border problems between the Sudan and Ethiopia through the preservation and respect of the status quo on the boundary as found at the time of Independence. However, the validity and effectiveness of introducing slight changes in the present position and major changes in the functions of the political boundary is mentioned and some practical suggestions are made in this direction.

C H A P T E R   O N E

THE PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE BORDER ZONE

C H A P T E R   O N E

THE PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE BORDER ZONE

The Republic of the Sudan<sup>1</sup> is more a geographical unit than most of the new African states since it is roughly coterminous with the Nile valley below the Ethiopian escarpment between north, latitudes 3° and 22°, and east, longitudes 22° and 38°30'. With an area of 2,506,000 square kilometres it is the largest country in Africa. In contrast to the general pattern of the African countries which is largely influenced by the distribution of physical features, so that one finds elongated political units lying parallel to the coast such as the Somali Republic and Mozambique, and landlocked empty states surrounded by deserts, as the case of Chad and the Republic of Central Africa, the Sudan is neither an elongated nor a landlocked state. It has a wide sea front communicating with the outside world. But like most African countries the Sudan, as a whole, lies within tropical influences. Much of it is too far removed from the ocean to enjoy sea breezes; and it has less than 1,500 metres above sea level, consequently it has a generally hot climate, mean annual temperature of 80°F being recorded in January and the highest of 94° in June. However, it is rather unique among the African countries in its wide range of geographical regions. Starting from the northern zone which runs roughly from the southern frontiers of Egypt at north latitude 22° through some 560 kilometres, one just encounters a total desert where life is almost entirely confined to the banks of the Nile. This zone experiences a cool dry winter of four months duration, and a very hot dry summer for the rest of the year. To the south of this desert zone, there is the central region of the Sudan which, in fact, includes western Sudan and some parts of the

southern Sudan provinces. This region extends about 1,000 kilometres between north latitudes  $19^{\circ}$  and  $9^{\circ}$  and experiences a summer rainfall which results in a well marked dual dependence on the Nile and rain waters.

In the southern region of the Sudan, which extends some 560 kilometres from Malakal town at north latitude  $9^{\circ}$  to the northern frontiers of Uganda and Congo, there is an equatorial type of climate especially in the extreme south. In contrast to the northern zone, this region experiences heavy rains which last for six months.

The Sudan is bounded on the north by Egypt and Libya and on the north-east by the Red Sea. Ethiopia lies on its east whilst Kenya, Uganda and Congo are on its south. On the west it is bounded by the Republic of Central Africa and Chad.

The northern boundary runs straight across the Nubian desert from the Red Sea to Jebel Uweinat and the southern boundary runs mostly through Equatorial Africa from Lake Rudolf, cutting across the Nile at Nimule to the Upper Ubangi following the watershed between the Nile and the Congo. In the western Sudan the boundary does not follow such remarkable physical features.

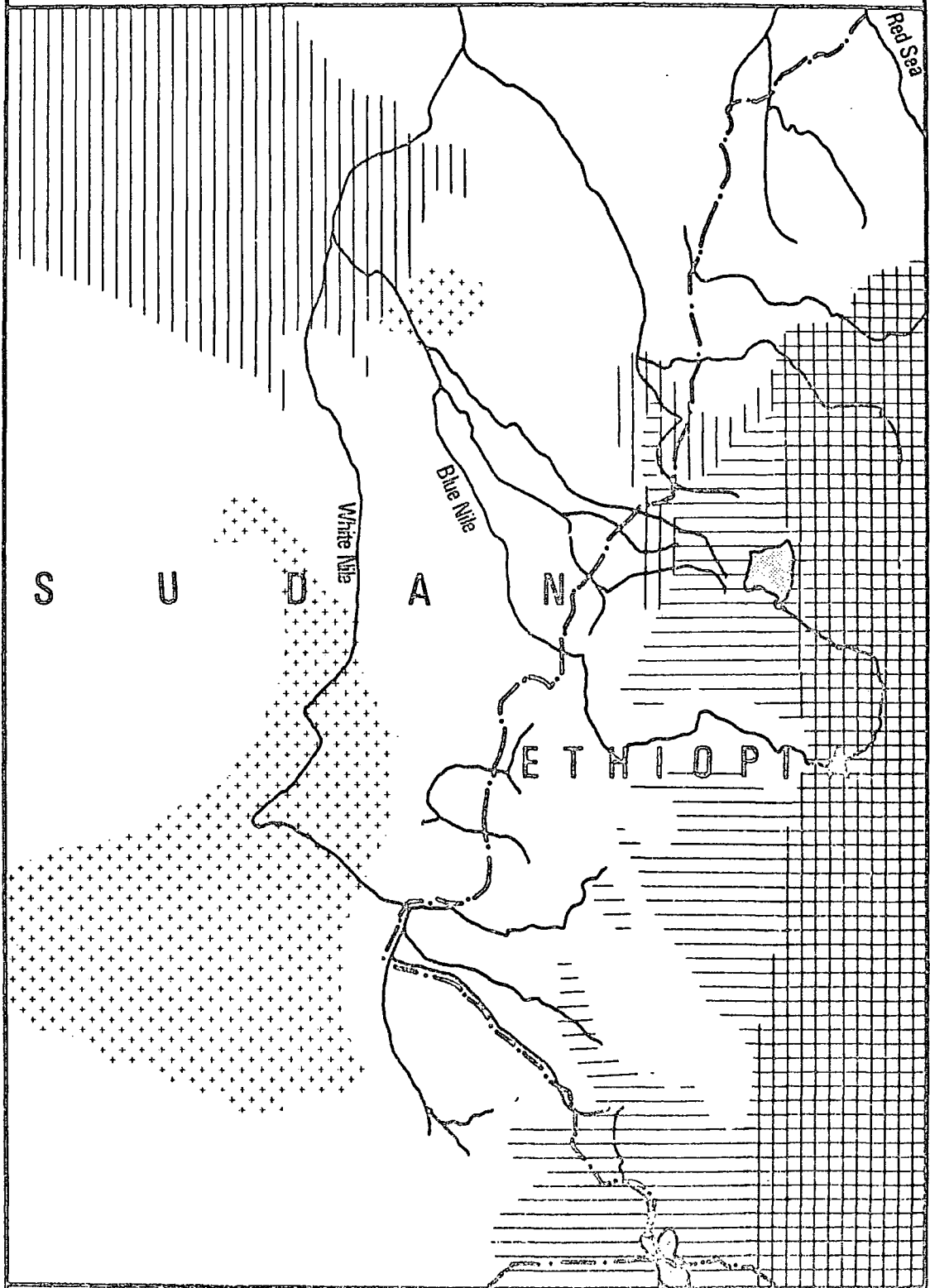
#### THE SUDAN-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY

The Sudan eastern boundary, which, for the purpose of this study is particularly important, is generally, though not entirely, coincident with the western edge of the Ethiopian plateau. The Blue Nile, the Atbara, the Setit and the Sobat cut across the boundary and massifs of Ethiopian mountains project into the Sudan.

The boundary extends from Ras Kassar (a small village on the Red Sea coast to the south of Suakin) to Lake Rudolf covering a distance of 2,220 kilometres. It was established at the end of the last century, but for most of its length it cuts across tribal and ethnic groups since it results from historical and political circumstances rather than from facts of physical and human geography. Consequently, the boundary divides the Beni Amer tribe in Eritrea, the Annuak and the Nuer in the Baro Salient, and further south to the west of Lake Rudolf it runs across the lines of seasonal grazing ground previously shared by the Topotha tribe of the Sudan, the Turkana of Kenya and the Nyangatom of Ethiopia. So came into existence an area called the Ellemi Triangle, a very poor region but always potentially effective as an irritant to international relations between the Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya.

The physiography of the area under consideration has three highly important effects upon the political geography of this boundary. Firstly, the Ethiopian mountains and plateaux and the Sudan swamps and marshes have consistently offered considerable obstruction to movement from east to west, while the deep valleys and the ravines of the River Sobat, the Blue Nile and the Atbara hindered longitudinal movement, i.e. north-south along the frontier. Secondly, the rugged environment at the western fringe of the Ethiopian plateau created greater opportunities for resistance, in the part of local inhabitants to successive tribal invasions, as well as the outside penetration attempted by Turks, Egyptians and Europeans in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Similarly the same environment gave rise to a natural asylum for generations of outlaws, the shifta and various peoples avoiding the state authority. Thus it is a common place that, today the region is a refuge for two great anti-state movements operating from either side of the boundary;

Main Geological Structure of the Border Zone



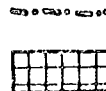
200km



Um Ruaba Series  
Basement Complex



Lavas  
Nubian Series



Political boundary

Effusive Rocks

FIG.1

the 'Eritrea Liberation Front' based on the north-western frontiers of Ethiopia; and the 'Southern Sudan Liberation Front' centred in the south-eastern frontiers of the Sudan. Thirdly, the extent to which the central administration at Khartoum can establish any effective control throughout the total area, is influenced by the physical geography of the state. In an under-developed country like the Sudan, the limitations of transport make such factors of mountains, deserts and rainy seasons of crucial importance to the central Government. To administer effectively a region up to the frontier means, that the central Government must have considerable means of access to it from the rest of the country and such access is certainly dependent, within the contemporary Sudan, on physical geography. Such being the case various aspects of the physiography of the Sudan eastern frontier: relief, drainage and river systems, soils and vegetations are dealt with in the following pages in general terms.

#### THE GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE BORDER ZONE (See Fig. 1)

The fundamental geological feature of the Sudan eastern border is the occurrence of the ancient Basement Complex, regarded by many as a part of the so-called Gondwanland Shield. This Basement Complex consists of a wide variety of rocks, strongly folded with steep dips and mostly comprising metamorphic and igneous rocks, with foliated granites and lavas in a highly altered or only slightly metamorphosed condition. These rocks are not far from the surface though in many cases covered with superficial deposits. At the latter part of the Mesozoic period oscillation took place as the result of which extensive sedimentary rocks of Cretaceous age were laid down, mainly sandstones, mudstones and limestones. These are known as the Nubian Series.<sup>2</sup>

It is generally believed that the area had suffered a gentle warping and some faulting effects in the Miocene-Pliocene periods. The Red Sea hills and the Ethiopian plateau were uplifted and the Red Sea was formed. In the northern part of the Eritrean plateau the Nubian Series is preserved under a mask of lava, but in the Red Sea hills it is almost completely removed by the effect of erosion. A continuous process of erosion in the Quaternary era resulted in the diminution of certain basaltic areas and in smoothing the relief of the region. Non-metamorphic sediments of Greywacke facies occur in the north-eastern Sudan only: these are associated with volcanic rocks which are a continuation of the Eritrean plateau.

Although the area under question is outside the Rift Valley the fracture lines of the western Rift extend into the Sudan territory east of Bhar El Jebel and run parallel to it. This resulted in the formation of some relief features in the southern frontier regions of the Boma plateau and in the Gallabat highlands to the north.

#### CLIMATE AND RELIEF (See Figs. 2 and 3)

Extending between north latitudes  $18^{\circ}$  and  $4^{\circ}$ , the whole of the eastern frontier region lies within the tropical climate and its climatology is simple. It is a landlocked area within a predominantly continental regime within the tropics. In the extreme northern parts, the Red Sea introduces certain maritime characteristics but they are confined to the coastal regions and eastern slopes of the Red Sea hills. To the east and south-east the region is limited by the Ethiopian plateau and the highlands of East Africa. Lake Tana, the Blue Nile and its tributaries and the sudd region around the River Sobat are not large enough to produce any local climatic effects. Except for the Ethiopian highlands the topography of the region would seem to have

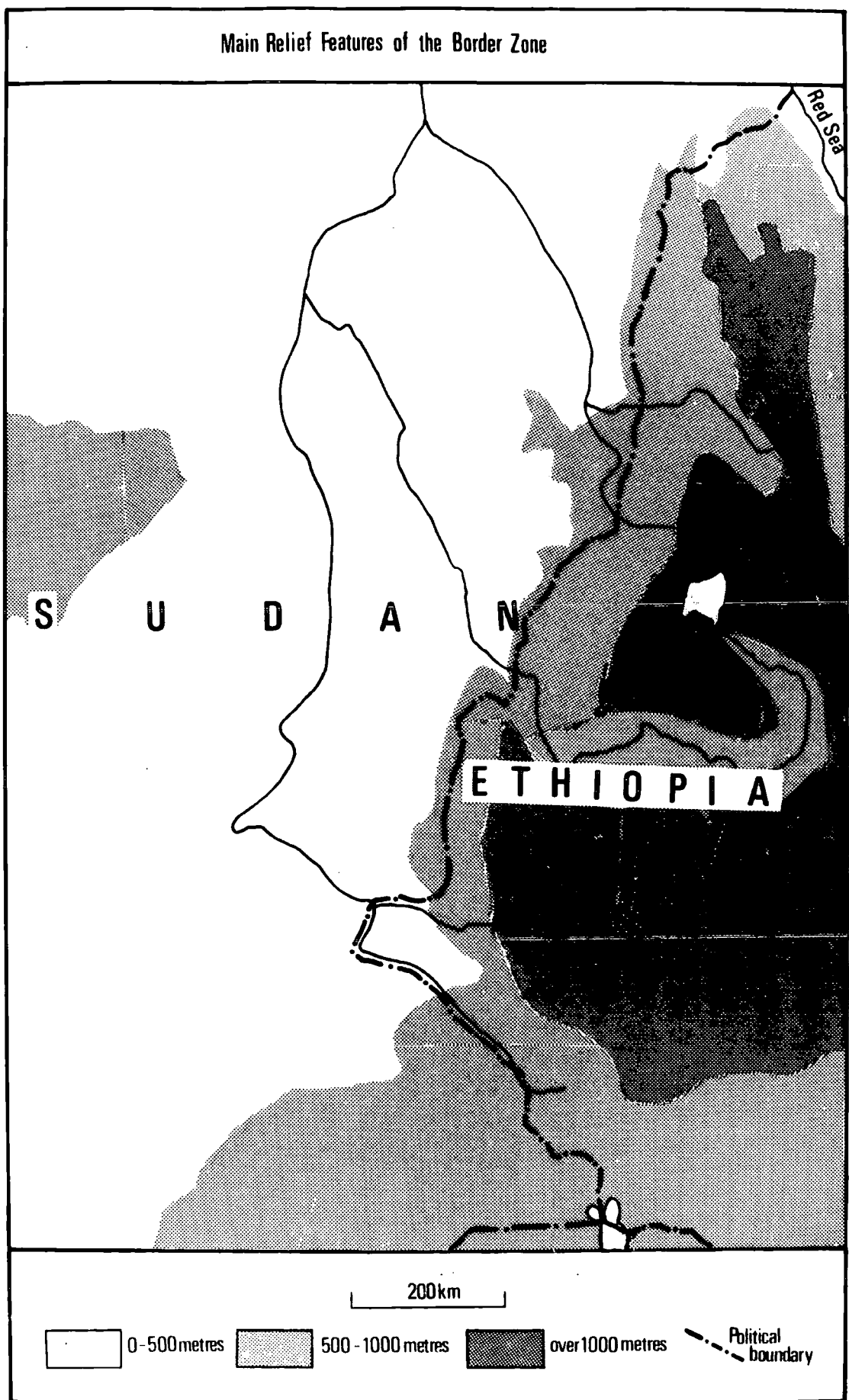


FIG.2

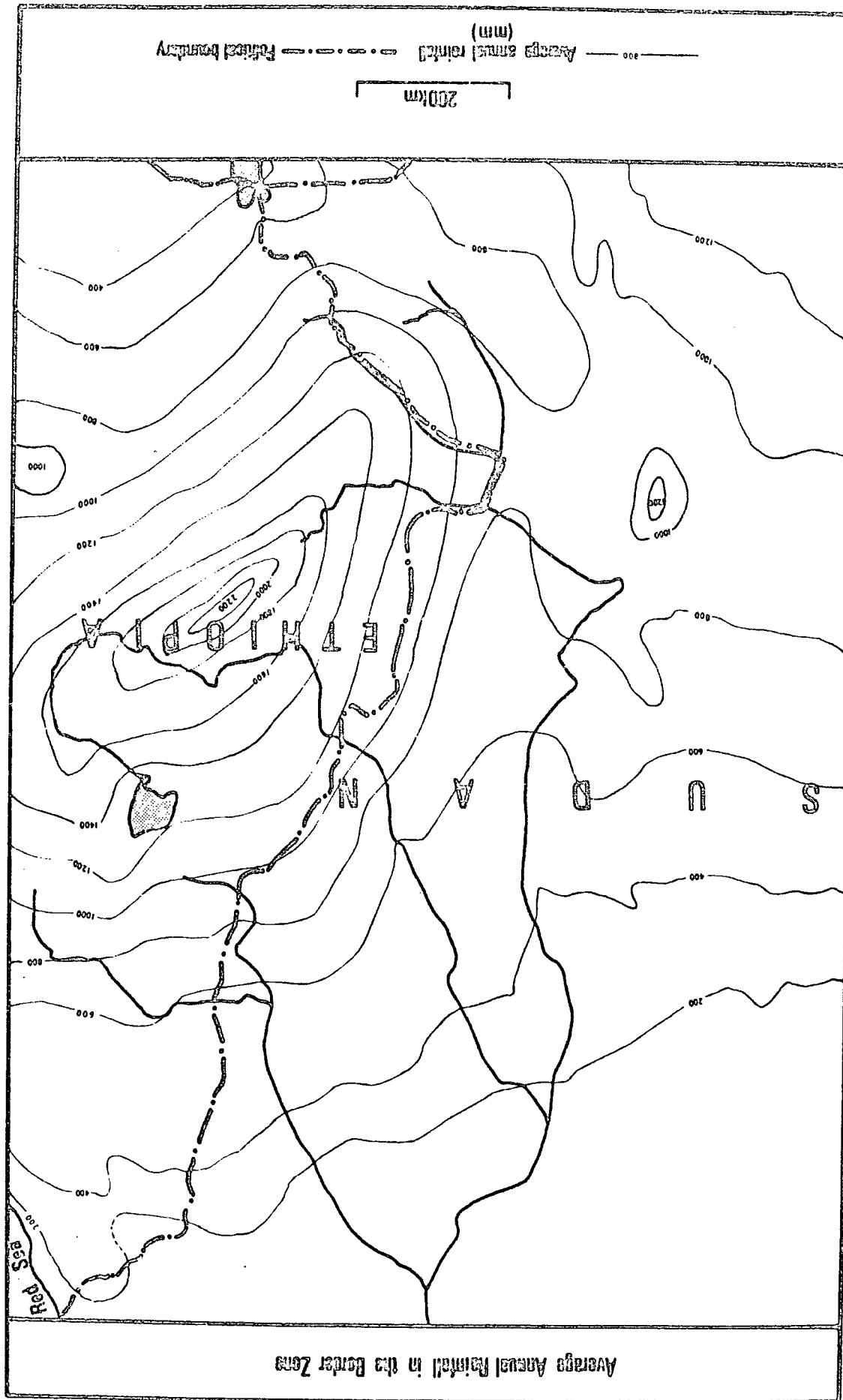
no major significance on the climate; the Ingasana hills are a minor group on the outlines of the Ethiopian plateau.

The highest surfaces of the region are in the western escarpment of the Ethiopian plateau. They are formed by a large table land of the Basement Complex, together with sedimentary deposits (limestones and sandstones) and by vast areas of lava in the form of plateau basalts. The highlands extend from north to south and the only breaks are in the central Omo, the Sobat and the Blue Nile valleys. The highest peaks are in the central region where they include the Semien massif (4,650 metres), and the Chalke mountains (4,050 metres). Generally the average plateau level and the rugged Red Sea hills rise to over 1,500 metres while the level of the plain drops to less than 460 metres; and there are no notable variations of relief to be seen above the general landscape.

Lying in the path of the moisture-laden south-westerly air currents of the summer months the Ethiopian Plateau experiences heavy precipitation, which feeds the River Sobat, the Blue Nile and the Atbara, and thereby provides the whole supply of the Nile waters except for the moderate contribution of the White Nile. The plateau has a typical tropical climate: October to April being an almost rainless period during which the prevalent winds are from north and east. Rains begin in the southern region about the end of March, and May to September could be considered as the rainy season. These seasons coincide with the wet and dry seasons of the Sudan, but in Ethiopia the rainfall is much heavier as it is shown by Fig. 3. Similarly there is a notable decrease in rainfall from south to north.

In the extreme north the Red Sea introduces certain maritime

FIG. 3



characteristics but they are closely limited to the coastal regions and the eastern slopes of the Red Sea hills and hardly extend further to the west.

The whole mechanism of rainfall in the region is very complicated. In winter<sup>3</sup> months Ethiopia and the portions of Sudan to the west of it are influenced by an area of low atmospheric pressure, so that the south-easterly winds prevail in the northern half of the Red Sea, and winter rain falls on its western coast. This area of low pressure is then displaced eastwards in March and April and in May it forms a part of the low pressure area which is centred over the Arabian Gulf; from June to September it is the dominating factor of the air circulation of this region. In the Saharan desert, west of Egypt, there is a high pressure belt, and northerly and north-easterly winds blow up the Nile valley and extend almost up to the Equator. During the summer (by May) as the sun is overhead at the tropic of Cancer, a low pressure belt replaces the Saharan desert anticyclones, so the low pressure belt west of Egypt attracts the south-eastern trade winds from the Gulf of Guinea and the Indian Ocean. When crossing the Equator these winds change direction and become south-westerly winds. They are air masses of a very humid nature which blow over the northern half of Africa as far as north latitude  $20^{\circ}$ , during the period from May to September, causing heavy rains over the Ethiopian plateau and the Sudan to the south of Khartoum.

Unlike the other parts of north-east Africa, the region under consideration does not experience maximum temperature in July and minimum in January. The rainy season causes a marked fall from the time that it sets in so that the highest temperatures are recorded in April, May or June and very often there is a notable drop in the

minimum monthly temperatures beginning in July (the start of rains) and continuing until lowest figures are recorded in January on the western side of the boundary. To the east, however, on the plateau, the lowest temperatures often occur in September or October, at the end of the rains. The Red Sea coast is an exception to this since here the north-westerly winds blow throughout the summer and the rains accompany the south-easterly winds of winter. On account of the great differences which exist between the altitudes of different meteorological stations, there is a considerable variation in the mean temperatures. Mean maximum temperatures are high in the Sudan plain and on the Red Sea coast, but at the Ethiopian stations 94<sup>o</sup>F is the highest recorded.<sup>4</sup>

#### DRAINAGE AND RIVER SYSTEMS (See Fig. 4)

The importance of rivers in terms of the political geography of the area is considered in other chapters. However, here only a brief physiography of drainage and river systems of the region under question is sketched as a background to explain clearly, the various frontier treaties and agreements which were made, in several cases, to follow the courses, banks, and valleys of these rivers.

In the north, at the Sudan-Eritrea borders, the plateau is drained almost entirely by the River Baraka and its largest tributary, the Anseba. Rising south-east of Asmara, in the Hamasen plateau, the Baraka flows first west, north-west and then north along the edge of the highlands. The River Anseba rises not far away along the west of Asmara and flows for the greater part of its course to join the River Baraka just to the north of latitude 17<sup>o</sup>N. The tilted plain enclosed by the rivers, at an altitude of more than 2,250 metres, falls at first gradually and then sharply towards the north-west. East of River Anseba

is a narrow strip of high plateau which emerges towards the north into a chain of mountains. The Baraka in its middle course has water only during the rainy season, and even then only intermittently. However, for a few days it is unfordable for a time. The Anseba has water more or less all the year round in its upper course. As for the other streams it may be said in general that perennially all of them have no more than surface pools in certain tracts; they mostly have running water only during the rains. The basaltic cover of the plateau has already been mentioned above. This cover has worn away and the process of erosion advanced so that the plateau character has in many places disappeared, the original block having been dismembered into isolated mountain groups. As one goes south the plateau becomes both broader and higher. In the undulating zone of Eritrea between the River Baraka and the Sudan, made up of the territories of Baria, Kunama, Elgadin, Sabdarat and others, the erosion has reached such a degree that the plateau character has disappeared. Here the general fall of the country is not only from east to west, but also from the south where the main watershed, a mixture of naked rocks thrusting out numerous spurs and peaks, marks the northern limit. As one goes west the plains of the alluvial soil (the deposits of which in some cases have been so extensive to result in the formation of plains) predominate over crystalline rocks outcrop and the mountains here and there appear more like islands in the soil laid down by the rivers. The whole catchment of the River Baraka and its tributaries amount to about 4,500 square kilometres.

In the Sudan the River Baraka is fed by Khor Langeb which rises in the hilly region lying to the north of the Gash Delta. After the junction with Khor Langeb, the River Baraka has a wide sandy channel.

It flows till it enters the plain and starts to divide and sub-divide forming the Baraka Delta.

The River Mareb, as it is called in Eritrea, is the most northerly of the Ethiopian rivers draining towards the Nile. It runs to the north-east and then to the north parallel to the River Tekaze (Atbara) until it emerges from the mountains when it turns north above Kassala town which it passes on its way towards the Nile. In its upper reaches the river has water more or less all round the year, in the form of large pools held up by rock and gravel bars. Within the boundary region, the River Gash or Sona (as it is called for successive stretches) usually flows less than a hundred days annually from July to late September, disappearing for the remaining time. At Todulk village the river is usually about three hundred and fifty metres broad. In unusually wet seasons a considerable area is inundated. Much detritus is brought down during the rainy season, a characteristic common to all of the Ethiopian rivers, and its valley shares their other characteristics of tropical vegetation stretches of marshes. It has numerous small tributaries; all torrential on both banks, the chief being the Terrena, the Blessa and the Sona on the left bank and the Ambessa on the right bank. The River Gash (Mareb) reaches its apex in the inland Gash Delta.

The Tekaze-Atbara in the north of the central portion of Ethiopia the Abai-Blue Nile in the middle and the Sobat in the south-east discharge between them more than 75 per cent of the total discharge of the Nile. The first of these has its course in the heart of the mountains of Lasta (2,100 metres). Its valley rapidly deepens and flows through a ravine sixty metres deep. After leaving the hills, the river is known by the name Setit, and it receives the waters of the River Atbara, which, with

Drainage and River Systems in the Border Zone

200km

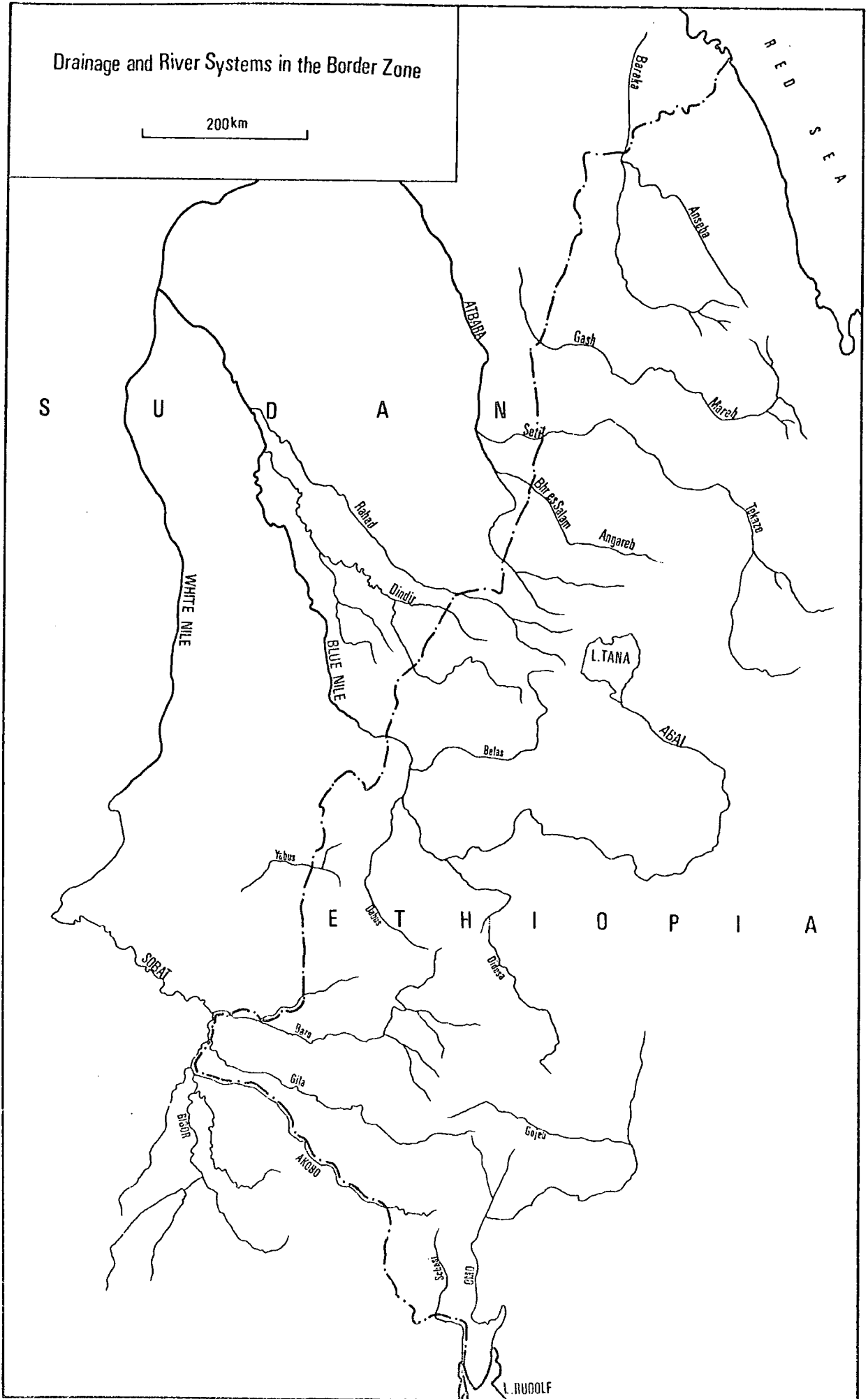


FIG.4

its tributary Bhr es Salam, drain the western edge of the highlands nearly as far as Lake Tana. Like most of the Ethiopian rivers it increases in volume in July and falls after October, and from November it shrinks to an inconsiderable size. However, in flood, it often forms an impassable barrier in Ethiopia between the northern and central provinces. Both the Atbara and the Setit in their courses through the Sudan flow for the most part in a flat alluvial plain cutting very deep valleys for themselves. The River Bhr es Salam (Angareb) is a flowing stream during most of the year, its bed is very rocky with extremely sharp bends when it cuts through high cliffs. The lower Setit which flows through the Sudan resembles the upper Atbara in general character. The Royan is a Khor which is dry except for occasional pools for a few months after the rainy season. Its junction with the River Setit marks the boundary between Ethiopia and the Sudan. The Khashm El Girba Dam on the middle Atbara was built to irrigate the Butana plains to resettle a population of more than 50,000 Nubians who were displaced from Wadi Halfa District on the northern frontier as the result of the construction of the Aswan High Dam.

The Abai is the upper course of the Blue Nile as the Tekaze is of the Atbara. It is the most important of the Ethiopian rivers flowing through the Sudan as it drains practically the whole of the centre of the Ethiopian plateau. The Blue Nile flows from Lake Tana at a height of 1,893 metres and an area of 3,000 square kilometres. It is fed by other numerous tributaries. Unlike the White Nile it is free from swamps until it enters the plains of the Sudan. From Roseris town, about 90 kilometres away from the boundary within the Sudan territory, the river runs in a deeply incised valley on a clay plain. El Rahad and El Dindir are two minor tributaries of the Blue Nile and drain into the Sudan from the high region beyond the boundary.

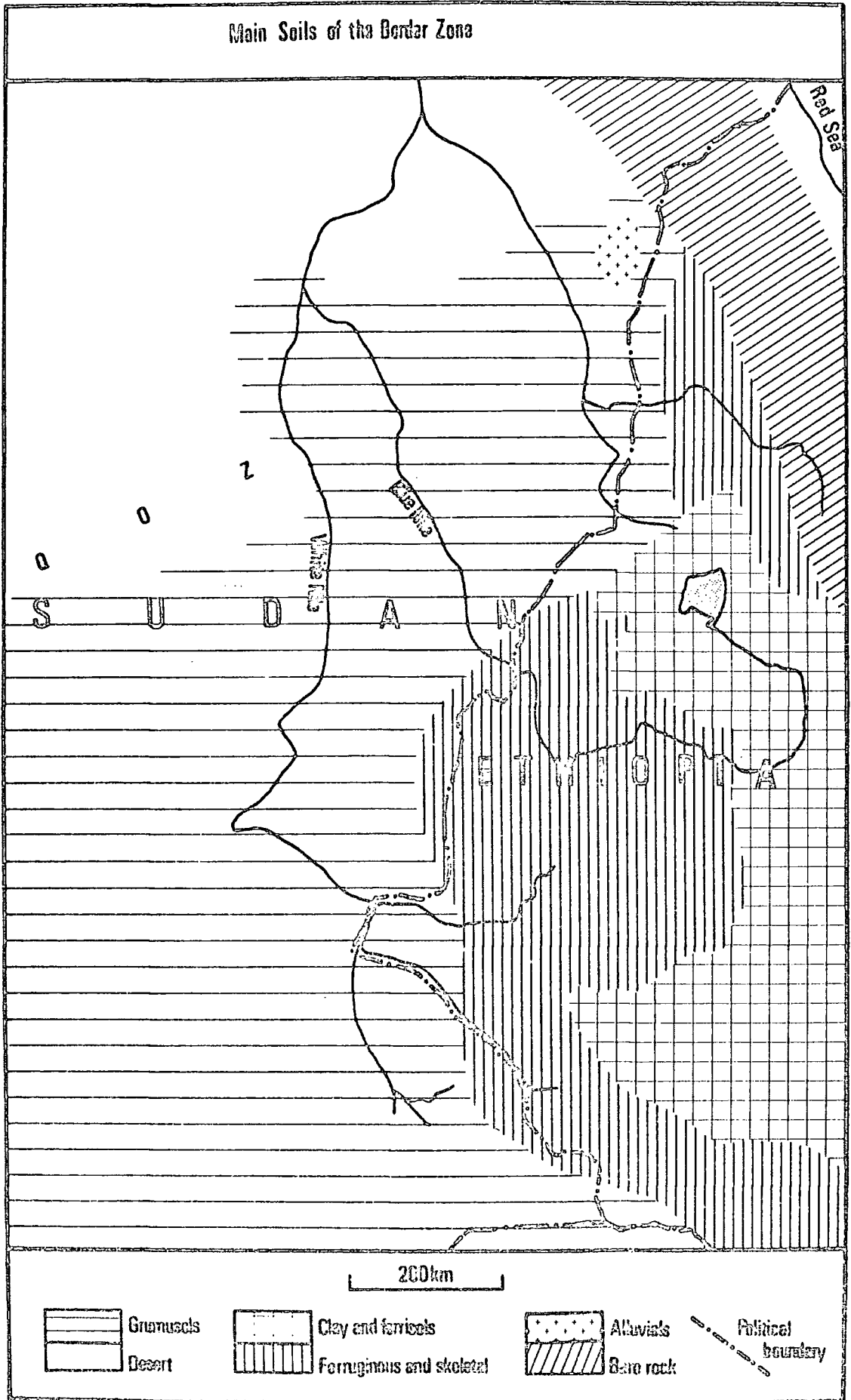


FIG.5

The River Sobat is formed by the junction of a number of rivers draining the Kafa plateau, with the River Bibor which comes from the open plains east of Bahar El Jebel river. The River Akobo with its large tributaries joins the River Bibor and the resultant joint stream takes the name of the River Sobat. The lower courses of these rivers follow the plains which gradually drop towards the Sudan steppe.

SOIL AND NATURAL VEGETATION (See Figs. 5 and 6)

The <sup>or</sup>viability of rainfall along the Sudan eastern border produces a vegetation varying from barren desert to closed tall forests. The influence of the soils is reflected in their holding capacity of water and to a less extent their acidity or alkalinity.

Despite the centuries of erosion, the western escarpment of the Ethiopian plateau is one of the most fertile portions of east Africa. In the northern part of the Sudan eastern border, the vegetation varies in kind from Semi Desert to Savanna and Warm Temperate vegetations as one ascends the plateau. Here, because of considerable variation in altitude, rainfall and temperature, there is a diversity of natural vegetation. At the height of about 1,800 metres forests of Box and Juniper are common; in the deep western and south-western valleys of Ethiopia, there are forests of tropical type in which wild species of coffee trees flourish. As the plateau ascends further, forests of more Juniper and Yews are found. At a higher level, Temperate Grass dominate and trees disappear gradually. To the west of the plateau, the whole region is covered with two main types of vegetation: Acacia Short Grass Scrub as a response to an annual rainfall of 300-500 millimetres and with a drought period of four to six months. This area is bounded to the north by the junction of the Sudan-Eritrea boundary and the Karora hills of the Sudan which have certain limited

affinities with the Eritrean plateau. To the south, the region extends approximately to north latitude 14<sup>o</sup>. Though it is dominated by Acacia, the river valleys and flood plains are covered with Ushar and Tarfa; within this zone also lies the treeless open grass Butana land of heavy clay plain.

To the south of north latitude 14<sup>o</sup>, the country has an annual rainfall of about 500-1,000 millimetres. Here, a larger type of Acacia is dominant in the northern portion. The soils are of heavy dark clay interbedding some light granitic hills as that of the Ingasana.

The Ingasana region and the frontier zone to the east of El Dindir and El Rahad rivers is covered with Acacia Fistula or Hegleg, from which gum-arabic is collected, and Dom are common. As one goes nearer to the vicinity of the Ethiopian plateau, a **broader** leafed flora is found.

East of the White Nile, is a vast plain of dark clay interrupted by swamps and scattered trees of Talih, Acacia Fistula and Deleb. Further to the east, within the plateau influence, the highland type of broader leafed vegetation is dominant. In Khor Yabus and around it, there are forests of Ternalia near the Ethiopian highlands. Along the River Akobo, in the flood plains, the country is covered with scattered thorn bush and various species of unclassified vegetation.

# Natural Vegetation of the Border Zone

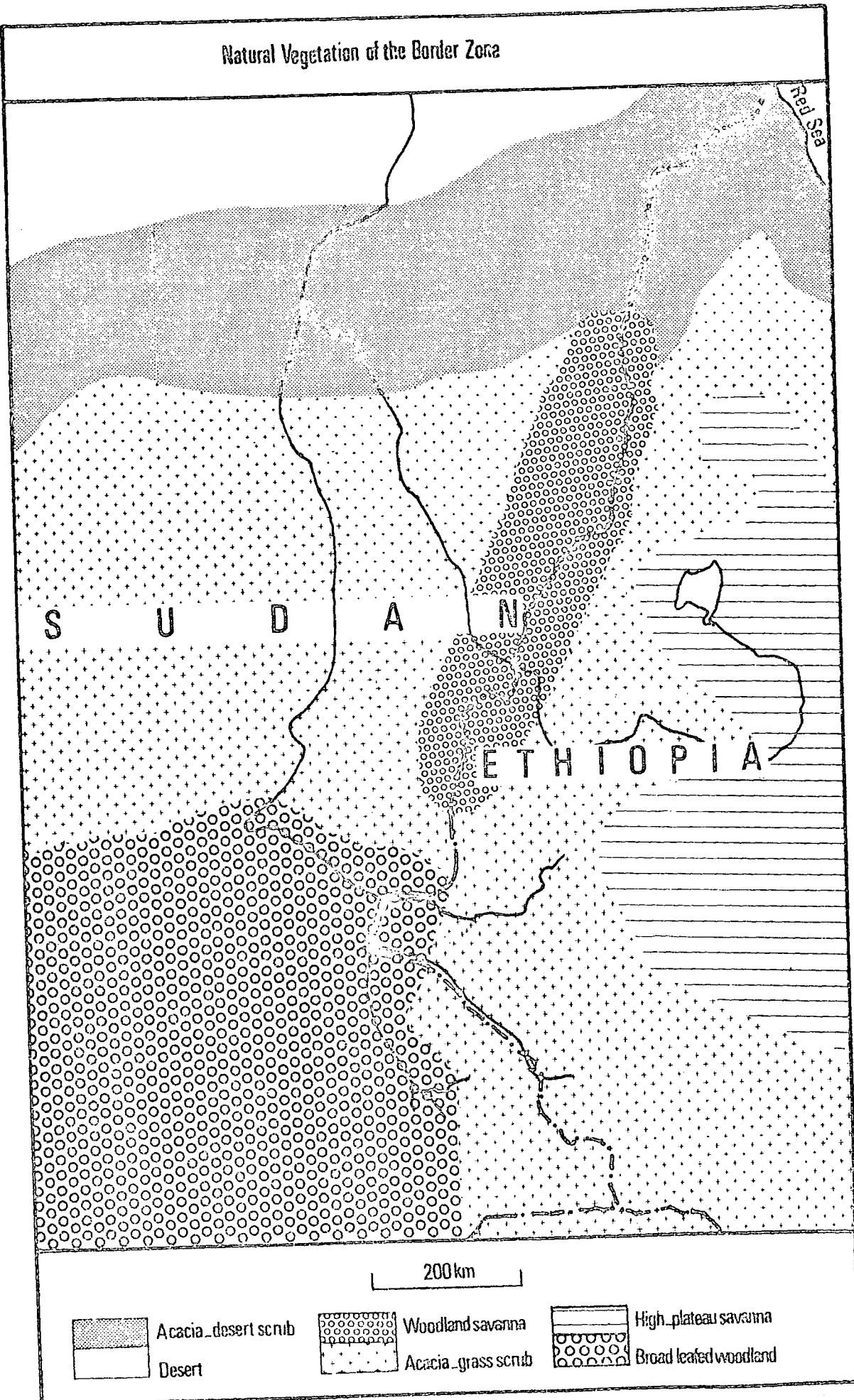


FIG.6

C H A P T E R   T W O

HUMAN, CULTURAL AND TRIBAL  
FRONTIERS OF THE BORDER ZONE

C H A P T E R   T W O

HUMAN, CULTURAL AND TRIBAL  
FRONTIERS OF THE BORDER ZONE

When dealing with such themes as the effectiveness of a state's authority within its borders and whether a certain section of a state's international boundaries is an effective division within the border landscape, it is important to look into the characteristics of the border population and the different attitudes represented within it. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine how far the eastern border of the Sudan with a people virtually representing no common race, no common language, no common religion, no common culture and no common past, is a part of the Sudan Republic; and how the political boundary under study, which is a recent creation of foreign diplomats, comprehends large and small ethnic groups speaking virtually innumerable languages and differing from one another in many aspects.

For the purpose of convenience the area under consideration is divided roughly into four cultural zones (see Fig. 7) from north to south.

1. THE EASTERN HAMITES (See Fig. 8)

The region occupied by the Eastern Hamitic tribes is defined for the purpose of this work as the country lying to the north of the regular cultivation area of Gedaref region or the southern limit of the nomadic tribal grazing ground. It is bounded to the east by the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary, to the west by the eastern boundary of Khartoum Province and to the north by a line roughly drawn along the railway line joining Atbara town with Port Sudan. The Atbara river running from

### Main Cultural Groups of the Sudan Eastern Borders

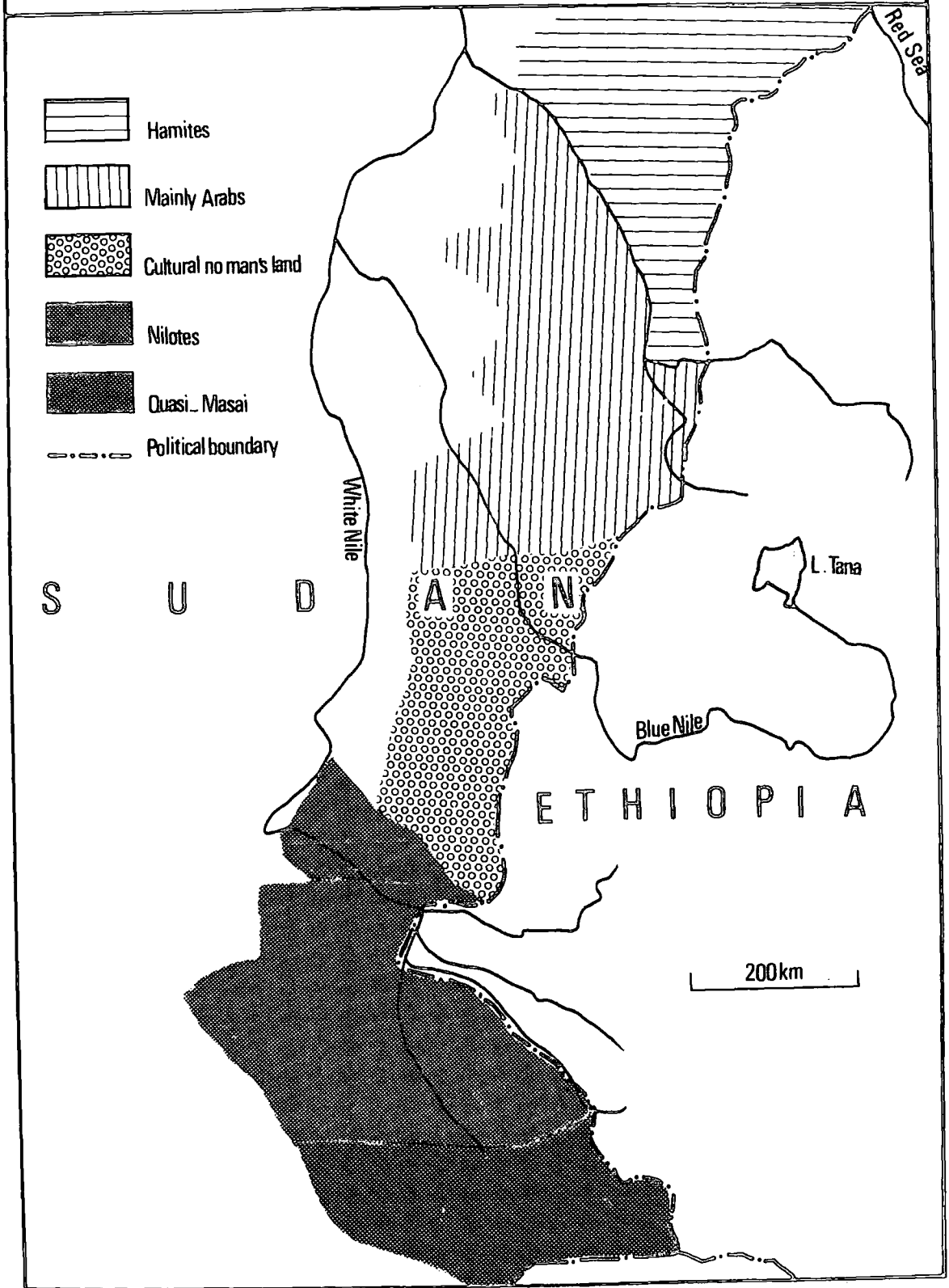


FIG.7

south-east to north-west bisects the area into two unequal divisions. To the west of the river is the Butana, the traditional grazing ground of the Shukria Arabs and the mixed elements of Dar Bakr administration. To the east of the river are the non-Arab tribes of the Beni Amer and the Hadendoea. Together with the smaller Arab tribes of the Lahawin, which has its grazing grounds on both sides of the Atbara just beside the international boundary, the Beni Amer and the Hadendoea are practically the main border tribes of this region. A minor section of the Shukria Arabs and the greater part of the Rashaida also cross the river during their seasonal migration and expand into the Ethiopian (former Eritrean) territory in search of rich fodder at the foot of the Ethiopian plateau. Such seasonal movement across the political boundary is a pre-boundary habit, but as the result of the superimposition of the international boundary at the end of the last century upon the cultural and tribal landscape, the Beni Amer have been divided into two nationalities, one Sudanese and one Eritrean.

Ethnically, the Beni Amer and the Hadendoea are members of the Beja tribe who are, according to Seligman, believed to be the eastern section of the Hamites who occupy the whole of north and north-east Africa.<sup>1</sup> The Beja are perhaps better known to the outside world, mainly in Europe, by Fuzzy Wuzzy, a name given to them by Kipling, the British poet, in the last century during the Mahdist revolution in the Sudan. To the neighbouring Arab tribes they are even considered to be mutawhisheen (savage) because of their rough hair and the very individualistic life they used to lead. The Beni Amer, on the other hand, are believed to have an admixture of Semitic blood so that some authorities even hesitate to call them Beja. Among the Beja as a whole, there are also some other minor tribal communities at the outskirts of the larger

tribes but mostly stressing their independence. Some non-Beja tribes like the Halanga and the West African Fellata immigrants are also amalgamated under the Beja Nasir (head of tribe). All these non-Beja tribes come under the Arabic phrase Gabail Ukhra (other tribes)<sup>2</sup> in spite of the fact that they have lived among the Beja since very early times and have acquired the Beja language and adopted the Beja way of life. These Gabail Ukhra are mostly Arab intruders in the Beja traditional country, but made good their position by marrying the Beja women and adapting themselves to the indigenous culture.

The Beja proper are reported to have been in their present habitats for not less than four thousand years. Unlike the Arab tribes they do not gather in large numbers; the family is the most important unit in their tribal structure. That is probably due to the configuration of the country in which they live; it is a rugged hilly region of isolated mountains and separate khors and wadis. In these wide arid conditions, pockets of Beja are found "living a life apart and intensely lonely, a life which serves to intensify the individualism of the often tiny clans which wander about in their cycles within the orbit of the tribal whole".<sup>3</sup> A sixteenth century account of the Beja by Don Juan De Castro, who sailed with Stefano De Gama to the Red Sea described them: "They are never at peace with their neighbours, but continually at war with everybody. They have no king or no great Lord over them but are divided into tribes and parties over each of which there is a Sheikh. They build no towns, nor other fixed habitations, their custom being to wander from one place to another with their cattle".<sup>4</sup>

It seems that, since the above account in the sixteenth century, the Beja have gradually changed their cattle to camels, which they breed at present, and from the beginning of this century there has been a

remarkable change taking place in their way of life, mainly shifting (though very gradually) from nomadism to sedentary life in the small urban centres and beside the river banks whenever and wherever reasonable facilities for occupation are available. However, all through their history the Beja have resisted all attempts at integration into the centralized states of northern and central Sudan until they (the Beja) were reduced and occupied by the Egyptian forces in the middle of the last century. Indeed, there is no evidence that the first centralized regime established over the Nile valley at the end of the fifteenth century under the Funj kings of Sennar, had any effective control over the Beja except for the Beni Amer of Khor Baraka and probably, some other minor tribes in the region of the River Gash and River Setit.

Even after more than four decades of their occupation of the Sennar Kingdom and the practical domination of the entire Nile valley to the west of the Ethiopian escarpment, the Egyptians were forced to organize military expeditions to collect taxes from the Beja tribes. As a matter of fact, the second largest town of Kassala in eastern Sudan was originally founded as a military post to resist the dangers of the unloyal Beja tribes against the central rule of Khartoum. It was only in 1844 that the Turkish military ruler, Ahamed Pasha El Minakli (nicknamed the Butcher) could establish an effective rule over the Beja by methods of the most cruelty that the Sudan administration has ever seen.<sup>5</sup> Nearly all the administrative accounts saved from the destruction of the Sudan archives twice in its history, categorically confirm that the apparent acceptance of the centralized administration of Egypt in the eastern Sudan by the Beja was only tolerated because of the superior weapons of the Egyptians. Again the only tribes in the entire eastern

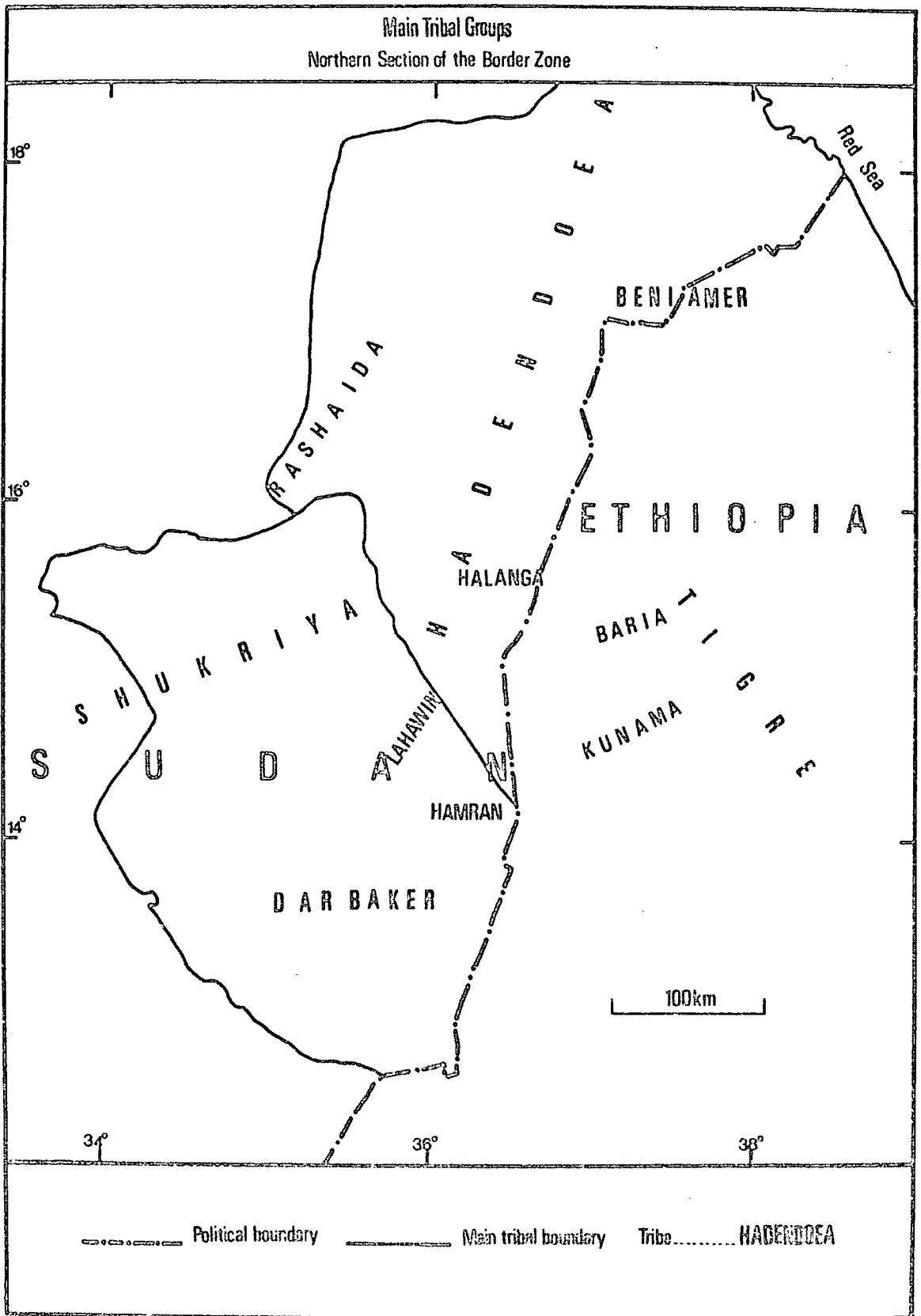


FIG.8

border other than the Halanga who willingly accepted the centralized Egyptian administration were the Beni Amer. This was partly because they were situated between the two warlike tribes of the Hadendoea to the west and the Ethiopians to the east, and partly because they were familiar with centralization since the time of the Sennar Kingdom. Thus, of all the Beja tribes, the Beni Amer were more prepared to welcome the Egyptian rule with which they came to terms in 1848, finding in it a support against the Hadendoea.<sup>6</sup> They were, indeed, so cooperative with the Egyptians that in 1872 the originally Ethiopian province of Boghas was ceded to the Egyptian 'Empire' by the help of the Beni Amer and their Deglal (the chief of the Beni Amer) who lives in Eritrea.

During the collapse of the Egyptian rule in the Sudan and the rise of the Mahdia in 1881, the Hadendoea, on the other hand, joined the Mahdi and remained loyal to and a part of the short-lived independent rule which ended by the Anglo-Egyptian occupation of the country in 1898. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Beni Amer were against the Mahdia which they regarded as a collaborator with their traditional rivals (the Hadendoea). In 1898 the whole of the Sudan came under the Condominium rule of the Anglo-Egyptian Government with practical influence being in the hands of England. The eastern part of the Beja land up to the Red Sea was then occupied by Italy since 1891, and a new state under the name of Eritrea was formed. Consequently, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Beja were faced by two European Governments, the British from the west and the Italians from the east, who both soon after the occupation of their respective countries lost no time in introducing more effective administrations and more defined boundaries between their respective colonies. The new boundary between the Sudan and Eritrea divided the Beni Amer including about 60,000 (roughly two-

thirds of the whole tribe) in Eritrea and the remaining third in the Sudan.

CULTURE, RELIGION AND LANGUAGE (See Figs. 9 and 10)

Culturally speaking, the Beja are at present gradually being integrated into the Sudanese nation by accepting Islam (the state religion) and Arabic (the official language) and above all one universal administrative system based on law and order. Islam was introduced into the Beja land by methods of slow penetration through many centuries. However, it is, indeed, astonishing to find that in spite of their situation on one of the main routes to Hijaz (Muslim holy land) and their proximity to Arabia (the cradle land of Islam) just on the other coast of the Red Sea, the Beja are one of the least Islamized tribes of the region politically known today as 'Northern' Sudan.<sup>7</sup> It would seem that the main reason for their relative isolation from the dominant Islamic influence for such a long time could be attributed to geographical and economic factors. A quick glance at the map of the Beja land shows that the region is so uninvitingly poor that the Arab tribes invading from the north through the Nile and the east across the Red Sea, did not settle for any length of time in that desert region. The Arabs continued to advance to the more promising lands in the central, northern (mainly along the banks of the Nile), and western parts of the Sudan. The southern part of the Sudan was very humid, hot and too unhealthy to accommodate the invading nomadic Arab tribes and their animals. As regards to the Beja land, the fact that the Shukria, the largest Arab tribe neighbouring the Beja, have limited themselves in the left bank of the River Atbara while keeping eastwards as far as the Ethiopian plateau might account for the above cited theory.<sup>8</sup>

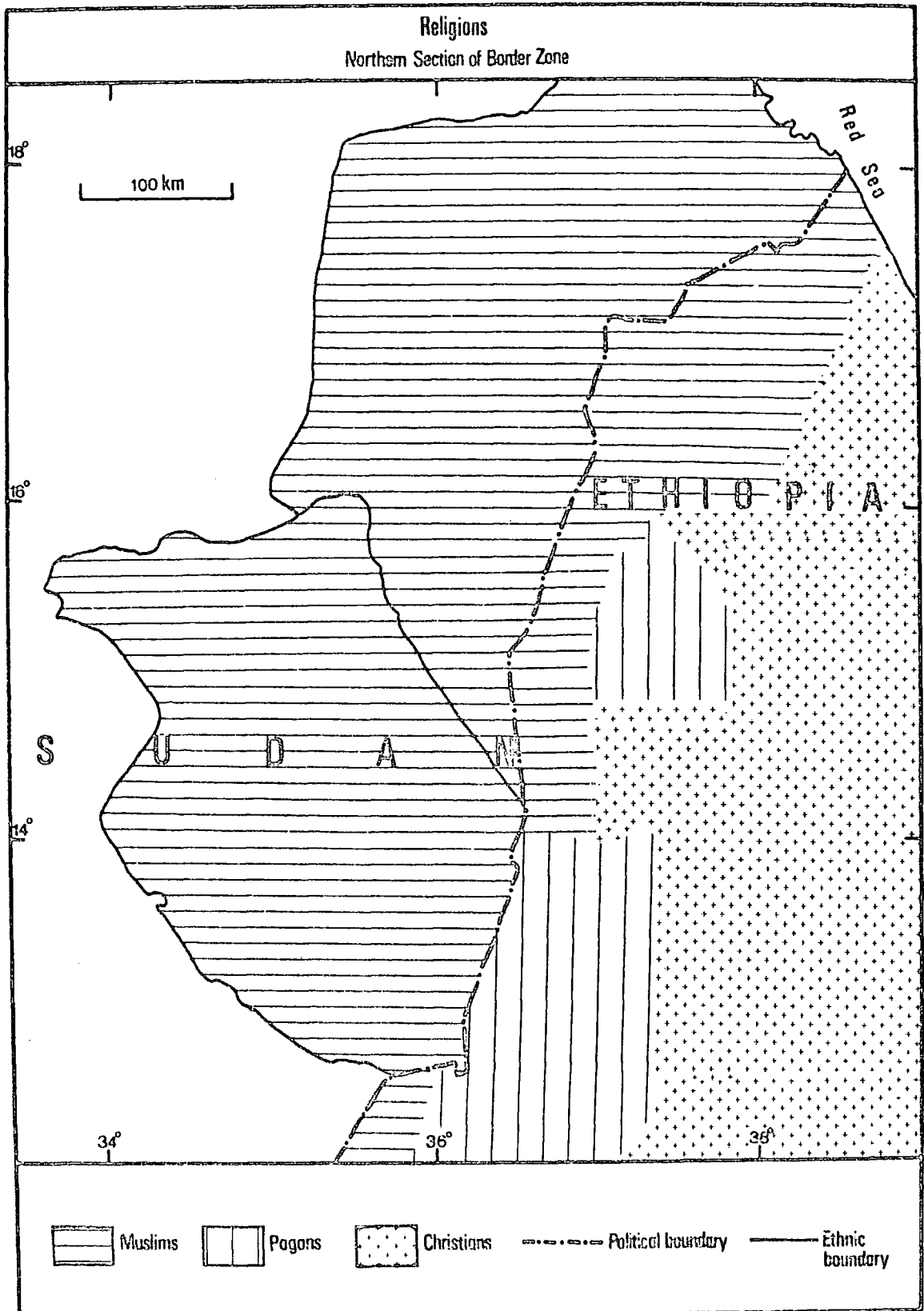


FIG.9

Although Trimingham reported that a certain Rabeia Arab community was settled among the Beja in the ninth century A.D., yet it is fairly certain that those Rabeia Arabs did not in any way modify the social and cultural characteristics of the Beja.<sup>9</sup> The real effective Islamic influence among the Beja, however, began in the sixteenth century when the Funj Kings of Sennar who, probably for motives of political expediency, had proclaimed themselves Muslims and encouraged the Muslim holy men to settle in their kingdom. Since then, the Beja though practically outside the influence of the Funj Kingdom experienced a continuous pressure on them to be assimilated into the 'Islamic nation' which had been gaining strong grounds in the other regions of the northern and central parts of the Sudan. Those holy men who came to the Sudan from all parts of the Islamic world to preach Islam in the heart of Africa did not limit themselves in the centre of the Funj Empire, but a good number of them ventured to explore the neglected country of the Beja and established their religious cells among the existing tribes and by claiming supernatural power (Baraka) which was, and still is, highly valued by the tribesmen in this part of Africa, attracted and persuaded many of the Beja to the Islamic teachings. Most famous and influential of these religious sects operating in the Beja land were the Khatmia, which is now widely spread among the Beni Amer, and the Majthieb, which was spread among the Hadendoea until the rise of the Mahdi when its followers turned to the Mahdia and became Ansar (the followers of the Mahdi). Probably more than anything else the religious sects of the Khatmia and the Ansar had played a major part in the Beja land in bringing the different tribes and the various sections of the Beja together by diverting the traditional tribal allegiance to one of religious fraternity based on Islamic teachings. Since the middle of this century, both the Khatmia and the Ansar have turned into political

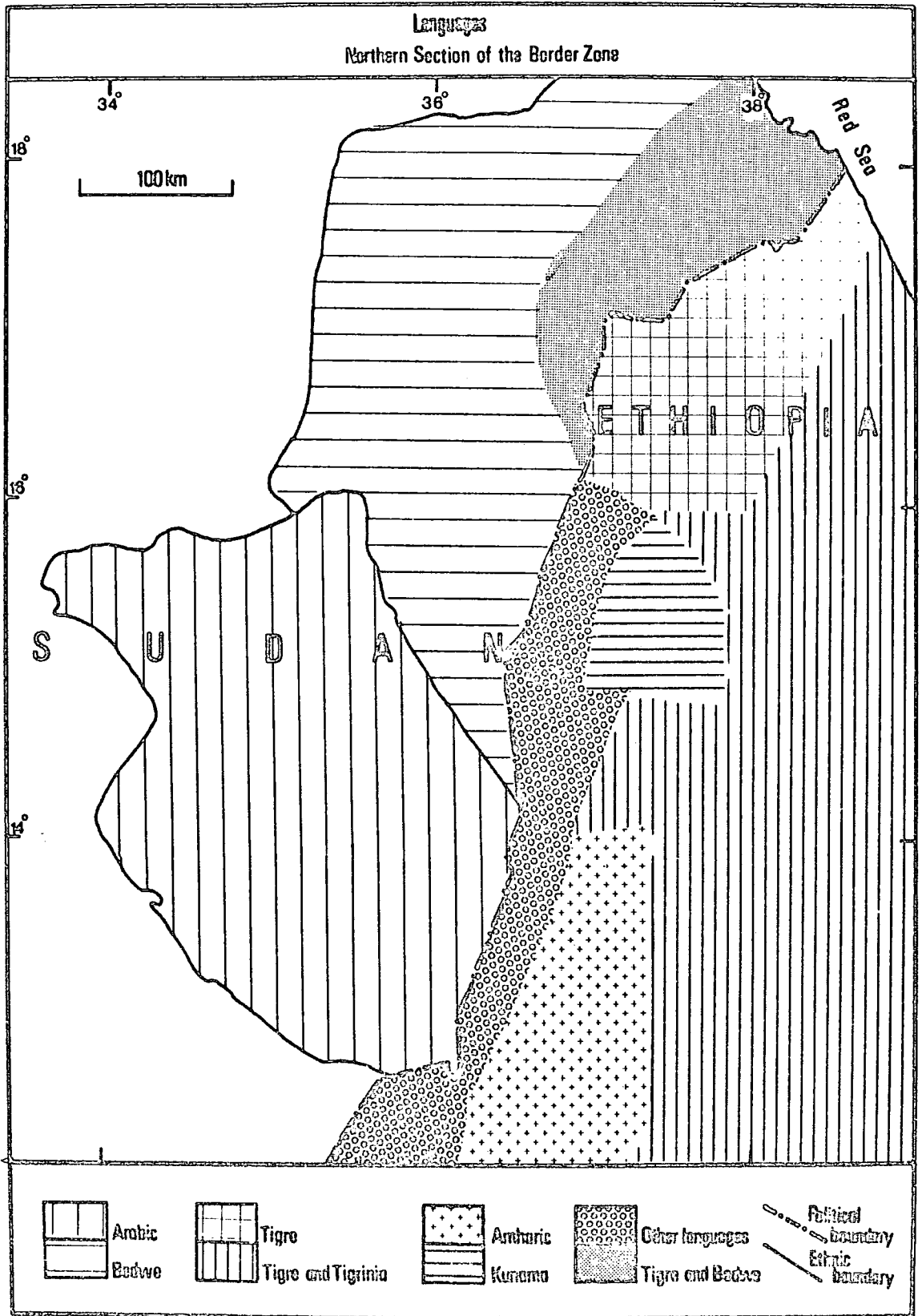


FIG.10

parties: the former has turned into the 'People's Democratic Party' and the latter into the Ummah (nation) party. Until they were banned in May 1969 after a military revolution which took over the authority in the country, the 'People's Democratic' and the Ummah were the two largest parties in the whole country.

As for the Ethiopian Beja, the same steps of Islamization and Arabization had been taking place for many centuries before they were divided into two nationalities as the result of the superimposition of the international boundary. Therefore, from a religious and a cultural point of view it is not surprising that the inhabitants of northern Ethiopia are today more orientated to the Sudan rather than to Ethiopia. More than twenty-five thousand Eritrean Muslim tribesmen have crossed the international boundary from their traditional habitats in Northern Ethiopia to the Sudan in 1967 and other waves of Eritrean Muslim refugees are still reported to be moving westwards.

There are several languages spoken in the Beja land; the Hadendoea speak a Hamitic language called Bedwe, while the Beni Amer speak another language of an unidentified origin called Tigré. Arabic is the lingua franca between them and since it is the official language of the state, all the tribes in the region are gradually diverting from their traditional languages to Arabic. Today, Bedwe is hardly spoken by the Beja children in the urban centres even within their traditional lands.

On the other side of the political boundary, in northern Ethiopia, the Amharic<sup>10</sup> is being implemented by the Ethiopian Government among the Ethiopian Beni Amer in the same way as Arabic is being encouraged among the Sudan Beni Amer. But one major difference between the two countries in this respect is that Arabic is being generally accepted

by the Beja tribes in the Sudan and spoken to a greater extent in northern Ethiopia while the Amharic has, so far, been totally rejected by the Ethiopian Beni Amer and has never been known among the Sudanese Beni Amer. This is mainly due to the fact that Arabic being the medium of Islamic religion has, in fact, been introduced among the Beja since about three hundred years and as an official language since the middle of the last century. On the other hand, northern Ethiopia was a part of Egypt's 'African Empire' in the nineteenth century, an Italian colony up to the end of the Second World War, a British Trusteeship until 1952, a federal part of the Ethiopian Empire since 1952 and it was only incorporated to Ethiopia in 1962. Thus Amharic is a new language to the Ethiopian Beja and has never been associated with their religious or other beliefs. Even the Tigre Coptic Christians of Eritrea maintain Tigrinia, one of their ancient languages.

As a consequence of all these factors the majority of the Eritrean population of Muslim background even tend to regard the implementation of Amharic language in their traditional Muslim territory as an act of oppression imposed upon them by the Amhara ruling tribe.

## 2. A CULTURAL NO MAN'S LAND (See Figs. 11, 12 and 13)

The region occupied by an unclassified miscellaneous group which is for want of a better term named in this work 'Cultural No Man's Land' is a part of the greater clay plain extending to the west of the Ethiopian plateau as far as the eastern limit of the Qoz sands of the western Sudan, and from Khartoum to the Machar Marshes. This Clay Plain is one of the core areas of the Sudan as it contains the Gezera where cotton (the main cash crop of the country) is grown and the Gedaref region the main granary of the state population. Moreover, the region

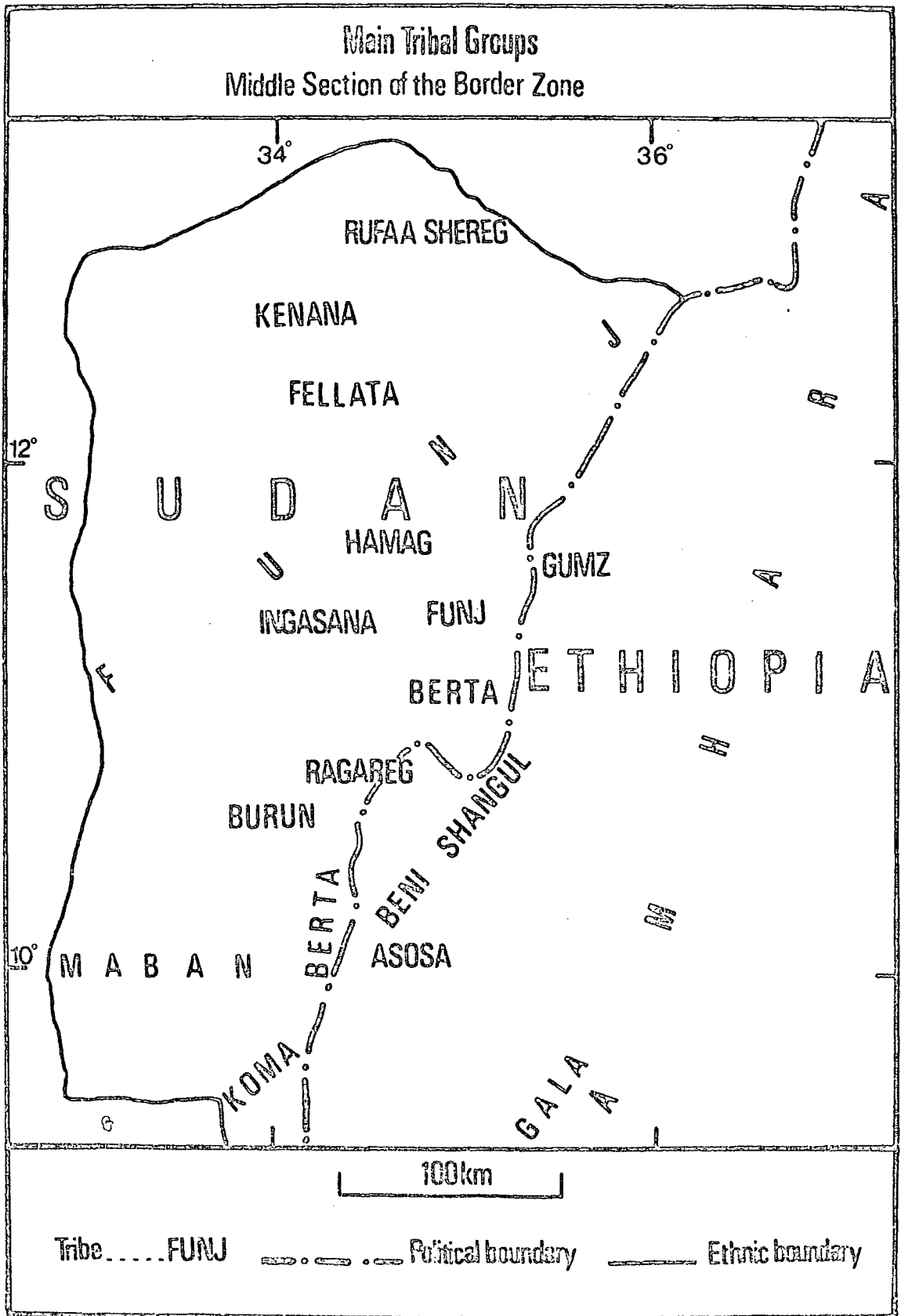


FIG.11

has always been the heart of the country from which nearly all powers emerged or centred in to manage effective control over the rest of the country.<sup>11</sup> For the purpose of this study, we shall only be concerned with the eastern part of the clay plain, which is adjacent to the international boundary or affected by it in one way or another. This part of the clay plain is of particular interest to the present study for it had witnessed the first attempt of a political federation, between the 'Black African' tribes and the 'Arabized' tribes of northern and central Sudan, to unify the whole of the Nile valley to the south of Egypt and west of Ethiopia.

The people involved in this study are the multiracial population of Rufaa Shereg, the Kenana, the Ingasana, the Aduk (Burun), the Berta and the Funj tribes, who more or less constitute the border population of the region in question.

The Funj Tribes: As Fig. 11 indicates, the whole area under consideration is loosely called the Funj region. The first historical appearance of the Funj is in 1504 when their leader, Amara Dungus, concluded a federation agreement with the leader of the Gwasma Arabs, Abdulla Gamma, to rule over the whole of the Nile valley from the Ethiopian frontiers as far as the southern frontiers of Egypt. From their capital at Sennar they controlled the southern part of their Kingdom (which is a part of the area under study) through one of their best known non-Arab institutions, Mangil.<sup>12</sup>

Contrary to the general belief, there are no traces of a Funj language. The language known as Funj is that spoken by the Hamag of Gule and one or two neighbouring villages. It seems that the Hamag language was once widespread over the region under consideration.<sup>13</sup> At present, the Funj Meks (administrative chiefs) speak Arabic or Berta, but the latter is giving way to the former. Thus one gets the impression

that the Funj were a ruling caste rather than a tribe in any real sense. According to the local tradition, the Hamag, who are found at Gule today, were, perhaps, in the past, far more widespread in the region. Singa District and the neighbourhood of Roseris town seem to have been a Hamag territory and the Blue Nile valley was perhaps thickly populated by them.<sup>14</sup>

Rufaa Shereg: All of the Arab tribes in this region, except for the Kenana who came recently in the time of the Mahdi (1881-1898), are part of Rufaa who are not so much a tribe as they are rather a number of distinctive tribes descended from a common ancestor, Mohamed. Rufaa Ibn Amer. They usually claim to be a part of the Juhayna Arabs, their original habitat being somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hijaz in Arabia, and are reported to have had a long sojourn among the Beja and the Ethiopians before reaching their present whereabouts. After they had maintained a permanent home in this region, a number of the Rufaa Shereg became Mangils to the Funj Kings, but some of them, mainly from the ruling classes, seized the opportunity of being at the frontier zone and established some tiny kingdoms of their own, like that of Bashir El Gul, which was based on Dunkur in Ethiopia and extended to the Sudan. Others like the families of Tor El Guri, which existed until the beginning of this century as independent entities, have never recognised the authority of any central Government from either side of the frontier.

Today, the Rufaa Shereg comprises more than twenty groups, chiefly camel owners, of whom a considerable number are heterogeneous. They usually pass the rainy season in the Butana, arriving on the River Rahad in early October passing down to the northern boundary of the Dindir Game Reserves.<sup>15</sup>

The Kenana: The Kenana, who are newcomers to this region, claim that, when they first came to their present area, the entire place was a desert and that under their protection the original inhabitants were enabled to cultivate the land and regain some measure of prosperity. They are predominantly baggara (cattle owners) who spend the rainy season round Jebel Moya and Dali; during the dry season most of them cross the Blue Nile with their cattle, and a few of them go on to the River Dindir.<sup>16</sup> In the past few years, the Kenana have been showing signs of settling in villages and they have been continuously complaining that their area is insufficient and asking for a part of the Dindir Game Reserves. Recently, this problem has been solved by the construction of Roseris Dam, which is shortly expected to bring about the total settlement of the whole tribe and the development of their entire region.

Miscellaneous Communities of Kushitic Origin: To the south of these nomadic Arabs of Rufaa and Kenana, in the rugged hilly area of the border, there are some primitive groups of black races differing widely from each other in language and customs, with no significant connection among them. These separate communities, which one hesitates to call tribes, are a people of very heterogeneous groups comprising Berta, Gumz, Ethiopian refugees from the frontier region, Arabs, Katamir, Hamag and various groups of West African Fellata immigrants.

These people mainly occupy the country between Singa and Fazughli along the Blue Nile. By the time of the collapse of the Funj Kingdom, the whole area was ruled by the Katamir, who were replaced by the Swarab in the Egyptian period, and since the Condominium period every single community has had its own chief under the authority of Local Government. Further to the east, beside the political boundary

from the Blue Nile to Guessan, the bulk of the population are Berta, Watwit and Jebelawin. On the boundary itself are the least known people of Kadala. In the extreme south-east, below Guessan, there are the hill villages of Regareg. All these communities, whilst speaking different languages, are mostly considerably 'Arabized' and a number of them are superficially Muslims.

The Ingasana: The inhabitants of Tabai hills, about fifty kilometres to the south of Roseris, are the people known as the Ingasana of Tabai. They are regarded as completely separate by the surrounding tribes, from whom they differ largely in appearance, language, organization and customs. 'Ingasana' seems to be a new, probably an Arab name for them, as none of the earlier travellers, Bruce or Marno, use it, but refer to them by the name Tabai. Although the Ingasana have never been united as a tribe, but formed of several unconnected groups, they seem to have retained their independence from the central Government until the beginning of this century. They largely resisted many attempts by the Sudan Government to integrate them into the general pattern of the Sudanese society. However, like the other surrounding tribes, the Ingasana speak Arabic as a lingua franca, and a number of them adopted Islamic religion, but the entire tribe still stick to their own way of life.

The Uduk (Burun): Just to the south of the Ingasana, lives the Uduk tribe. Unlike the Ingasana, the Uduk do not seem to claim the ownership of their present homelands, but claim that they have migrated from a south-east direction. Also in contrast to the Ingasana, the Uduk mix with their neighbours and speak several languages, mainly those spoken in their border lands. A good number of them also speak Arabic but do not adopt Islam, though at one time in the recent years they have been reported as being Ansar.<sup>17</sup>

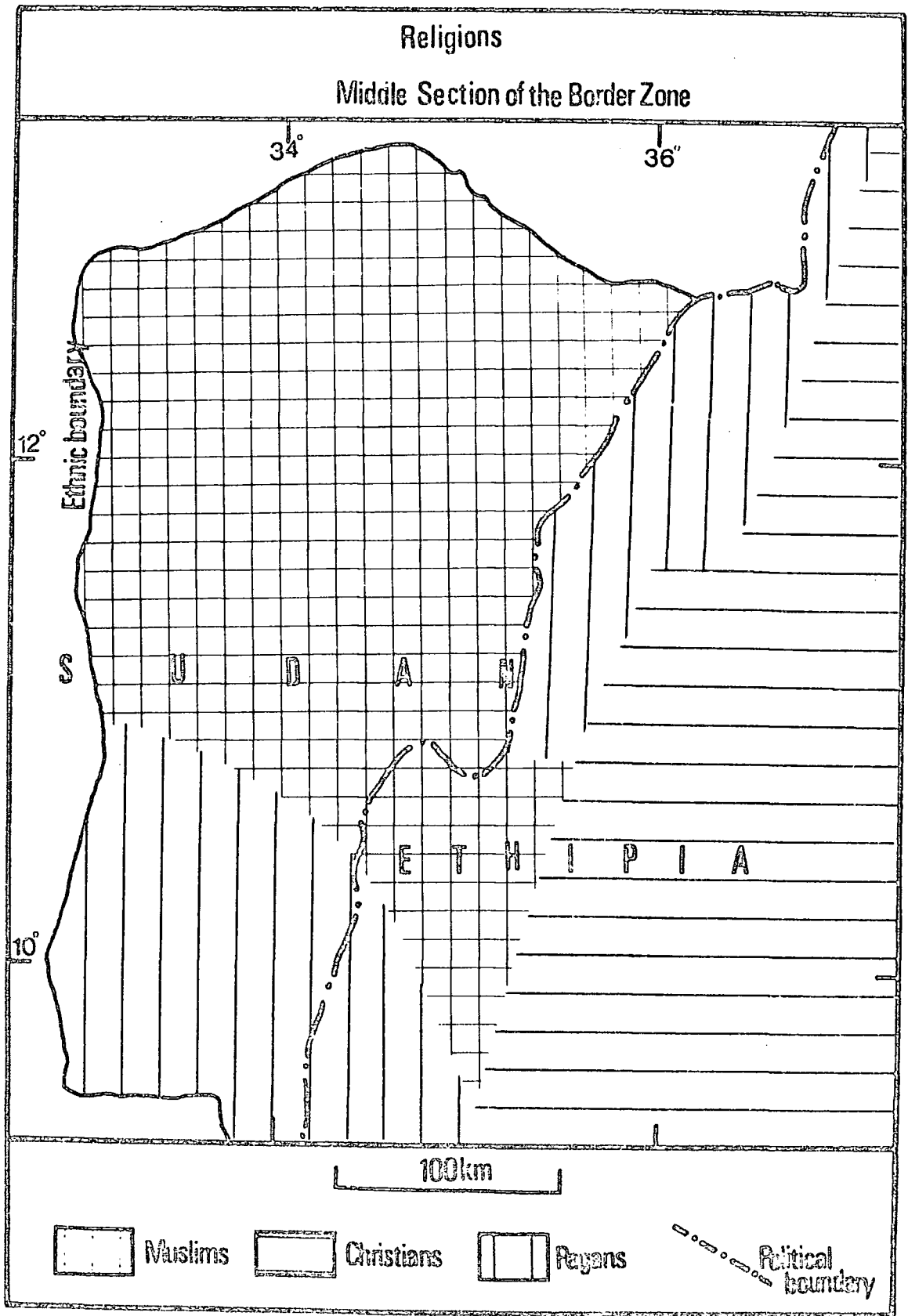


FIG.12

Shankala:<sup>18</sup> As a result of the demarcation of the political boundary in 1903 the original Funj territories of Guba, Beni Shangul and Fadasi passed into Ethiopia and the political boundary in this place, cutting as it does across all ethnic lines, has been a source of continuous problems ever since, as we shall see later.

It is somewhat astonishing, on first acquaintance, to discover that these territories contain no Ethiopians as the Amhara are found on the plateau and fear the climate and fever of the low lying country. The original inhabitants are negroid, Gumz to the north of the Blue Nile ruled by the Funj family of Abu Shuk with a number of Jebelawin Sheikhs, while to the south of the Blue Nile are Berta and the former slave raiding Watwit elements who displaced the Funj Meks.

Beni Shangul, Gumz and Fadasi could be treated as a whole, and in general it may be said that all the families of Tor El Guri of Beni Shangul, the Awlad Mahmud of Gumz and the Khojali of Fadasi and Assosa are all descendents of the Arab Gellaba<sup>19</sup> who settled in the region before the Egyptian conquest, and usurped the power of the Funj rulers by the familiar device of marrying their daughters. For many centuries this country was afflicted by the periodic raidings of the Gala and devastated by the slave trade which furnished the main article of export for the region, especially during the Egyptian period (1821-1885).

During the Mahdia the Awlad Mahmud of Gumz succeeded in keeping on fairly good relations with the Mahdists, while those of Fadasi and Beni Shangul defied the Mahdia and the Kings of Ethiopia alike. At the present time, the whole of this region is not in any way different to what it was in the beginning of the present century when the political boundary was demarcated. It appears that no effective rule has ever

been exercised either by Addis Ababa or by Khartoum probably because of its sheer remoteness, its unfavourable climate and lack of security in the area.

Culturally, this region has often acted as a buffer zone between the Sudan and Ethiopia; in its centre the ancient Sennar-Gondar route linked the central Sudan with the heart of the Ethiopian plateau and had been the main route through which cultural influence from the outside world had penetrated. To the west, the White Nile had been an easy route which guided the Nilotic tribes that pushed the hill tribes of the border region further north and west.<sup>20</sup> The Gala and Amhara peoples who widely spread over the Ethiopian plateau were only hindered from reaching the region under consideration on account of the high mountains and the hot climate of the western border. Thus, the region has attracted all small tribes escaping from invaders and evading the central administrations. The region also, in many respects, renders a typical example of a marginal zone: it is a marginal zone in terms of the cultures of the Gala, the Amhara, the Nilotes, the Funj and the Arabs. In terms of the contemporary politics of the Sudan, it is a marginal zone between the 'North' and the 'South'. In terms of administration, it is not only a neglected border zone between the Sudan and Ethiopia but also a neglected zone at the frontiers of the Kassala, the Blue Nile and the Upper Nile administrative provinces.

The Clay Plain as a whole, for more than three centuries, has been under the Islamic influences of the Funj Kingdom, but several Funj aristocrats centred at Gule, Fazughli, Beni Shangul and Keli were the most important Mangils of the whole Funj Kingdom. These Funj overlords had considerably influenced the culture of the local population in many

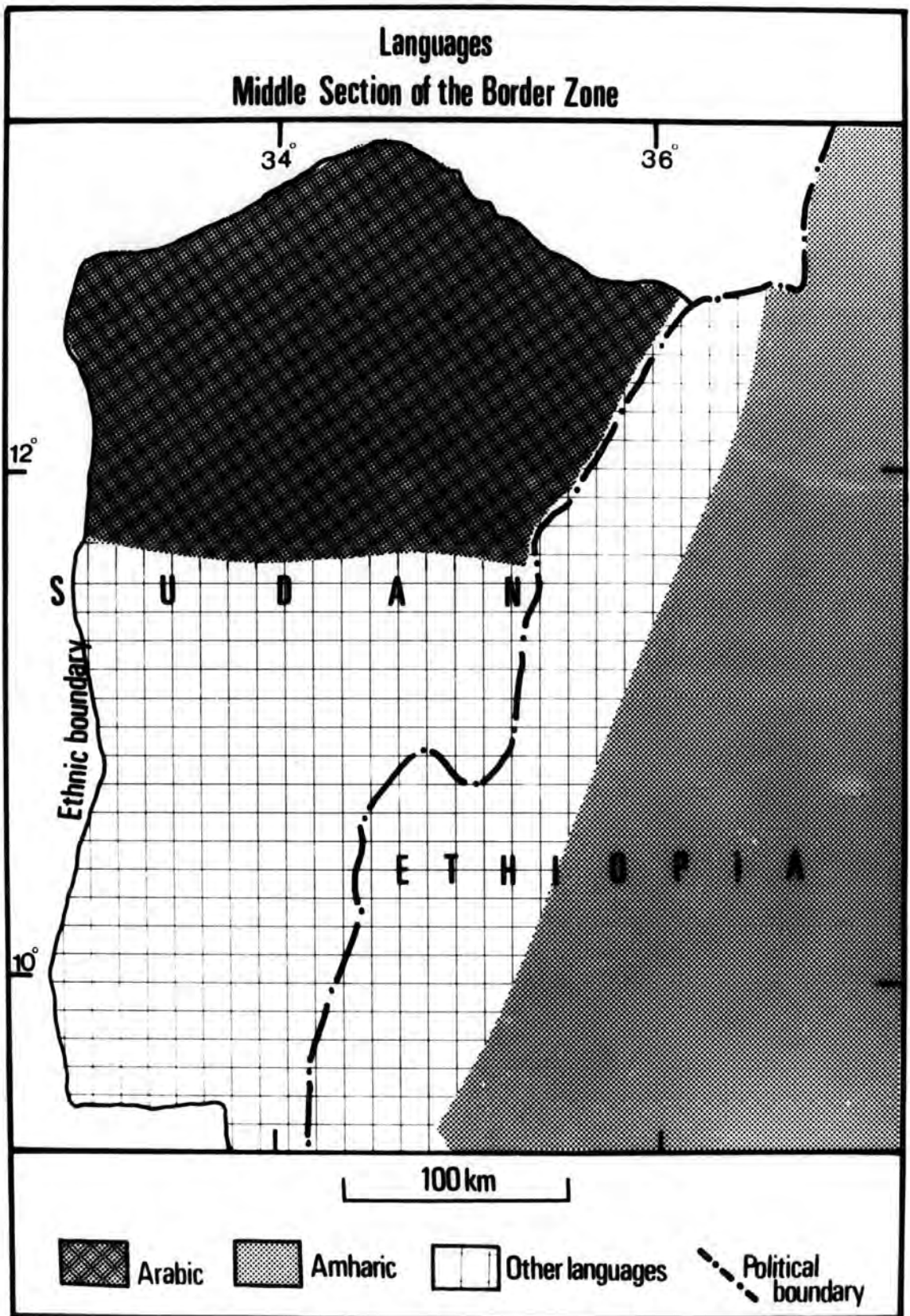


FIG.13

ways: they helped the spread of the Arabic language and Islamic religion through a number of Islamic schools (Khalwa). Ever since, the region had been largely orientated towards the west to Sennar which was not only important as the capital of the Funj Empire, but also as a great centre of trade, probably in the whole of Africa south of the Sahara. In the nineteenth century the region became a part of Egypt's 'African Empire' but the whole administrative system remained unchanged and the same Funj aristocracy was maintained to rule under the new regime at Khartoum. Arabic language and Islamic religion were even more encouraged and spread to other parts of the region. In addition, there has been a considerable flow of northern and central Sudan population towards this border zone escaping from the Egyptian army in 1821, and from the Mahdists and the Anglo-Egyptian forces at the end of the last century. Also the area has been a refuge for the slave traders and raiders, several peoples evading state taxes, running away from military service and forced labour camps. Not surprisingly, today, one finds fragmented groups of people of miscellaneous cultures but who, through centuries of living together, have developed a certain unity of outlook which has been greatly strengthened by the establishment of law and order since the demarcation of the international boundary.

### 3. THE NILOTES AND THE QUASI-MASAI TRIBES (See Figs. 14, 15 and 16)

These peoples occupy the eastern part of a greater region known in the geography of the Sudan as the Southern Clay Plain. It is defined in this work as the region bounded by the foothills of the Ethiopian plateau to the east, the northern limit of the Machar Marshes to the north, Lake Rudolf to the south and the traditional boundaries of the Annuak and the Eastern Nuer tribes to the west. The region includes the flood plains of the River Sobat and the Boma plateau to the south-east of the Sobat. It is the traditional habitat of the Nilotic

peoples (the Annuak and the Nuer) as well as the Quasi-Masai peoples (the Beri, the Jiye, the Tirma, the Nyangatom, the Turkana and the Topotha). Although all these tribes are often grouped under the terms Nilotes and Nilo-Hamites,<sup>21</sup> they do not in fact resemble a single tribe or even a unified group of tribes. They are a set of fragmented tribal communities which are often unfriendly with one another.

#### The Nilotic Tribes (the Nuer and the Annuak)

"The Nuer must be among the most backward of all the peoples of Africa, they live by, for and with their cattle ..." <sup>22</sup> says Jackson, who was an administrator in the Nuer land of the Upper Nile Province. They are divided into two main administrative sections, the Eastern Nuer and the Lau Nuer, numbering more than 300,000, almost the greatest single tribe in the Sudan.

Generally the Nuer claim common origin with the Dinka, Shiluk and the Annuak, but none of these tribes seem to claim any connection with the Nuer. According to their own account the Nuer claim to have immigrated to their present habitats, between the Nasir Post and the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary, sometime about the middle of the eighteenth century from Lake No region inside the Sudan flood plain. Today, they do not form a homogeneous tribe, but fall into several divisions in which every division has in many respects a separate identity and is independent from the others.

Like the Nuer, the Annuak are a Nilotic tribe inhabiting the flood plains adjacent to the Ethiopian highlands. They number about 50,000, of whom at least two-thirds live in Ethiopia. They are almost entirely agriculturalists, with some cattle breeders on the higher grounds because of the danger of the Tsetse fly. Reporting to the

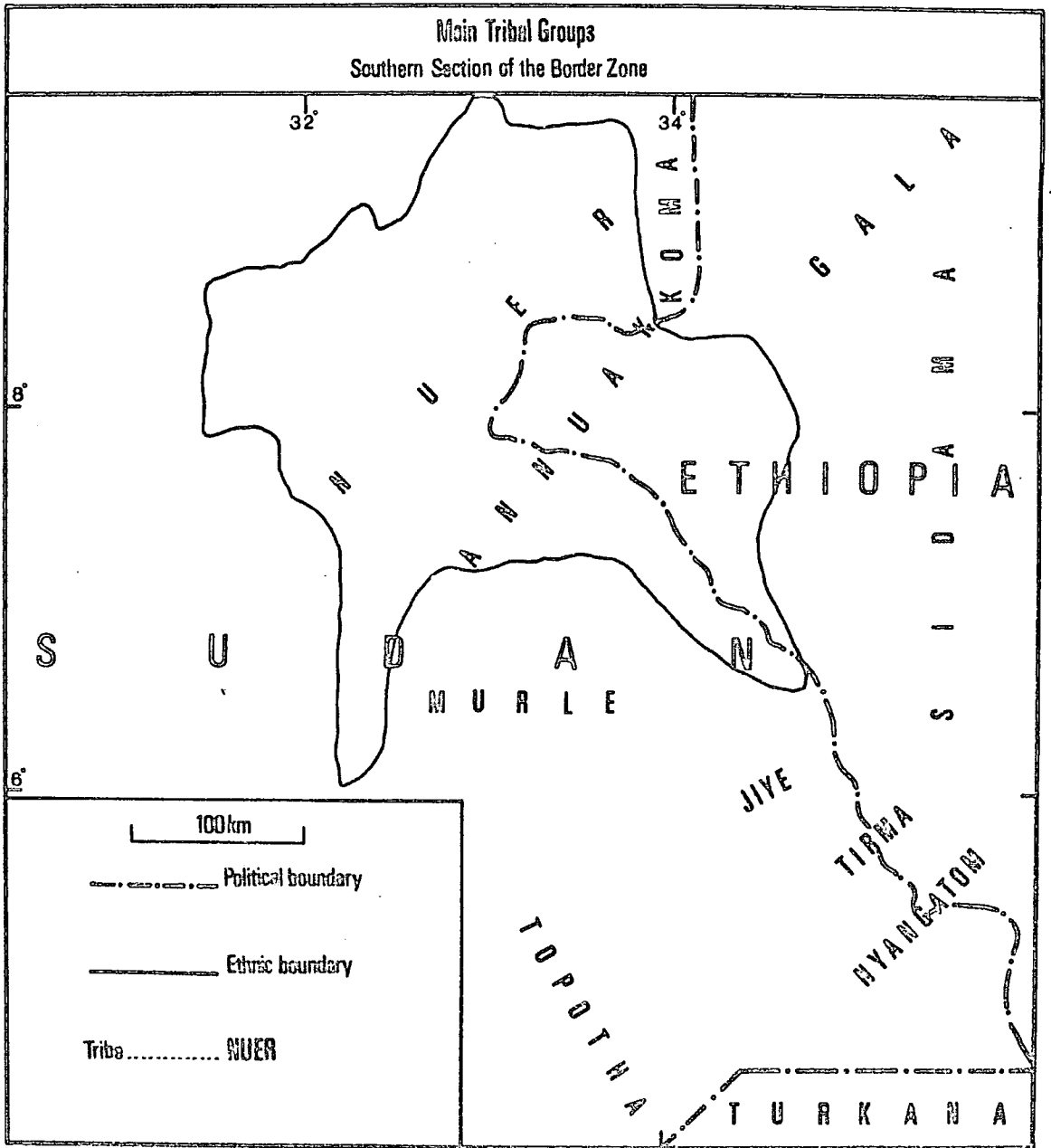


FIG.14

UNESCO, Lienhardt, of the International African Institute, says:

"The Annuak are certainly among the least administered peoples of the southern Sudan, and as far as I could gather, they are equally free from the control of any central Government in Ethiopia". He wisely attributes this lack of administration to the fact that "... even the administrative centre of Akobo cannot exercise such control as might be expected of nearby Annuak villages, since dissident individuals and factions can with ease withdraw across the river into Ethiopia".<sup>23</sup> Indeed this fact is of great importance to anyone who is dealing with the problems of the Annuak integration into the state because the vast majority of them live in so inaccessible a position that any form of direct rule is out of the question. For at least ten months in the year the Annuak are left entirely to their own resources to arrange their affairs. In contrast to the Nuer, the Annuak are one of the most homogeneous tribes of southern Sudan. Despite the fact that there are here and there some differences according to different environmental conditions the Annuak are homogeneous throughout their habitats, both in the Sudan and in Ethiopia.

Culturally, the Annuak always keep to their tribal identity, though economically they are orientated towards the east, to western Ethiopia. However, it is not easy to give the exact eastern limits of their tribal lands, but with possible exception of one or two Annuak communities which are said to be on the Ethiopian escarpment, there are no Annuak settlements east of longitude 35°E. This does not mean that they stretch as far east as this parallel, for they naturally keep as wide a stretch of country as possible between themselves and the Gala and Amhara, and since these peoples do not descend to the Sobat plains for any length of time, there is practically a wide no-man's land between the Annuak and the highlanders of the Ethiopian plateau.

#### 4. THE QUASI-MASAI TRIBES

The southern corner of the Sudan just to the south of the Annuak land is occupied by the Beir, the Jiye, the Topotha, the Nuyangatom, the Tirma and the Turkana which are a group of semi-nomadic cattle-owning tribes. They are not Nilotes (like the Nuer and the Annuak) but more like the Masai of Kenya. Therefore, it is reasonable to group them under the name of 'Quasi-Masai' which is adopted in this work in favour of 'Nilo-Hamites' which has been applied to them for a long time. Generally speaking, they occupy the region to the north and west of Lake Rudolf. Here, it is very difficult to give any exact definition of the tribal limits or to distinguish the Sudanese tribes from those of Kenya or Uganda who frequently visit the Sudan territory known as the Unadministered Area, or more widely and loosely as the Ellemi Triangle (see Fig. 35).

Another difficulty in regard to these tribes is the fact that each of them refers to the neighbouring tribes in its own language. In the following pages, the tribal names used are those best known of the people involved.

The Beir: The Beir are the people who call themselves Morle, while the Jiye call them Epeta, the Annuak call them Ajiba and it is the Dinka who call them Beir, the name which is formally used by the Government of the Sudan.<sup>24</sup> They are divided into two main sections, those who live on the Boma plateau and those who inhabit the plain with permanent wet season villages along the Bibor river south of latitude  $7^{\circ}\text{N}$ , and its tributaries the Veveno, the Lotilla and the Kengen. During the dry season they scatter around the headwaters of these streams and extend northwards along the Khor Geni as far as north latitude  $7^{\circ}20'$  and east longitude  $32^{\circ}97'$  where they join the Nuer, and north-eastwards where they come into close proximity with the Annuak. On the west they march with the Dinka and Bor, and their southern limit is on the Upper Nile Province boundary on north latitude  $5^{\circ}45'$ .

It appears that the Beir have been in the Bibor area for more

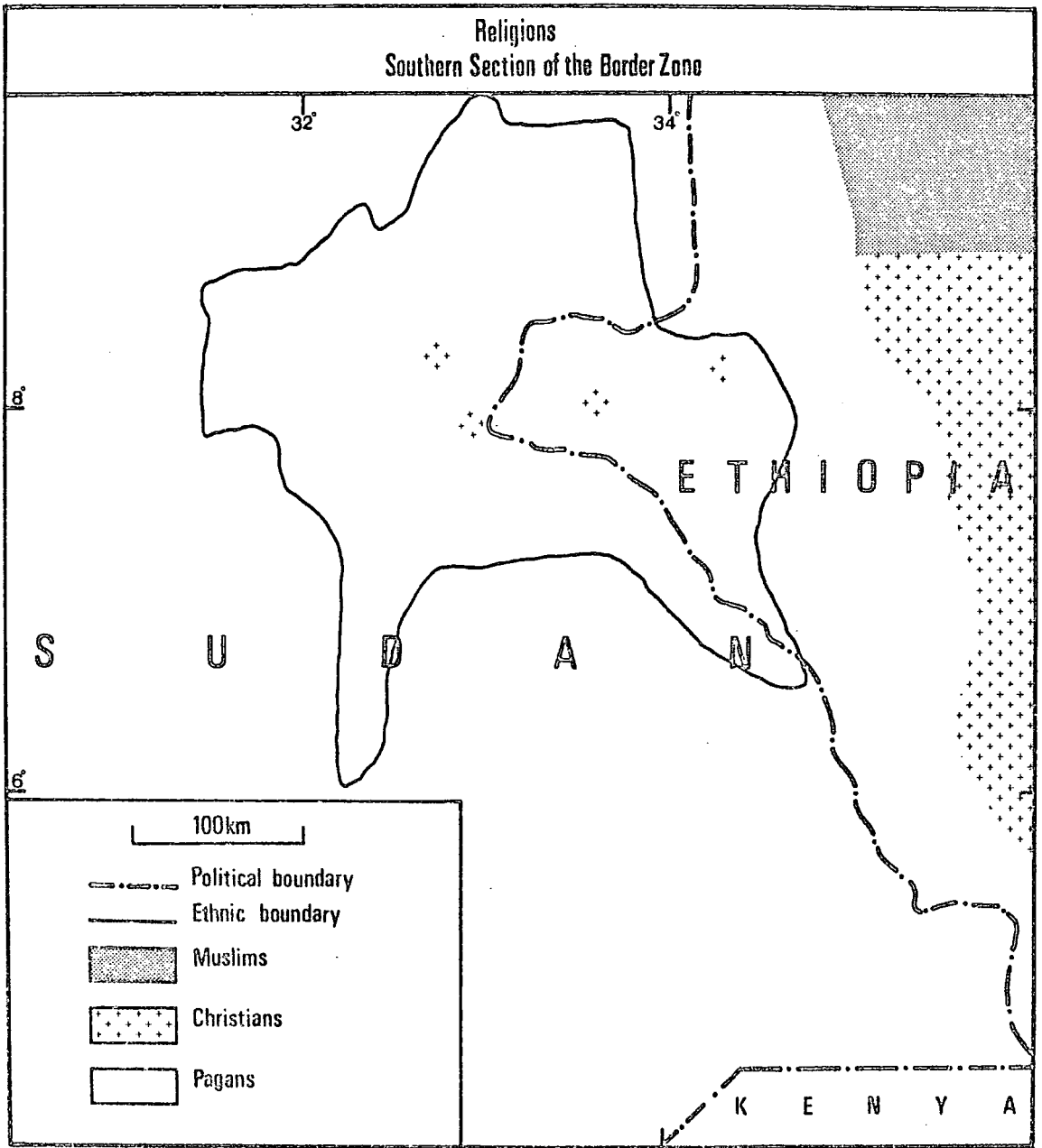


FIG.15

than a century and they claim that they emigrated to this area from the region of the Boma plateau. Even at present, there are waves of continuous migrations from Boma plateau to the plains around the River Bibor. Although the plains Beir frequently visit their relatives in the Boma plateau, they do not apparently go there to settle permanently. A puzzling feature in this respect is that whereas the plains Beir live by their cattle, they are poor agriculturalists and despise non-cattle owners, the plateau Beir are reputed to be excellent and industrious agriculturalists and own little stock on account of fly and disease. Most probably they are two sections of one tribe and consistent communication is maintained between them.<sup>25</sup>

The Jiye: The Jiye are known to the Beir by Kume and otherwise by Beri. Very little is known of the origin and permanent habitat of the Jiye, but they used to live in the mountain ranges to the south and east of the Boma plateau. At present they occupy all the country to the south and west of Jebel Kassingaro at north latitude  $5^{\circ}45'$  and east longitude  $34^{\circ}$ , and there is a possibility that they may extend eastwards to the Ellemi Triangle. The Jiye country is almost waterless in the dry season and so the tribe pressed northwards across the Kengen river. As neither the Beir nor the Jiye are typically Nilotes, it may be assumed that both have immigrated from the south; the Beir in every probability leading the way not less than a century ago, with the Jiye following in recent years, possibly via the eastern foothills of the Boma plateau.<sup>26</sup>

The Topotha, the Tirma, the Nyangatom and the Turkana

From a cultural point of view, all these tribes are a part of one great tribe, although they are bitter enemies of one another and cause increasing difficulties to the Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia as it will be seen in Chapter Six. When the political boundary was demarcated in 1909, the Topotha were included into the Sudan, the Tirma and the Nyangatom into Ethiopia and the Turkana into Kenya.

The Nilotes and the Quasi-Masai tribes are pagans, and though they speak their own dialects, broken Arabic is the lingua franca and English is generally spoken among the elite (educated and school leavers) who have been taught in the various missionary schools.

In this chapter we have traced the main human cultural and tribal background of the peoples of the Sudan eastern frontiers with the objective of setting the scene for the study of certain frontier problems. Such problems of administration and integration have been brought up by the establishment of the international boundary. It is now relevant to conclude this chapter by asserting the following facts which are further elaborated in the proceeding chapters:

- (1) In theory the peoples of the Sudan eastern border are a part of the state population by the fact of their being effectively administered within the state's political boundaries, practically, they fall into four distinct cultural zones and more than a dozen tribal groups which are not only at odds with the rest of the state's population, but also with their immediate neighbours and to each other.
- (2) Neither the spread of Arabic language nor Islamic religion can necessarily promote the spread of the Sudanese culture and way of life or in other words lead to integration in a single state in the sense of 'belonging to'. For example among the Beja and the Funj there are many communities who either speak Arabic or adopt Islam but largely retain their own traditional cultural and social patterns.
- (3) The spread of a national culture to the remote parts of the Sudan eastern borders is very slow but in steady process, as it has been seen in the case of the Eastern Hamites. In the Funj region where the national culture has been gaining strong ground since the time of the Funj Kingdom of Sennar, it is probably largely a matter of

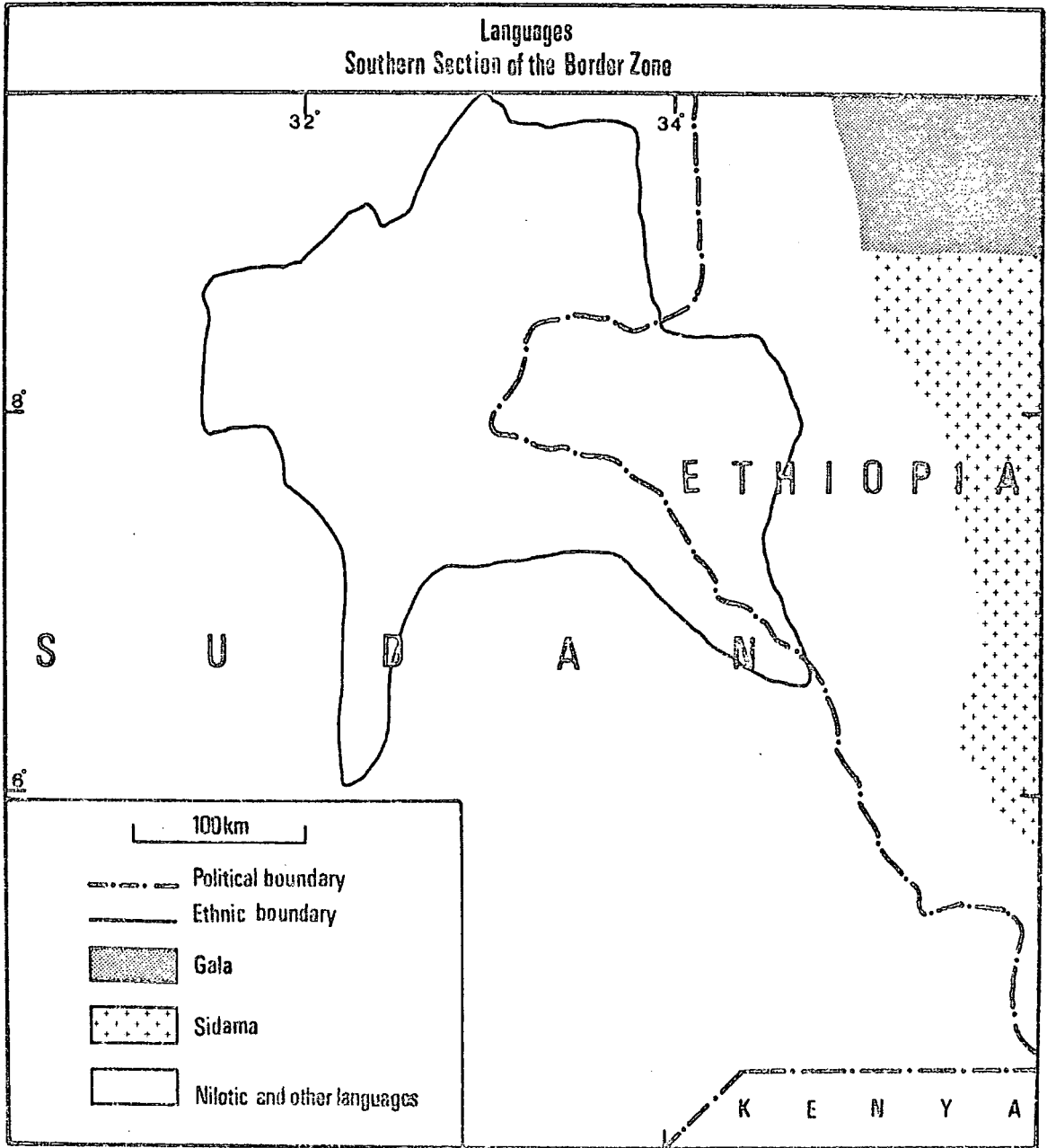


FIG.16

a sincere and active policy on the part of the central Government to link this economically vital part of the state with a good network of modern transport and communication to achieve the integration of the various communities into the pattern of Sudanese life.

The Nilotes and the Quasi-Masai tribes, having been separated from the rest of the country through ages of isolation, and having so far, resisted many attempts at centralized administration, can only be integrated into a coherent state by the adoption and application of a new political and administrative relationship between them and the rest of the state's population. Such relationship could be based on complete autonomy to the southern regions to manage their own affairs within one federal state. In other words, it might well be the case that the achievement of a mature national unity in the Sudan could only be reached by the implementation of a sort of federal system of state administration rather than the over centralized systems which have been adopted in the country since the beginning of the last century.

Poverty, ignorance and isolation are among the main obstacles in the way of integration of the various human groups of the Sudan eastern frontier as well as the rest of the state's population. Also their distinctive cultural identity and traditional allegiances to tribal chiefdoms makes it more difficult for the state to achieve any remarkable progress towards the national coherence. However with the development of education, communication and transport one can hope for the gradual breakdown of traditional chieftainships and tribal allegiances, which would promote a new allegiance to one national state based on common utility.

CHAPTER THREE

PRE-BOUNDARY FRONTIERS AND INDIGENOUS POLITICAL UNITS

IN THE BORDER ZONE

C H A P T E R   T H R E E

PRE-BOUNDARY FRONTIERS AND INDIGENOUS POLITICAL UNITS  
IN THE BORDER ZONE

INTRODUCTION AS TO THE NATURE AND CONCEPT OF AFRICAN BOUNDARIES

The colonization of Africa began at a time when the continent was still geographically unknown to the world.<sup>1</sup> The European explorers who first visited the region had prepared maps, which, owing to unfavourable conditions, and owing to lack of adequate instruments, were not wholly correct.<sup>2</sup> In some cases those explorers were not even sure of what they had discovered.<sup>3</sup>

It was under such conditions that the European powers began to move toward Africa. Agreements were signed with local chiefs and tribal leaders granting the Europeans monopoly of trade and extending the protection of the powers to the existing systems. The agreements so concluded were uniform and reference was made to tribal limits, which probably could have no definite meaning in the minds of those who initiated the agreements. That is because in pre-boundary times a tribe did not have a fixed territorial limit, though it possessed a centre of authority and in most cases a well organized community which could easily be mistaken with a political unit. Often a tribe in Africa is a mobile human group and does not have a defined boundary. Even indigenous Empires and Kingdoms of pre-colonial Africa assumed rather elastic dimensions because of the confused relations existing between themselves, their vassal chiefs, and the other, smaller, tribes at the outskirts of their border zones. Lord Lansdowne in 1904 wisely stated:

"It must be borne in mind that these tribal limits are of the

most elastic and uncertain description. A tribe belongs to one petty ruler one moment and to another petty ruler at another. We cannot, therefore, attribute to such boundaries the sanctity of a well established limit."<sup>4</sup>

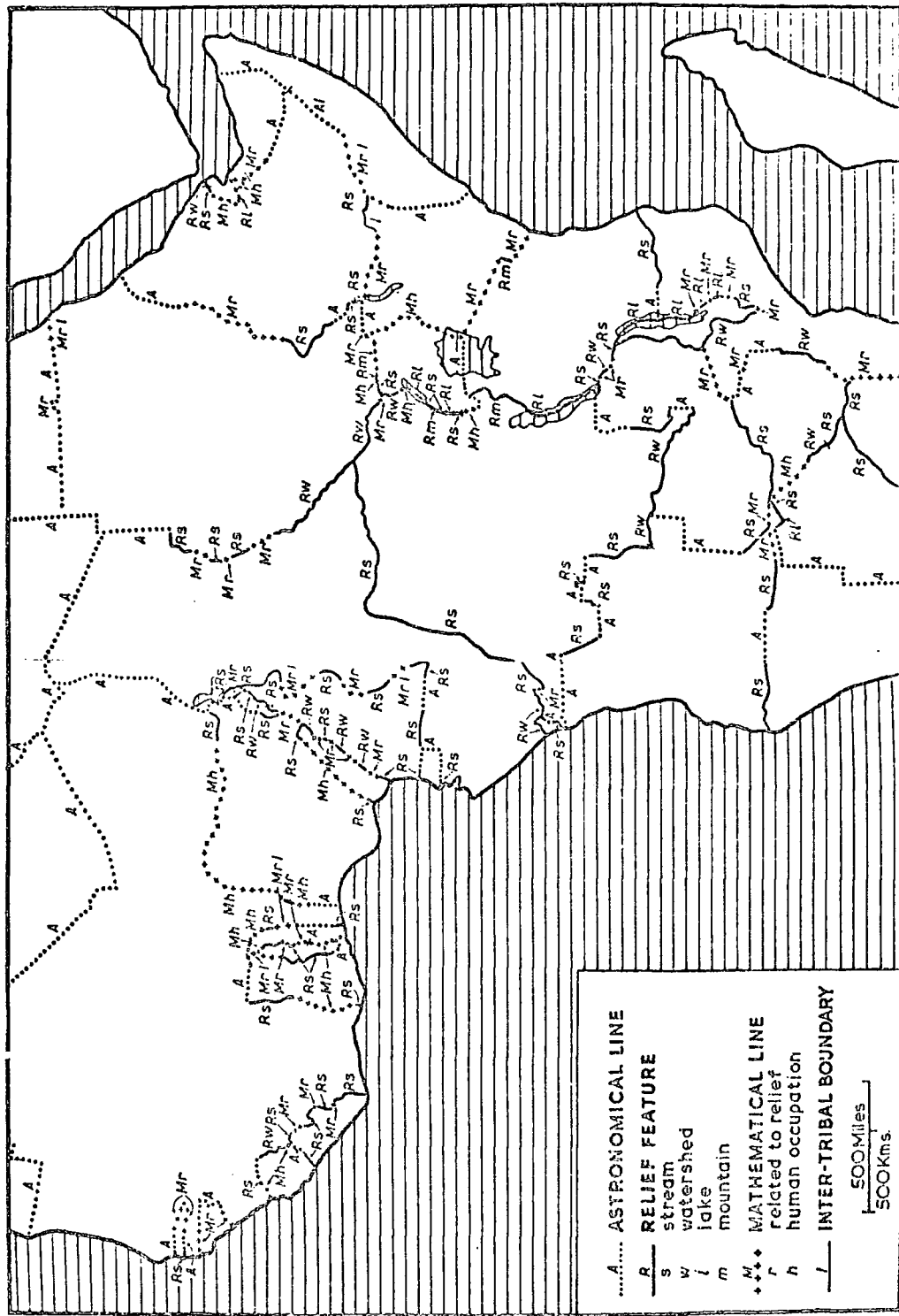
An example of such an agreement can be found in the treaty of 1885 between the Sultan of Sokoto and the National African Company (later renamed as Niger Company). The Sultan agreed to:

"grant and transfer to the above people (National African Company) or other whom they may arrange, my entire rights to the country on both sides of the River Benue and rivers flowing into it through my dominions for such distance from its and their banks as they may desire".<sup>5</sup>

On the strength of such agreements the European powers concluded between themselves treaties defining what they termed "spheres of influence". In such circumstances many controversies were bound to arise when the boundaries were demarcated. For the purpose of this work only a limited number of those controversies which particularly resulted from geographical factors will be considered.

In Africa the lines of boundary demarcation were mostly made to follow astronomical and mathematical lines (see Fig. 17). Barbour roughly calculated the relative proportions of different types of boundaries in Africa as follows: 44 per cent astronomical lines, 30 per cent mathematical lines, and only 26 per cent were found to follow relief features.<sup>6</sup> According to Boggs, these astronomical and mathematical boundaries "were antecedent to settlement, that is the boundaries were largely defined prior to settlement by the peoples who established them. They reflect the geographical ignorance of the time."<sup>7</sup> Thus geographical ignorance was responsible for a number of boundary

Tropical Africa: Types of International  
Boundary



(After K. M. Barbour)

FIG. 17

disputes which arose in the course of European colonization of Africa. Africa consequently bears evidence of the fact that the powers hastened to make boundary agreements without finding the time to survey and map unknown territories.<sup>8</sup> Lord Salisbury is reported to have said, in the Mansion House, that he and the French ambassador had been "giving away mountains and lakes to each other, but we have been hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where those mountains and rivers and lakes were".<sup>9</sup> Similarly in different parts of Africa diplomats were allocating large and small territories of their respective colonies to each other without the adequate survey of the potentialities of those territories. Sir Angus Gillan, who was a senior administrator in the Sudan from 1909-1939, addressing the combined meeting of the Royal African Society and the Royal Empire Society on the Sudan, said:

"We have rather a grievance over that nice round figure of one million square miles, because we used to be able to claim it with a few miles to spare. But in the days of appeasement we had to cede a small patch of disputed sand and rock to Mussolini to keep him quiet. It did not do us much harm or him much good, but it spoiled that round figure."<sup>10</sup>

To elaborate the scope of the geographical ignorance in Africa at the time of the boundary making, it is convenient to consider a number of specific examples from various parts of the continent under the following headings:

#### Wrong Mapping and Wrong Location

Wrong mapping was liable to happen at the early times of African exploration due to the lack of adequate equipment, ignorance of the language of the indigenous peoples, and the lack of adequate

knowledge of the various names which the natives gave to the various features of their landscape. An example in this respect is found in the agreement between Great Britain and King Leopold II of Belgium in 1894, relating to their respective 'spheres of influence' in central and east Africa. In the agreement laid down, the two sides:

"agreed that the 'sphere of influence' of the Independent Congo State shall be limited to the north of the German 'sphere of influence' in East Africa by a frontier following the 30th Meridian east of Greenwich up to its intersection by the watershed between the Nile and the Congo."<sup>11</sup>

The original map showed the wrong position of what was supposed to be the 30th Meridian. However, later discoveries and more geographical knowledge brought to light the fact that the real position of the 30th Meridian is considerably to the east of the line shown on the map.<sup>12</sup> In a later period after investigation, the true Meridian was found to be about 21 kilometres to the east of the first one.<sup>13</sup>

Difficulties caused by wrong location could be well illustrated by the boundary between the former Belgian Congo and Northern Rhodesia. Article I of the agreement in relation to this portion between the two powers states "It shall then follow the thalweg of the Luapola up to its issue from Lake Bangweolo. Thence it shall run southwards along the meridian of longitude of the point where the river leaves the lake".<sup>14</sup> In the year 1927 it was found by a joint commission which was appointed by the two Governments to demarcate the boundary, that the Luapola river does not issue from Lake Bangweolo.<sup>15</sup> The river was found to be identical with another river, and that it only takes the name Luapola after flowing over the swamps to the south of Lake Bangweolo.

The boundary between British and the French mandated territories in Togoland was made in reference to a map known as 'Sprigade Map' in 1919.<sup>16</sup> A commission appointed in 1929 to modify the boundary found that the following features which were printed in the 'Sprigade Map' and referred to in the text of the agreement could not be traced: the massif Kuni, the River Balagbo and the Maria falls. The Mo and Mamale rivers did not exist.<sup>17</sup> As a result of these discrepancies, in the later periods of colonization the boundary commissioners began to rely on the wording of the agreements and protocols rather than the maps. At least one Anglo-French protocol in 1929 in respect of Togoland recommended "in cases where the details of the map do not appear to correspond exactly with the wording of the protocol, it is the wording of the protocol which must be strictly followed. The map is intended to support the protocol."<sup>18</sup>

#### Identity of Landmarks

The pioneer surveyors and map makers of African territories mainly depended on the indigenous place names. As there were no standard names for the various landmarks and physical features, but nearly every tribe or sub-tribe in an area had its own name for the same feature, errors and complications were inevitable. Perhaps the best example in Africa is found in the agreement between Germany and Portugal respecting their possessions in south-west Africa in 1886. In this agreement it was stated that the boundary will follow River Kunne-ne to certain waterfalls on the same river.<sup>19</sup> These waterfalls were not sufficiently defined. Not surprisingly a dispute arose as to the identity of the waterfalls of the River Kunne-ne. Different maps gave different names to the same falls. The Portugese marked them as the Rua Cana falls, while the German maps called them the Kemple falls. The problem remained until 1926 when it was solved by

a new agreement between the Union of South Africa and Portugal where the two parties agreed that the falls in question were to be "the great falls marked on Portugese maps as the Rua Cana falls and on the German maps as Kemple falls".<sup>20</sup>

### Geographical Terms

In respect of geographical terms which were used in the boundary agreements, the technical problems which have arisen in Africa are not basically different from those which have arisen elsewhere in the world.

In Africa almost 90 per cent of what is traditionally known as 'natural' frontiers follow rivers, streams, watersheds and plateaux. At that time these physical features were conceived to be the best boundary marks because they were presumed to make good barriers, and were easy to demarcate and maintain. However, when these relief features serve as boundaries between states, certain principles should be adopted to define the line. These principles are expressed in various geographical terms like the thalweg, the median line, the upper part, the watershed, the plateau, the slope and the table ... etc. Accordingly certain difficulties were to be faced at the time of boundary making because of the inaccurate use or lack of adequate definition of these terms when connected with international boundaries. To support this thesis only two of these terms, thalweg and watershed, are examined in the following pages to explain the various problems that might arise when such geographical terms are used in connection with African boundaries. However, it is convenient to note that these two terms are chosen here at random as there could be no space within the limited scope of this study to state all the geographical terms which were inadequately used in connection with African boundaries.

Thalweg:<sup>21</sup> In Africa there is frequent reference to thalweg as there

are a number of boundaries that follow rivers, wadis or khors. In most cases thalweg is used without any precise definition in spite of the fact that it can stand for more than one meaning. However, in very rare cases it is defined to mean only the navigable part of a river.<sup>22</sup> It would appear from the various definitions cited in the footnote that there is no uniform definition for the term thalweg. Therefore, when a boundary is indicated to follow a thalweg the following problems might arise (see Fig. 34): (a) the river might change its course; (b) the river course (sometimes) divides into two or more channels and the question is which of these channels constitutes the boundary; (c) the sovereignty of islands which might be formed in the middle of the river; (d) some boundary rivers are navigable while others are not; and (e) some river beds dry out during the dry seasons.

Watershed: This term is also used in a number of African boundary agreements as a landmark of delimiting international boundaries.<sup>23</sup>

Like the thalweg it does not follow a conclusive definition. Adami defines it as "the line of water parting, formed by joining all points where the water separates, whether on or below the ground, to flow respectively into the adjacent basins of the two rivers".<sup>24</sup> The main difficulties of the watersheds are that some of them are featureless and their exact limits are not always easy to find. "Some of these watersheds are in swamps and some others are in low relief that a traveller is unconscious of ascent and descent as he crosses the divide between major river systems".<sup>25</sup> Even the water divides between the great African rivers like the Nile and the Congo are not in certain parts quite distinctive. A good part of the watershed between the Congo river and the Nile is fairly flat and featureless.

#### Tribal Limits and Existing Frontiers

Elsewhere in this chapter it has been mentioned that 74 per

cent of the total length of African boundaries fall under the category of astronomical and mathematical lines, that is to say they mostly follow straight lines and arcs of circles. Consequently it is widely believed by many students of boundaries, whether in the fields of geography, history, politics or international law, that African boundaries are 'artificial' in the sense that they are superimposed upon the cultural and economic interests of the border people. In Whittlessey's words:

"For the indigens, these boundaries are imposed upon and cut across tribal units which have grown up in adjustments with conditions with the natural environment. To be divided between opposed systems of Government is itself vexatious."<sup>26</sup>

However, the present author found that in some parts of Africa, a number of boundaries were made to follow the tribal limits: an example can be seen in the boundary between British East Africa (now Kenya) and Ethiopia where it was agreed in 1907 that "the boundary between the two states will follow from Ursulli, the tribal limits between the Gurre' and the Barana".<sup>27</sup> In 1908 Italy and Ethiopia followed the same principle and agreed to make the boundary between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia follow the tribal limits between Rahamin and all the tribes to the north of it.<sup>28</sup> Yet the main difficulty about this type of boundary, was that in pre-boundary Africa, the tribes themselves knew of no boundaries in the modern sense.<sup>29</sup> Thus some contributors in this field tend to believe that it was not surprising that the colonial boundaries could not satisfy the interests of the indigens and they are doubtful if it was at all possible to draw any boundary which would not disturb the tribal and ethnic groups.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand a number of African nationalists and some advocates of African unity in various parts of Africa do believe that it was possible at the end of the nineteenth

century to draw a boundary in tune with the existing political units at the time of boundary making.

Therefore, an attempt is made in the following pages to examine the pre-boundary frontiers and indigenous states which existed in the Sudan eastern border to show how they do compare and contrast with the present day boundaries of the region.

#### PRE-BOUNDARY FRONTIERS AND INDIGENOUS POLITICAL UNITS IN THE SUDAN EASTERN BORDERS

In the area now under question the author could not find any form of boundaries, in the modern sense as we know today, prior to the intervention of various colonial powers at the end of the last century. However, there were indigenous frontiers and large political units which were more or less similar to the former colonial states or the sovereign countries of today. Thus the examination of the nature and distribution of existing frontiers and indigenous political groups in the pre-boundary times at this part of Africa is useful in two ways: firstly, it will be possible to assess the relationship between the pre-boundary frontiers and the colonial boundaries which exist today. Secondly, it will be possible to test the validity of the very controversial problem of the so-called colonial boundaries being superimposed upon the indigenous frontiers.

Having discussed the various aspects of the ethnic and tribal distribution and their interrelations in the previous chapter, the following paragraphs will only attempt to consider the character and distribution of the indigenous frontiers of the political units which more or less possessed a fixed territorial limit and a centre of authority, apart from the traditional tribal entities.

For this purpose it is convenient to divide the whole area under question into two sections:

- (a) - the Existing Conditions North of River Sobat, and
- (b) - the Existing Conditions South of River Sobat.

By considering the existing frontiers in these two sections, one cannot fail to observe two distinctly different types of pre-boundary conditions. To the north of the Sobat the present political boundary was more or less made to follow an indigenous frontier which has been existing for many centuries past, while to the south of the Sobat the border zone was one marked by ethnic fragmentation and heterogeneity and by the absence of any political organizations which hardly exceeded the limits of a village or a small number of villages.

(a) THE EXISTING CONDITIONS NORTH OF RIVER SOBAT

To study this section of the frontier at the time of the boundary making one must sketch the existing conditions in the region as they existed before the nineteenth century. Such a sketch is useful in three ways. First, it demonstrates a gradual and systematic evolution and development of a border zone into a boundary during a period of many centuries. Second, and related to the first, it is possible to show that, as a matter of fact, this development from a border zone to a boundary did not practically or effectively modify the lives of the indigens or make any remarkable division in the cultural and economic landscape of the region. Third, a great deal of emphasis has been laid (both at the time of boundary making and in the present day boundary disputes in the region) on the existence of previous frontiers of ancient Empires and Kingdoms as a historical evidence to make good a claim upon certain present day border territories. Perhaps the most outstanding claim of this sort in the history of the region

under consideration was made by Emperor Menelek II of Ethiopia in his famous circular letter to all the heads of European states:

"While tracing today the actual boundaries of my Empire, I will endeavour if God gives me life and strength to establish the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia up to Khartoum."<sup>31</sup>

Although the above quotation does not in any way show or make reference to any definite ancient Empire of Ethiopia, yet the author believes that the Emperor was referring to the Axumite Empire which ended in 700 A.D. That is because, apart from the Ethiopian Empire of the nineteenth century which was built by Menelek himself, the Axumite Empire was the only Ethiopian Empire that had its frontiers on the west beyond the River Atbara (Tekaze). Such being the case, it is convenient to trace the nature and extent of this Empire to the west of its heart land, that is towards the present day Sudan.

#### The Western Frontiers of the Axumite Empire (? - 700 A.D.)

Almost all the available evidence, though this in many aspects is meagre and inadequate, tends to show that the western expansion limits of the Axumite Empire was approximately at the upper parts of the River Atbara.<sup>32</sup> The Emperor of the Adulis Inscription (about the second half of the first century A.D.) claimed to have conquered the Beja tribes. "I proceeded next against the Tangilae (the most powerful Beja tribe) who adjoin the borders of Egypt." He also claimed that he reduced, "all the nations on the West up to Kasu". Budge, from whom these quotations are taken, believes that the evidence is enough to believe that the east bank of the Nile was the western frontier of the Axumite Empire.<sup>33</sup> Emperor Ezana in his famous inscription called himself King of Beja and the Kasu.<sup>34</sup> From Ezana's inscription it would appear that the Axumite Empire had two frontiers to the west, one was the Nile on

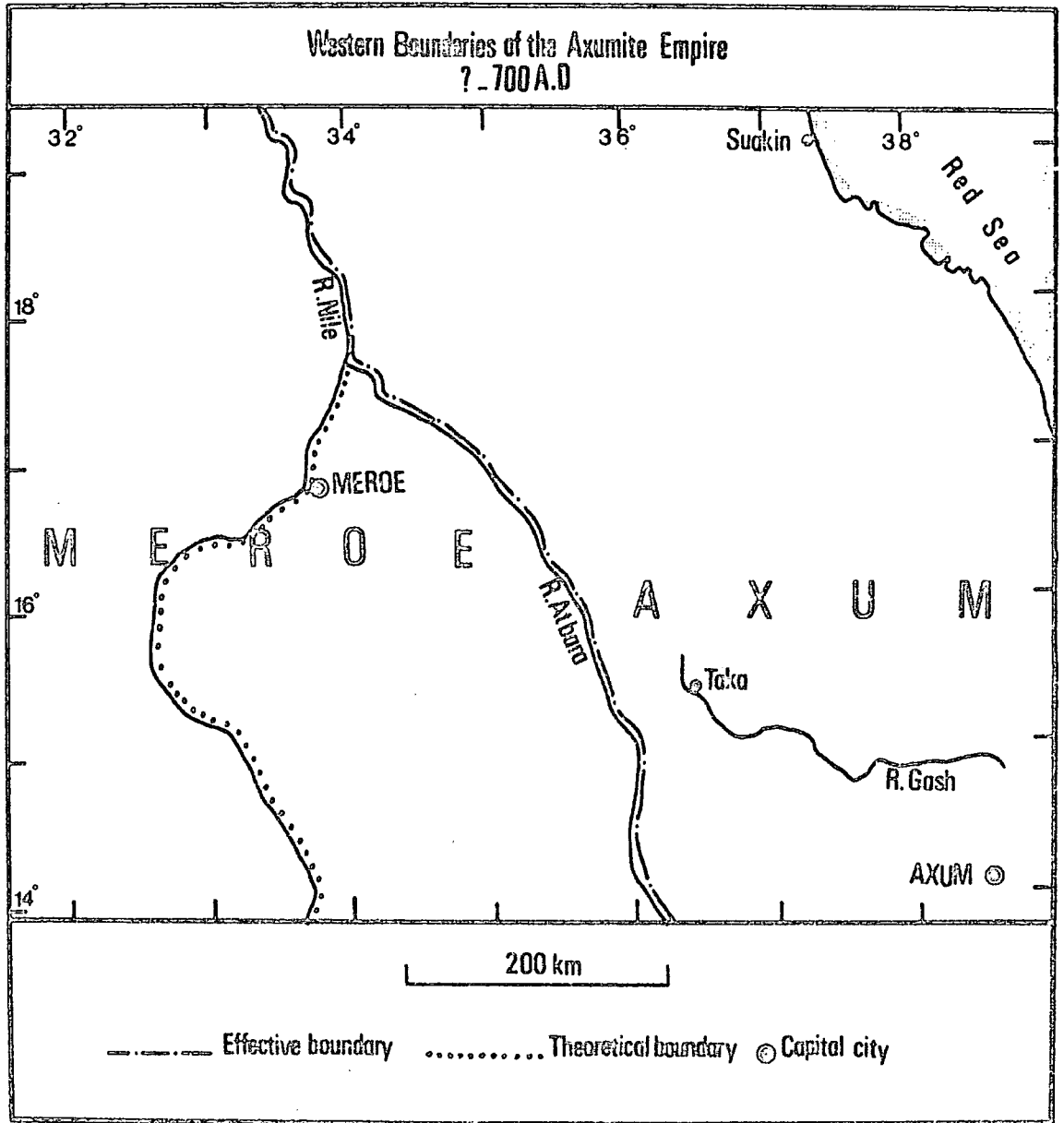


FIG.18

which Ezana had probably little real influence until he was strong enough to undertake an effective expedition. The other frontier seems to have been at the Atbara where the Axumite authority might have been directly enforced (see Fig. 18). This is even more emphasized by the following extract from the same inscription in which he justified his expedition against the peoples of Noba to the west of his country.

"And they will not cross the River Tekaze (Atbara) said the peoples of Noba (Sudan subjects); and they were in the habit of attacking the peoples of Karsa and making war upon the Red peoples."<sup>35</sup>

"Ezana did attack the Noba and fought a crucial battle with them", says Budge.<sup>36</sup> A later inscription describes an Axumite Emperor fighting in the neighbourhood of Kassala and mentions the Baria tribe, which is still known in the same area, being attacked.<sup>37</sup> This inscription strongly suggests that Kassala was a border settlement as it is today.

After the collapse of the Axumite Empire in the eighth century A.D., there is no information about the existing conditions and it seems that the whole region was broken up into tiny Kingdoms, Sheikhdoms, and City states (see Fig.19) which were still in existence in the sixteenth century when they were gradually conquered and federated into the Funj Kingdom of Sennar.

#### The Eastern Frontiers of the Funj Kingdom of Sennar 1504-1821

Crawford,<sup>38</sup> has in a masterly way dealt with the history of the Funj Kingdom from its emergence at the beginning of the sixteenth century until its collapse during the first part of the nineteenth century under the pressure of Egypt's 'African Empire'. His work

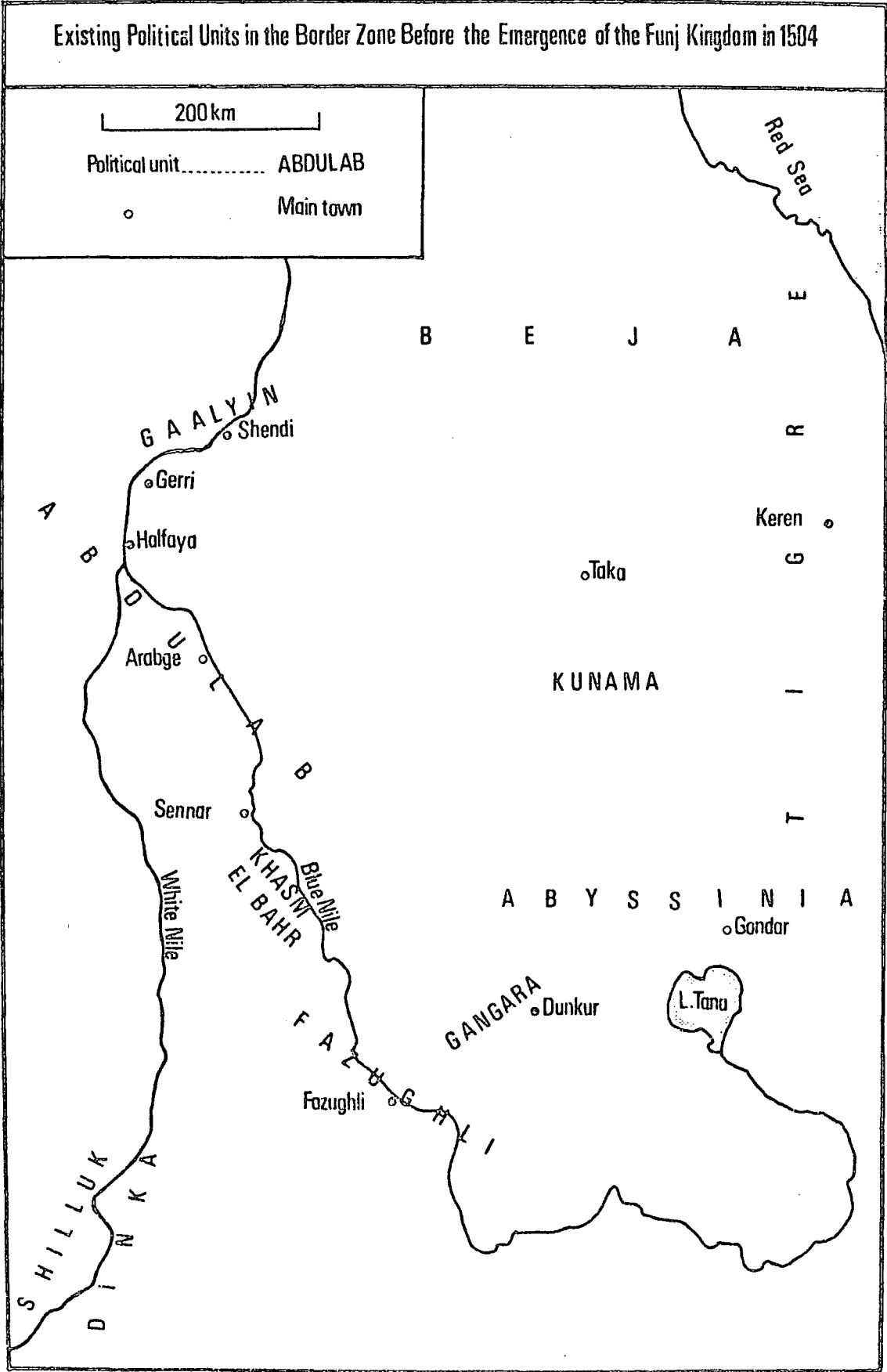


FIG.19

includes a study of the relations between the Funj Empire and that of Ethiopia in which the frontier clashes between rulers and subjects of the two Empires played a great part. Crawford's book indeed ranks as an indispensable source book combining all accessible evidence on the conditions of the indigenous frontiers during these three centuries which preceded the delimitations of the present day boundaries.

Recently, Merid Wolde Aregay and Sergew Hable Selassie studied 'The Sudanese-Ethiopian Relations Before The Nineteenth Century' from the Ethiopian sources which were not available to Crawford.<sup>38</sup> Both works spoke about presumed border disputes between the two adjacent Empires. Crawford concluded "it would be unfortunate to attempt to find any clearly defined line separating the Kingdom of Sennar from that of Abyssinia". He continued "to the Abyssinians Fazequlo (Fazughli) was regarded the uttermost limit of their land to the south, that in the north being Sevaken (Suakin). In the Nile Valley it is true that there were points marking the exact limits of jurisdiction; but in the open country such certainty never existed. Allegiance to one or the other power consisted solely in the payment of tribute, and in the remoter fastness it could only be enforced by the periodical raids".<sup>40</sup> Aregay and Selassie showed from the 'Annals of the Ethiopian Kings' that many of the provinces and districts of the Funj Empire bordering Abyssinia could be correctly identified today. From north to south, these are Suakin, Taka (Kassala), Atbara (meaning the river), Sakhia, Sin, Abu Ramla, Radmer, Queheba, Deleb, Fazugli and Berta (meaning the tribe).<sup>41</sup>

At present Berta is a tribe which lives to the south of Fazughli, but to the best of the present author's efforts no town or village or district could be traced in the region bearing the name

Berta. Such being the case there is no reason not to believe that the 'Annals of the Ethiopian Kings' had actually meant the same tribe. On the other hand if this suggestion is true, then contrary to the generally accepted view that asserts the southern limits of the Funj Empire at Fazughli one can assume that the southern frontiers of the Funj Empire might have been much further to the south of Fazughli. Probably it extended to the Macher Marshes and the River Sobat in the Upper Nile Province. This region was not only a reasonable natural barrier against the attacks of the Ethiopians, the Gala and the Nilotic tribes, but it was also the southern end of the navigable part of the White Nile and its eastern tributaries.

Fig. 20 is based on information and data mainly derived from the 'Annals of the Ethiopian Kings' and Crawford's 'Funj Kingdom of Sennar'. It is not in any way intended to suggest that there was a linear boundary between the Funj Empire and Abyssinia. However, it must be noted that because we do not know whether there were linear boundaries between these two Empires we need not necessarily conclude that there were not political boundaries between them, or that their rulers did not know them. It is equally important to note that at the earlier part of the nineteenth century, almost along the entire length of this frontier zone there was an area of no-man's land where slave raiders and refugees and exiles from both sides of the border had built up a number of small kingdoms of their own away from any effective control from Sennar or Gondar. Fig. 21 shows the approximate distribution of those tiny border kingdoms as they existed at the end of the Funj Empire.

To the north of the River Atbara the author could not find evidence that the land of the Beja (except for Dar Sabah, that is the region of Khor Baraka and the River Gash as well as along most of the

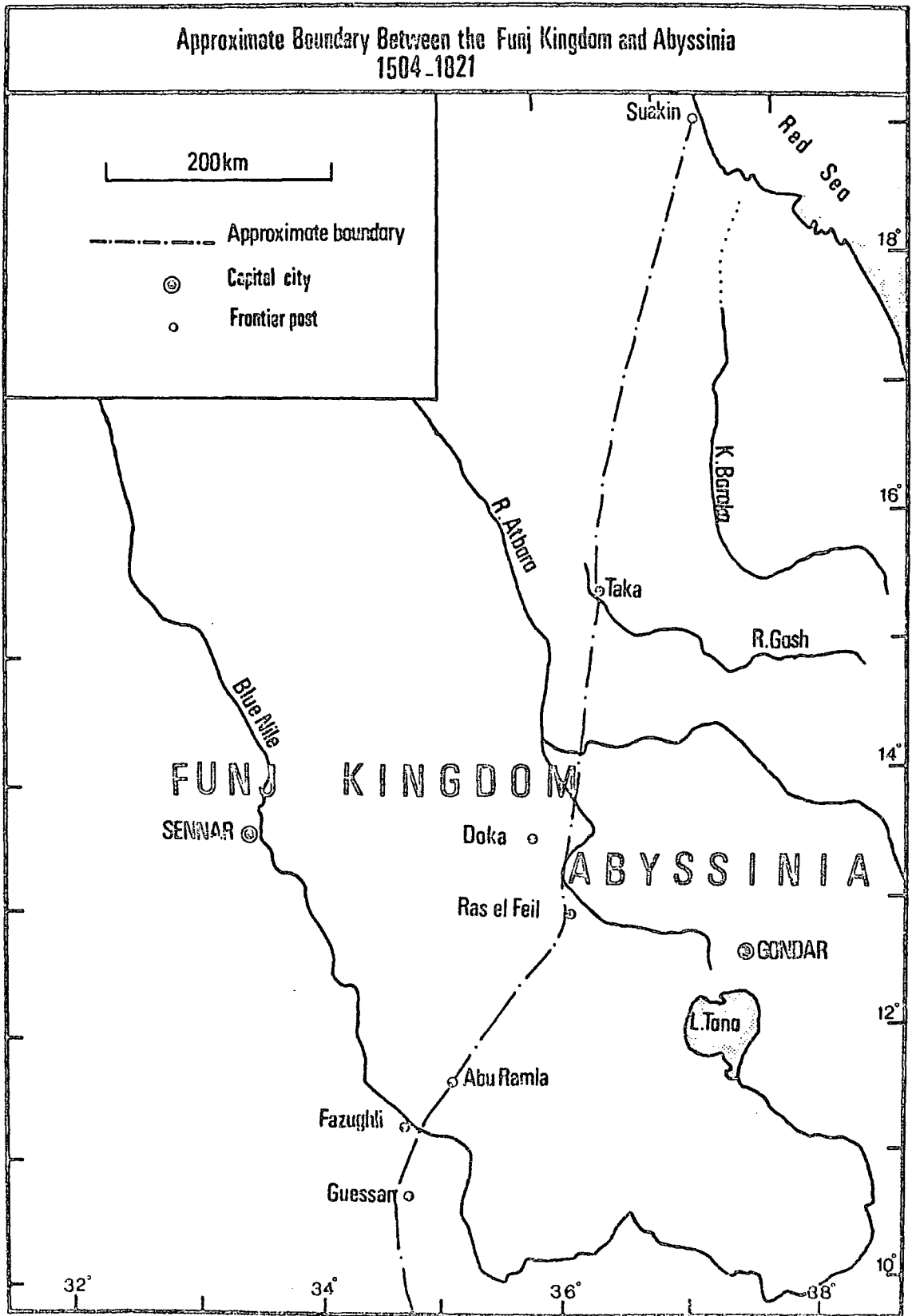


FIG.20

trade routes to Suakin) has ever been a part of the Funj Empire or in any way connected to the Abyssinian Empire. The Beja have always been masters of their own lands. Suakin port itself together with the two subsidiary ports of Massawa and Zeila were a part of the Ottoman Empire in east Africa since 1550 A.D. under the Wali of Hijaz in Arabia.

#### The Eastern Frontiers of Egypt's 'African Empire' 1821-1885

After establishing himself a Khedive (viceroy) in the Ottoman province of Egypt in 1805, Mohamed Ali Pasha later felt that he was strong enough to build an Empire of his own that could succeed the Ottoman Empire, which was showing signs of decline by that time.<sup>42</sup> Occupied by the idea of Empire building, Mohamed Ali decided to invade the Sudan in 1821. His main motives were, first 'African slaves', not only to work in his many agricultural and industrial schemes in Egypt, but also to build up the strong army of his dreams by thousands of unpaid black 'African slaves'. His second motive was to exploit the famous gold mines of Beni Shangul at the eastern borders of the Sudan, which were reported to him with a great deal of exaggeration. His third motive was even more ambitious, it was the control of the Red Sea which formed the main trade route between Africa, Asia and Europe and the main stream of pilgrim traffic to the holy places in Arabia. By mastering the Red Sea, the Khedive could divert the whole of its trade to the benefit of Egypt.

With these motives in his mind, Mohamed Ali in less than twenty years had practically controlled all the former frontiers of the Funj Empire except for the triangular region extending to the north of the River Dindir including the Butana as far as south of Suakin. This region was not conquered mainly because the Khedive was not sure whether the Beja and their allied tribes, who were not a part or subjects of the Funj

Existing Political Units in the Border Zone at the End of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

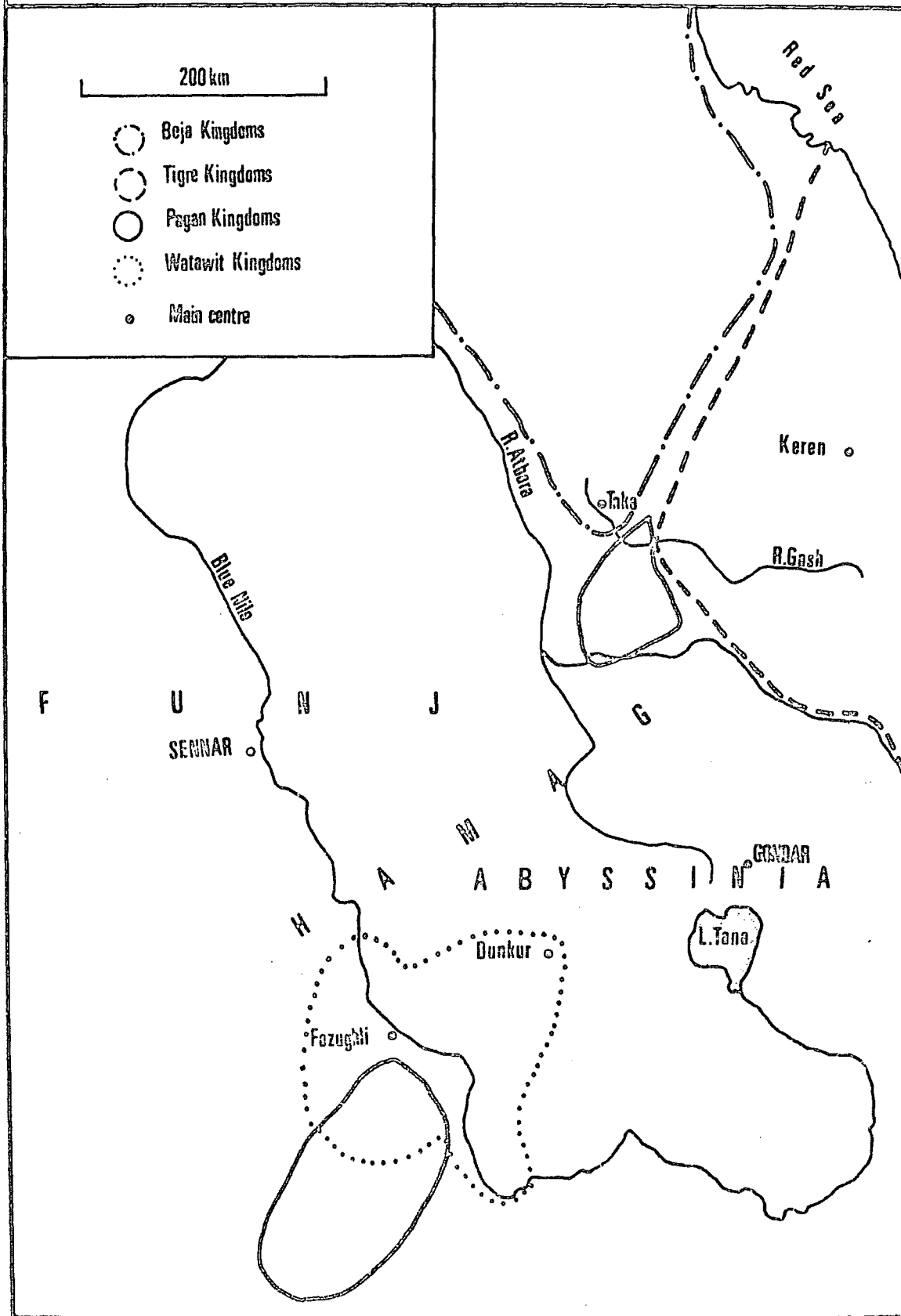


FIG.21

Empire, might have been in one way or another connected with Ethiopia.<sup>43</sup>  
In 1837, when he was assured that the Beja were independent from Ethiopia and that they had no connection with it, Mohamed Ali lost no time in destroying the Beja and occupying their territories.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, by the middle of the nineteenth century, for the first time in the history of the Sudan, a universal administrative unity was achieved in the whole of the Nile valley west of the Ethiopian plateau. Later on, the Khedive even endeavoured to occupy more territories of north-east Africa lying between his newly acquired Empire and Ethiopia by directing his tax collecting and slave raiding parties to the no-man's land lying to the east of Gallabat region; but these parties were often met with strong resistance by the Ethiopians who were probably aware of the Khedive's motives of expansion.

From Massawa and Kassala posts the Egyptians extended their 'sphere of influence' to the Hamasen plateau in northern Ethiopia and established strong frontier posts between Kassala and Massawa against any Abyssinian extension westwards. When the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 turned the Red Sea into a strategic waterway, Ismail Pasha, the Egyptian Khedive at the time, pronounced his claims on the Red Sea. Shortly afterwards, the Egyptians notified the different powers concerned that the Somali Coast was a dependence of Massawa and in 1875 they even actually took possession of Zeila port and extended inland to occupy Harar.<sup>1</sup> In 1877, Britain formally recognised Egyptian jurisdiction over the Somali Coast, including Balhar and Berbara which were agreed between Egypt and England to be free ports.<sup>45</sup>

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, Egypt's 'African Empire' reached its greatest extent. From a point just to the south of Massawa port, the Ethiopian-Egyptian frontier ran northwards following

the foothills of the Hamasen plateau as far as the approaches of Keren village then it ran west and south-west passing within 80 kilometres of Lake Tana, then to Fzughli and Bani Shangul. From here the frontier followed a westward direction including Kurmuk and Nasir posts into the Egyptian side up to the Sobat river.

In Fig. 22 the eastern frontiers of Egypt's 'African Empire' are shown by an approximate line. However, it is important to note that a boundary in the modern sense with visible demarcations and frontier guards did not exist. There was a border zone of no-man's land varying in width from within a few metres near to the frontier posts, on some essential river banks, and around the sea ports on the Red Sea coast, to within a few kilometres in deserts and uninhabited regions to several hundred kilometres on the marshes of the flood plains to the south of the River Sobat up to the Nile Victoria, which was the southern extreme of Egypt's 'Empire' in Africa.

Following the occupation of Egypt by Britain in 1882 on the eve of the European expansion to this part of Africa, the possibility of a more defined frontier between the Egyptian 'Empire' and Ethiopia was getting increasingly liable. Under the pressure of British advisors to the Government of Egypt, the Khedive expressed his desire to the Foreign Office authorities in England in 1883 "to proceed to a delimitation of a frontier which would give satisfaction to both sides (Egypt and Ethiopia)".<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately these attempts did not lead to the proposed frontier negotiations because the Mahdist revolution was by that time gaining strong grounds in the Sudan and aiming to overthrow the Egyptian rulers from the country. Therefore, Egypt was forced by the unfavourable circumstances in the Sudan to hand over her possessions in the Sudan eastern border to the neighbouring powers. Boghos District was returned

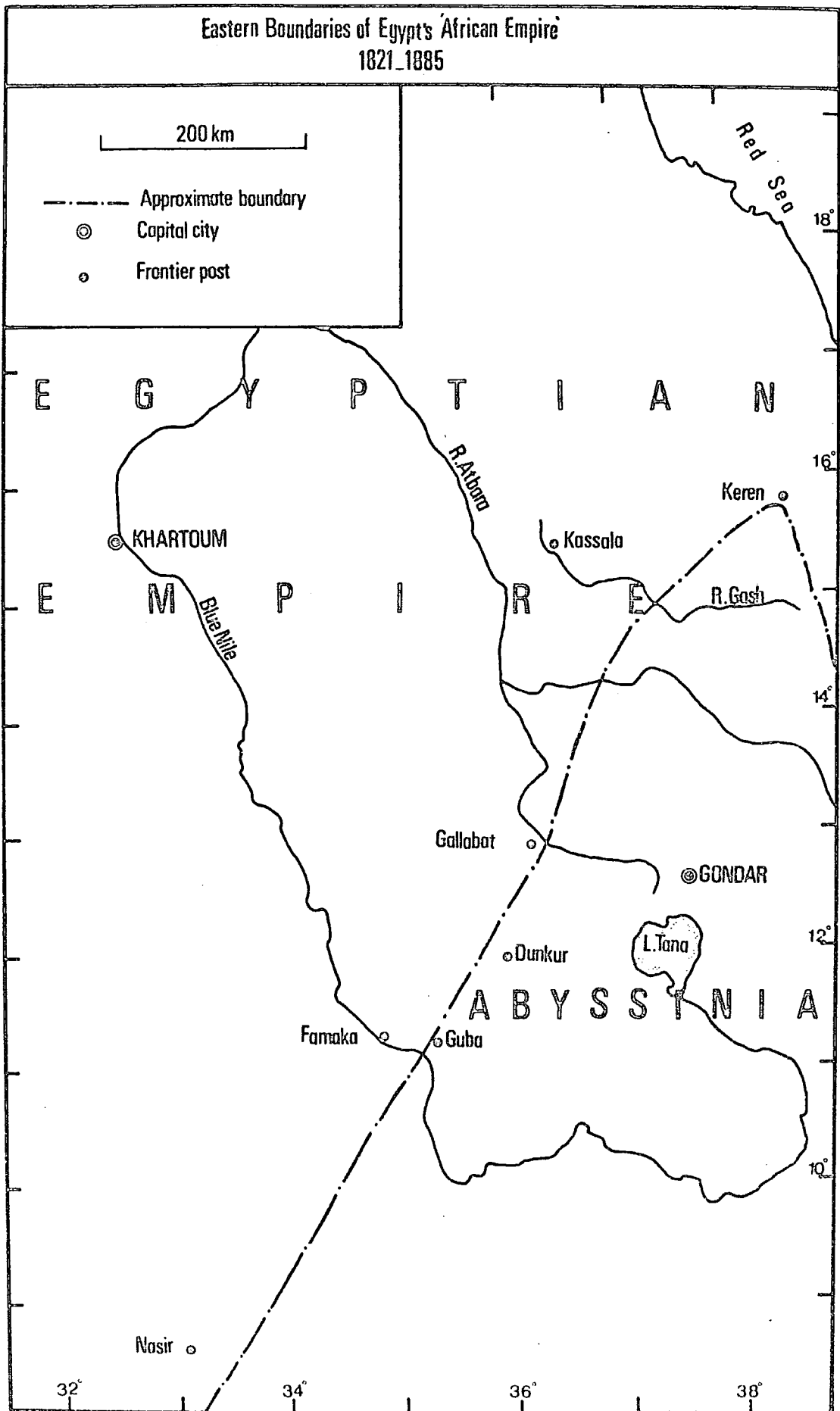


FIG.22

to Ethiopia as a price for her help in evacuating the Egyptian garrisons at the eastern frontier posts through Ethiopian lands; and northern Ethiopia (later named Eritrea) was occupied by Italy. By 1885 Egypt completely failed to maintain her 'Empire' in Africa and evacuated the Sudan to the Mahdist troops.

#### The Eastern Frontiers of the Mahdist Sudan 1885-1898

The short-lived independent state of the Mahdi which was founded on the ideological basis of establishing a religious state of a pure or true Islam,<sup>47</sup> not only in the Sudan but also in all of the neighbouring countries, did not take much heed of territorial possessions or boundary delimitations. It was totally occupied by the idea of converting the rulers of the neighbouring countries to true Islam, by fire and sword if necessary.

As Ethiopia was the strongest Christian country neighbouring the Sudan, it is not surprising that one of the first inzar (warning) was sent to the Ethiopian Emperor to adopt Islam or prepare himself for a jihād (holy war). Thus, all through this period the border zone between the Sudan and Ethiopia became one of the most unsettled regions in the Sudan. Indeed, the frontier region had once again witnessed a revival of the traditional religious wars between the Christians in Ethiopia and the Muslims in Sudan. Surprisingly, there were no major changes in the former frontiers of Egyptian Sudan except for those parts which were handed over to Ethiopia or left to Italy at the collapse of the Egyptian rule in the Sudan. Fig. 23 shows the eastern frontiers of the Mahdist state at the time of the reoccupation of the Sudan by the joint troops of Anglo-Egyptian forces in 1898. It is of particular interest to note that the Mahdist state in its maximum extent only included the former limits of the Funj Empire, together with the Beja lands. It did not include all the other

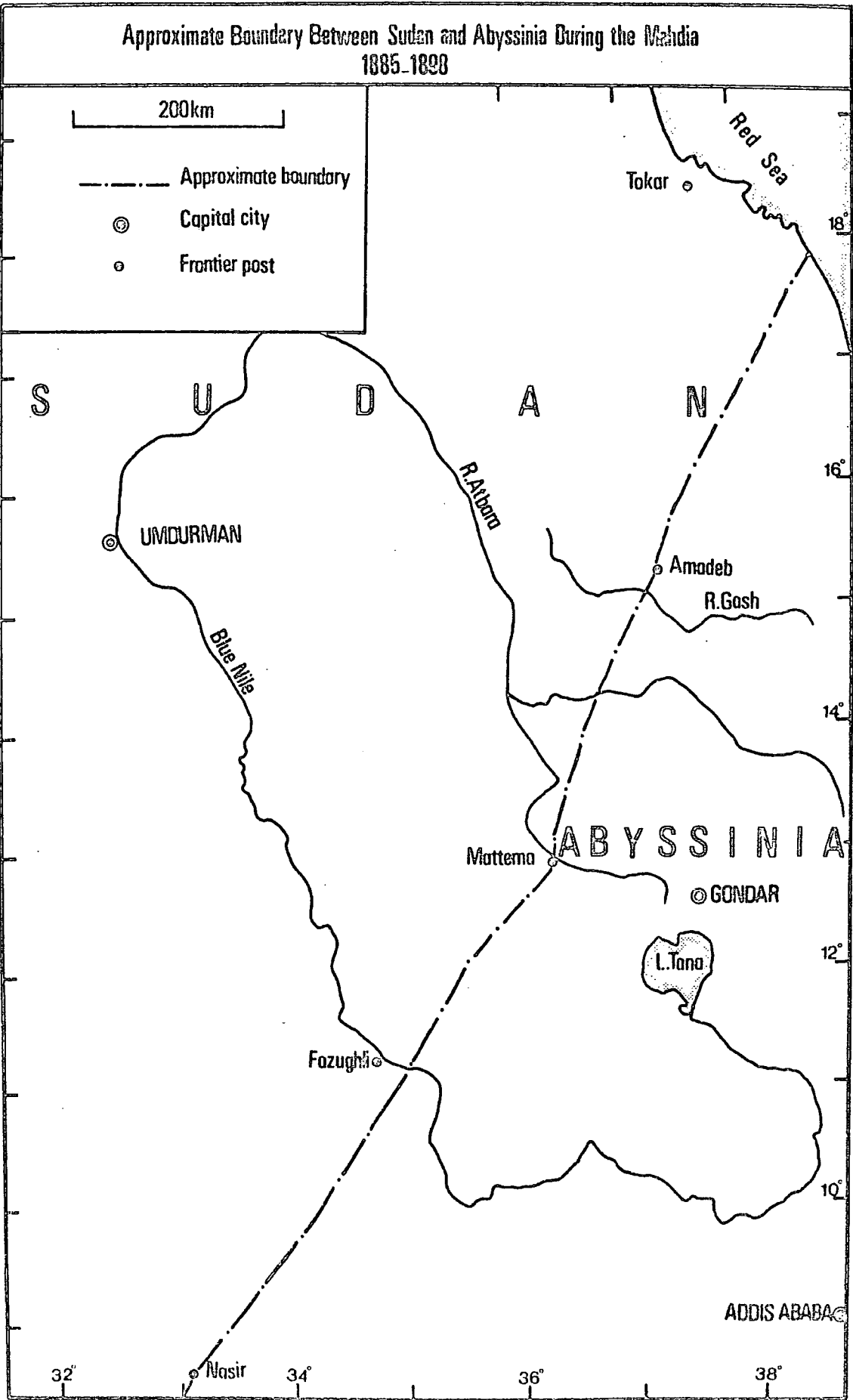


FIG.23

dependencies that resulted from the Egyptian expansion to the east and north-east.

One remarkable development in the area at the latter part of the nineteenth century was the expansion of the European powers and the European rivalry over the Nile valley and north-east Africa. This new phase of the political development in the area is considered in a separate chapter as it forms a crucial stage in shaping the political boundary of today. The appearance of the different European powers in the region under study to divide the whole area into their respective 'spheres of influence' was the real watershed between the pre-boundary frontiers and the modern political boundaries which exist at present. In 1891 Italy concluded frontier treaties with Britain regarding her newly established colony of Eritrea, and was actively moving inwards from that direction. France reached the White Nile at Fashoda in 1898 at the same time when the joint troops of Anglo-Egyptian forces announced their reoccupation of the Sudan after defeating the last strongholds of the Mahdists at Umdurman.

(b) THE EXISTING CONDITIONS SOUTH OF RIVER SOBAT

In the previous chapter it has been shown that the entire region to the south of the River Sobat (Eastern Flood Plains) has long been occupied by the Nilotes and the Quasi-Masai peoples; and that these peoples are in many ways distinct from those peoples to the north of them.

Probably because of its unfavourable conditions and its remoteness away from the easy reach of the influences of the strong Empires and Kingdoms which existed to the north of the Sobat river, except for some periodical slave capturing and elephant hunting raids, the region was left to its own affairs. The Egyptians were mainly interested in the Central

Flood Plains where they could safeguard the sources of the White Nile. And the Mahdists were more or less concerned with the destruction of the Egyptian administration in the Sudan where it existed rather than exploring the marshes of the Sobat basin and the Boma plateau which had never been under any political administration in pre-boundary times.

Equally the same unfavourable conditions must have been responsible for the absence of any remarkable indigenous political units which exceeded the level of tribal communities. However, it cannot be assumed that because of the absence of political units in the region to the south of the River Sobat, the indigenous tribes had no frontiers, or that their leaders did not know their tribal limits. Depending on the scattered maps of the tribal distribution in the region, mainly of those drawn at the eve of the boundary making, one can trace a very vague frontier between the Sudanese tribes and those of Ethiopia at the latter part of the nineteenth century (See Fig.14). With possible exception of a few settlements which have been reported to be occupied by the Annuak near the foothills of the Ethiopian plateau, probably no tribes belonging to the Sudan went beyond east longitude  $35^{\circ}$ . These Nilotic tribes even today keep as wide a stretch of country as possible between themselves and the Ethiopian tribes of the Amhara and the Gala. The Ethiopian tribes themselves hardly descend the plateau for any length of time because they fear the hot climate and the fevers of the hot plains. It seems that the first frontier which could be traced with any certainty in this area was that astronomical line which resulted from the partition of the whole region between the British and the Italian 'spheres of influence' in 1891.

Having followed the main stages of the development of the Sudan eastern frontiers from the earliest periods until the time of the boundary

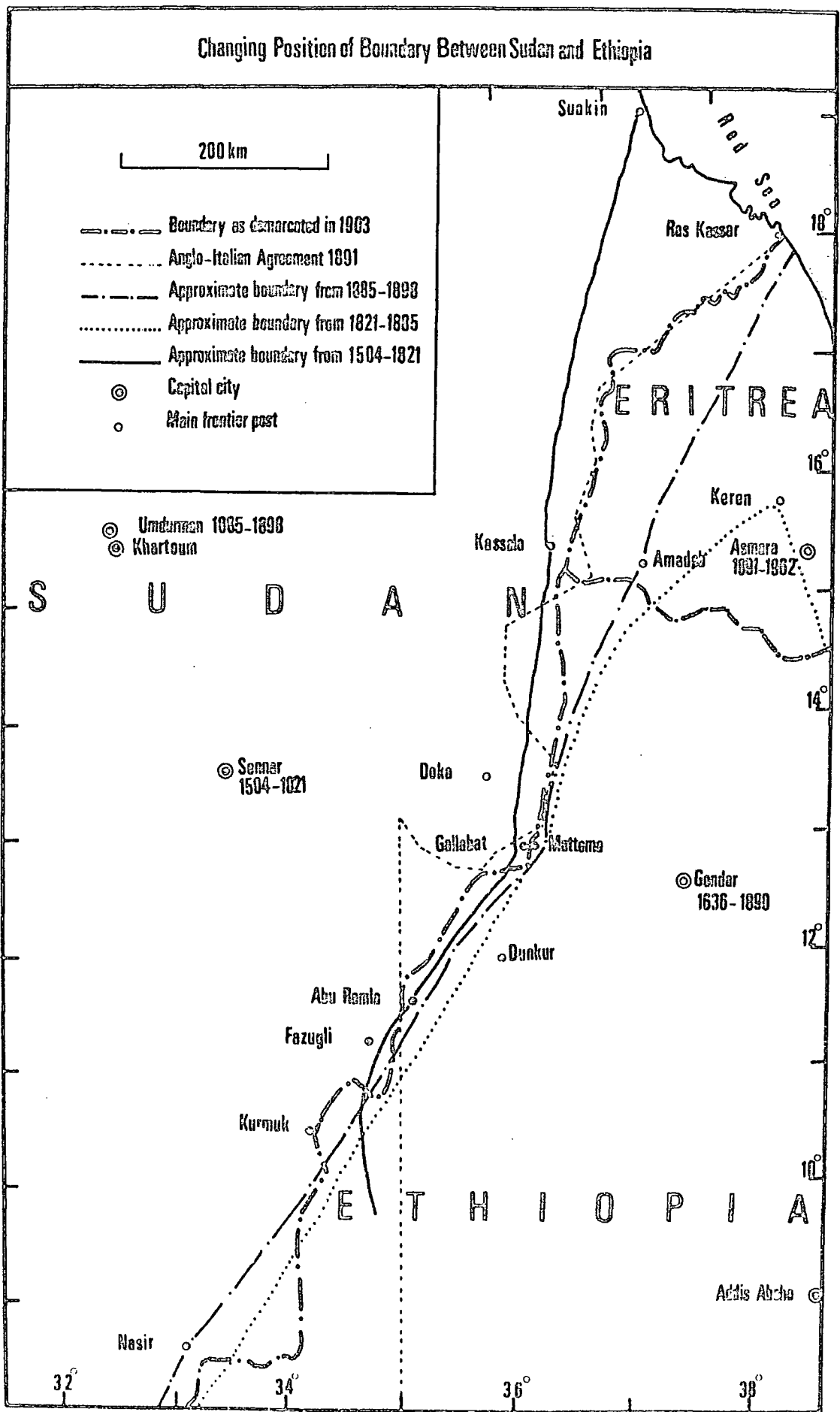


FIG. 24

making at the end of the nineteenth century, it is now convenient to conclude this chapter by a brief comparison of the different pre-boundary indigenous frontiers with the existing boundary (see Fig. 24). And in so doing, one cannot fail to appreciate that to the north of the River Sobat the modern boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia has, in the main, followed an existing frontier zone which can be traced as far back as the eighteenth century.

To the south of the River Sobat the indigens, even those really big tribes like the Nuer and the Annuak, have had no formal political organization at all above the clan level, and even in the clans, authority was, and still is, widely distributed, especially among the Nuer. No tribe ever seems to have been strong enough to establish a wide-spread predominance outside its homeland, or even to act as a focus for the inter-tribal relationships of any large area.

Thus, as far as the region under consideration is concerned, one should question the validity of the widely accepted view that the colonial boundaries in Africa disregarded the indigenous frontiers and existing political units. In this particular part of Africa the author did not find any example where the present boundary cut across or divided any political unit which existed at the time of the boundary making. However, in several places along the border the colonial boundary indeed cuts across a number of tribes and ethnic groups as it does in the north, the middle and the south; but it is very doubtful if it was at all possible to draw a boundary which would not divide the tribes and cover that enormous distance (2,220 km) between the Red Sea and Lake Rudolf. Moreover, as it has already been mentioned above, tribes in Africa did not have linear boundaries for their territorial possessions, and in such cases it was

almost impossible to draw any satisfactory line between two or more tribes.<sup>48</sup> Above all in several parts of this border zone the tribes were, and still are, mostly nomadic and often mobile. They have no static tribal grounds. In most cases the tribes have summer grazing grounds and winter grazing grounds which could be separated by hundreds of kilometres from one another.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PARTITION OF NORTH-EAST AFRICA AND THE  
ALLOCATION OF PRIMARY TERRITORIAL LIMITS IN  
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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### THE PARTITION OF NORTH-EAST AFRICA AND THE ALLOCATION OF PRIMARY TERRITORIAL LIMITS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the previous chapter it has been shown that in the pre-colonial era there was a frontier zone between the Sudan and Ethiopia varying in width from a few metres in some places to several kilometres in other places. In this chapter an attempt is made to show how the activities and rivalries of various European powers in this part of Africa led to the conquest, cession, occupation and partition of the entire region into their respective 'spheres of influence', and how in so doing they practically set the stage for the demarcation and establishment of the so-called colonial boundaries. Such an outline is useful to understand how the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary of today had primarily evolved as a direct outcome of power politics<sup>1</sup> in the region.

#### ACQUISITION AND OCCUPATION

In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened after many years of rivalry and strained international relations. In anticipation of its completion, England, France, Italy and, to a lesser extent, Germany were actively making treaties with the local chiefs for ports and coaling stations along the east coast of Africa on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

By 1882 when dual control of Egypt by England and France had failed, Britain alone undertook the occupation of the country. Meanwhile, an empty treasury at home and the Mahdist revolution in the Sudan forced Egypt, at the instance of Britain, to relinquish her hold on the Red Sea and her possessions in the Sudan. Such a situation had made it comparatively easy for England, France and Italy to move gradually into the evacuated

areas along the Red Sea coast, which had gradually ceased to be either a Turkish or Egyptian controlled channel. Indeed, it was opportune for the European powers mentioned above to enter a harbour and negotiate a treaty of protection with an illiterate Sheikh or chief and hoist their flag. The relatively weak protests of Egypt and Turkey availed nothing against the expansion of the European powers; the even weaker protest of Ethiopia, claiming ownership of her old coast line, taken from her by the Muslims, was scarcely heard in the so-called 'scramble' for Africa.

The occupation by European powers of this part of Africa was, however, a watershed in the political geography of the region for, the partition of the whole area and the delimitation of future boundaries rested on the mutual jealousies and rivalries which might arise out of the conflicting interests of the three powers just mentioned, with intermittent German and Russian interference on a small scale.<sup>2</sup>

At this stage it is convenient to consider the motives and purposes which led each of these powers to the actual occupation and possession of this region, and how they achieved this in a remarkably short period of not more than fifteen years from the Agreement of Berlin in 1885.

#### British Possessions

British interests in north-east Africa and the Red Sea date as far back as the end of the fifteenth century, but subsequent to the opening of the Suez Canal, various developments in the Far East and the Mediterranean substantially increased the volume of trade passing through Egypt which in turn gained importance as one of the world's essential highways. So, from her strong position in Egypt, Britain later maintained her interests not only in the Suez Canal, but also in the Sudan and the

upper basin of the Nile, and also east Africa which later became British East Africa.

Before her occupation of Egypt, Britain had no direct contacts with the Sudan, and indeed, in the nineteenth century, some reports like that of Burkhardt, who travelled in Nubia in 1819, encouraged the British nationals in the service of the Egyptian Government to collect information on the Sudan from European traders and other sources. Those reports, particularly on the subject of slavery and slave trade, aroused the interest of the British Government and British people, especially the Anti-Slavery Society. Influenced by the pressure groups based on humanitarian principles, certain influential powers, like the Archbishop of Canterbury, had pressed Britain and Egypt to bring an end to the slavery in the Nile valley. As the result of these pressures Egypt and Britain signed a convention on 14th August, 1877 repudiating slavery.

Indeed, by the time of Khedive Ismail, the Egyptian interest in the Sudan had changed from value as a slave capturing zone which was adopted by the earlier Khedives to a new one of dominating the Nile waters from the source to the confluence. This change in the Egyptian attitude towards the Sudan was due to two main developments in Egypt: first, since the death of Mohamed Ali, Egypt had abandoned the idea of building an Egyptian 'Empire' in Syria and Arabia, therefore African slaves were no more needed. Second, since Egypt entirely depended on the waters of the Nile, it was feared that if any European power happened to occupy the headwaters of the river, in Ethiopia and Uganda, it would undertake large engineering projects on the Nile in such a way as to effect the normal flow of its waters to Egypt. The Egyptians were, therefore, struggling hard to include the whole headwaters of the Nile into the control of Egypt and, to win over British support, they lost no time in

publicising a proclamation to abolish slave trade (about which Britain had expressed concern even before signing the convention mentioned above) in the Sudan.

British interests in the Red Sea and its adjacent territories were even more advanced during the war with Napoleon. It is unnecessary to mention the policy of the latter towards England and its communications with India and the Far East. Its results in Anglo-French rivalries in Egypt and the upper Nile were far reaching, and extended even to the practically little known country of Ethiopia and the eastern frontiers of Sudan. In 1808 the famous British traveller, Lord Valentia, urged Britain to exert influence in the Red Sea in order to secure the region against Napoleon, and to gain Britain a base from which to oppose his possible advance. Accordingly, the British East India Company was directed to establish a residency at Bocha on the Red Sea coast near Ethiopia, with the especial intention of opening trade with Ethiopia and excluding France. Indeed, this fear of the French expansion in north-east Africa coloured the whole of the British activities in the region. Thus in 1840 Britain deemed it wise to prevent France and probably Egypt from occupying Aden by taking ownership herself of this important passage, and signed treaties of friendship and protection with the native Sultans of Tajura and Zeila and purchased the island of Mushah at the entrance of Tajura Bay.

In the meantime France fitted out a mercantile expedition to establish commercial agencies on the east coast of Africa within the straits of Bab el Mandab, to counteract the occupation of Aden by Britain.

This step taken by France was clearly undesirable to Britain because if the French were established in the Red Sea, they would

seriously interfere with British communications with India and weaken the British position in the Mediterranean and Egypt. So, when it was reported to Britain in 1859 that France had occupied Disse Island on the Red Sea coast, it was thought in Britain that the French took possession of this small island as a point from which to make settlements in the mainland near the port of Adulis. In this respect the British Foreign Office stated "if the French were to make good their possession of Abyssinia, they would without difficulty, and whenever it might suit them, drop down upon Egypt and thus get possession of the whole southern shore of the Mediterranean".<sup>3</sup> Therefore, to close the door finally for any other power, Britain encouraged Egypt to declare its jurisdiction over the Somali coast, and in 1877 Britain formally recognised the Egyptian claim over the Somali coast as far as Ras Hafrun.<sup>4</sup> However, having temporarily kept France out of the area, Britain negotiated a treaty with Egypt on the problem of the Somali coast. In this treaty, Britain secured a "most favoured nation treatment" in return for her recognition of Egypt's right on the Red Sea coast; the two ports of Balhar and Berbara were declared free, appointment of British Consular Agents was agreed, and customs dues at Tajura, Zeila and other ports were regulated in such a way that the British subjects' free commerce and navigation were secured. But most important, Britain made sure "His Highness the Khedive engages for himself and his successors that no portion of the territory, to be thus formally incorporated with Egypt, under his hereditary rule shall ever be ceded to any foreign power".<sup>5</sup>

But by 1884 Egypt failed to defend her possessions in the Sudan and north-east Africa as the result of the Mahdist action, and accordingly it was decided by Britain that the Egyptian authorities and forces be withdrawn from Harar and the entire Red Sea coast which they had previously

occupied.<sup>6</sup> Hence Britain herself took over Zeila and Berbara, which are located directly across and to the south of Aden, thus gaining control of the outer approach to the Red Sea. Kassala, Senhet, Amadab and Gallabat posts of the Sudan eastern frontier were also evacuated. Egypt was certainly more worried about the eastern Sudan than the Red Sea coast; its primary interests in the eastern Sudan had been the Nile waters, upon which both Egypt and the Sudan depend. Consequently, the question of the Nile waters became the most important factor that influenced the location of the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary which controls the source of the Nile waters. In fact, the idea that the security of Egypt depended on the Nile waters and the defence of the upper Nile was first brought to the attention of British diplomats in 1884 by Sir Samuel Baker, who wrote emphasizing the danger "a hostile power could readily dam the upper Nile, starve Egypt of water and destroy the country".<sup>7</sup> This fear had also been expressed by Riad, the Egyptian Prime Minister at that time, who wrote "the Nile is the life of Egypt, the Nile means the Sudan ... if any power took possession of the banks of the Nile, it would be all over with Egypt".<sup>8</sup>

Still, Britain at that time was not persuaded by Baker or Riad to take any active part to safeguard the Egyptian rights in the Sudan and the upper Nile. According to the British point of view, there was nothing of concern regarding the upper Nile waters in Uganda and Ethiopia. There was no sign of any European power approaching these regions, and the native rulers in the Sudan and Ethiopia were not engineers to cut off the flow of the Nile. But by 1889, when Britain had finally decided to stay in Egypt on two accounts, things began to be different: firstly, to safeguard her strategy in the Mediterranean, and secondly, to watch very closely the various powers moving swiftly towards north-east Africa

(mainly France, Germany and Italy). Consequently, Britain began to appreciate that a foreign power astride the upper Nile would be in a position to lever them out of Egypt.

It was Italy which presented the first trouble of this kind. The Italians having concluded an agreement with Menelek of Ethiopia whereby they secured a great deal of influence over the Blue Nile,<sup>9</sup> laid claim on Kassala town in Sudan territory which controlled the Gash-Atbara tributaries of the Nile. British diplomacy quickly acted to announce "if the Italians took Kassala, they would soon strike the valley of the Nile ... The establishment of a civilized power in the Nile valley must, by the mere force of its geographical situation dominate Egypt".<sup>10</sup> In respect of Kassala, Lord Salisbury wrote in 1890 "It gives the power occupying it, command over one of the main affluents of the Nile, and, therefore, a power of diverting a portion of the supply which is vital to Egypt". Accordingly, in the same report he instructed the British Consul in Egypt to take "such measures as may be necessary for the purpose of protecting your Nile valley against the dominion of any outside power".<sup>11</sup> Thus from 1889 the safety of the Nile and the safeguard of the right of Egypt in the Sudan and the Nile valley became the new policy of the British diplomacy towards the other powers, and in the same year Britain formally warned Italy to keep away from the Nile valley.<sup>12</sup> France and Germany were also given such warnings.

In the 1890's Britain was even convinced that diplomacy alone would not work in the Egyptian strategy and decided to dispatch a joint Anglo-Egyptian force to the Sudan to exclude the Italians, the French, the Ethiopians and the Mahdists. The entire region to the south of Egypt as far as the Ethiopian escarpment; or in other words, the whole area controlling the Nile waters, came under the effective occupation of the Anglo-Egyptian forces.

### Italian Possessions

The achievements of Italy in its national unity, in the nineteenth century, was accompanied by colonial activity in Africa, coincident with the historical period of the opening of the Suez Canal. Its first acquisition was in north-east Africa about one hundred and sixty kilometres to the north on the other side of the straits of Bab el Mandab, where it bought the port of Assab from the native chief of the area in 1869. Further areas adjacent to Assab were bought in 1879 and 1888 from the Sultan of Rahita and more treaties of protection were concluded with the local chiefs in the Red Sea coast.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the Italians did not confine themselves to the coast, but had been consistently watching with great interest the tragic events taking place in the eastern Sudan, as the result of the Mahdist revolution, which could not but affect the future of the Red Sea coast line. In 1884 Italy approached Britain and enquired what could be the British attitude to an Italian occupation of the entire Red Sea coast. The British reply was one of indifference since this coast, no longer tenable by the Egyptians, would now legally revert to Turkey. The question was, therefore, one for Italian settlement with the Sultan of Turkey. It seems that, at first, Britain was strongly in favour of such occupation of the Red Sea by Italy for two reasons: firstly, to win Italian support in the Egyptian question; and secondly, to introduce Italy as a rival power against the French aspirations in the region.

The conditions in the Sudan at that time had also helped the Italians in their quick advance towards the hinterland of Egypt. The evacuation of the Egyptian garrisons in eastern Sudan at the end of 1884 signified to the Italians the abandonment by Egypt of all interest in this quarter and the likelihood of its occupation by the Ethiopians.

Thus Italy occupied Saati and Wa, more than twenty-five kilometres inside from the coast in 1885.

Within the Sudan eastern frontiers, the Italians also made several treaties of protection with the native chiefs of Habab tribe in 1887, Zula in 1888 and Beni Amer in the same year.<sup>14</sup> While still concluding treaties with local chiefs, the Italians finding conditions hot and unhealthy on the coast, further advanced inland for more favourable positions on the top of the plateau. Asmara, which became the capital of Eritrea, was occupied in 1889 as well as some other key villages southwards to the line of Mareb and Blessa rivers. By signing the controversial Treaty of Uccially with Ethiopia, the Italians did not only extend their territory to the Hamasen plateau but also gained the support of the second greatest power in the region (Ethiopia), as long as they confined themselves to Eritrea.

In the meantime, the Italian Government and the British East Africa Company negotiated a treaty whereby the former obtained "lands, territories and countries lying on the south coast from and including Kismayo and north of the mouth of the River Juba, including the coast of Brava, Mourka and Magdisho with radii landwards of ten miles ..."<sup>15</sup>

But by 1896 all the Italian expansions came to an end after the defeat of Italy at Adowa, which resulted in the emergence of Ethiopia as a strong power. Ethiopia itself began to take even more steps than that of Italy in the occupation of the territories of the upper Nile which Britain had long declared to control and safeguard on behalf of Egypt. Also having assisted the Ethiopians in their war against the Italians, France established herself in Ethiopia as "the most favoured nation" at least for a long time to come. Thus, together with Ethiopia,

France became the main rival of Britain in the upper Nile.

### French Possessions

France was not interested in the upper Nile itself, but as has already been mentioned, its main aim in the region was to weaken the British position in Egypt, the Mediterranean, and the Red Sea by threatening the British trade in India and the Far East. France bought the small port of Obok on the Gulf of Tadjura from a native Sultan in 1862<sup>16</sup> but as Obok was a shallow, ill-suited port for the docking of ocean-going steamers, it continued to use the British harbour of Aden until the Indo-Chinese war in 1883 when this privilege was withdrawn<sup>17</sup> and France then had to look around for her own coaling station. In 1884, while Britain was facing increasing difficulties in the Sudan and elsewhere, France signed a protection treaty with the Sultan of Tadjura, who agreed "to give his country to France in order that she may protect it against all foreign powers ..."<sup>18</sup>

France then gradually extended her possessions round Tadjura Bay in the process of which she discovered a suitable harbour at Djubuti that had been transformed into a seaport. Her frontiers were subsequently pushed into the hinterland and the once tiny sandbar of Obok had grown till it consisted of over sixteen thousand square kilometres of desert with a good port linking central Ethiopia to the outside world. France, also signed a treaty of protection with the Queen of Madagascar in 1885 whereby Madagascar also accepted the right of France to occupy the Bay of Diesgo-Suarez.<sup>19</sup>

No formal protest, however, was made by Britain against this active French expansion in the coast of east Africa, probably because Britain wanted to direct French attention away from Egypt, the upper Nile

and the Suez Canal; and in 1890 Britain even recognised French protection, and later colonization, of Madagascar island.<sup>20</sup> But France, with her strong hold on the coast and her influence in Ethiopia, proposed the White Nile as the limits of her 'spheres of influence' and began to move towards the upper Nile. To this last, Britain was not prepared even to negotiate for any length of time. So the Nile Expedition was sent to the upper Nile in 1898 with the well-known results of Fashoda.

### Ethiopian Expansions

The year 1882 was also a watershed in the political history of Ethiopia: the occupation of Egypt by Britain in this year did not only end the Egyptian threat to Ethiopia, but also promoted the Ethiopian unification into a single Empire as well as its sudden and rapid growth, so that within a period of less than thirty years it reached its greatest limits as a united kingdom. Vast areas to the west and to the south like Kafa, Wallamo, Sidamo and a considerable part of Balli that had never previously been parts of Ethiopia were included in the Empire. The Negus Menelek, who was behind this expansion, was also aware of the European powers' intentions, at that time, to occupy and divide this part of Africa among themselves, so he declared from the start that he was not "intending to stand as an idle spectator while far distant powers were partitioning Africa".<sup>21</sup> In 1891, Menelek even openly challenged the Anglo-Italian proclamation of their respective 'spheres of influence' in north-east Africa and announced that he was resetting the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia as far as Khartoum and Lake Nyanza.<sup>22</sup> In so doing, Menelek was simply pushing his frontiers further to the west and south before the European powers could anticipate him.

After 1896 it appears that as long as Menelek kept his activities away from the Nile affluents, Britain was prepared to accommodate his

expansions westwards in order to gain his neutrality in the Anglo-Egyptian war against the Mahdi. Apparently, being aware of this fact, Menelek occupied parts of Gallabat, Mattema, Gunza and Beni Shangul which were in the Sudan territory.<sup>23</sup> But when the Sudanese forces were defeated in 1898 Menelek unwillingly accepted the British re-occupation of the Sudan eastern frontiers, and did not seriously refer again to his previous declaration to the European powers, and instead he preferred to struggle hard through negotiations with Britain to make good his claims in the Blue Nile region down to Roseris town.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, his agents effectively raided and occupied most of the territories to the east and south of the River Sobat as far as Lake Rudolf, pending a settlement of the problem of frontiers in due course.<sup>25</sup>

#### German Possessions

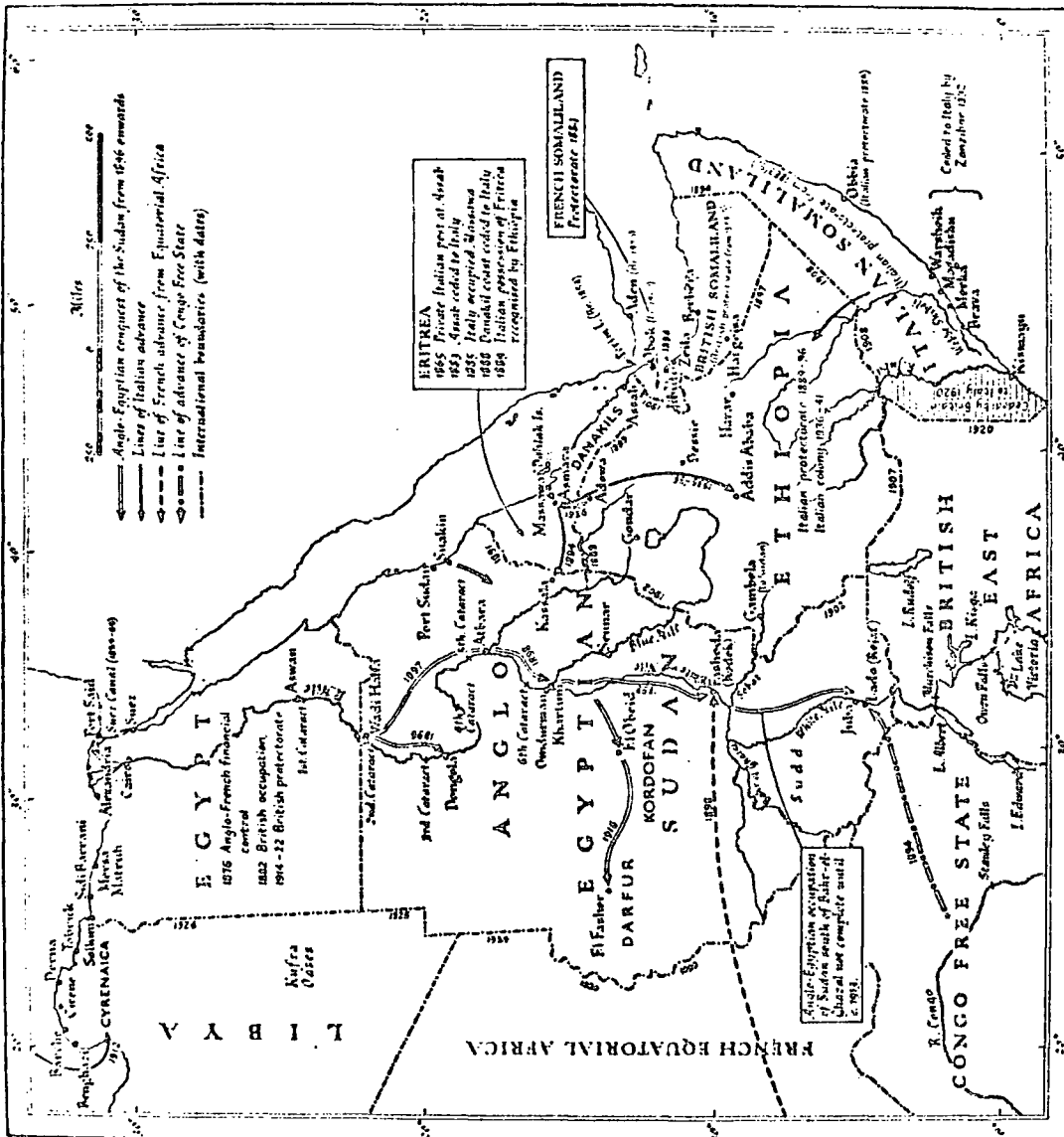
After 1860 Germany emerged as a new power taking part in the partition of Africa, but unlike the other European powers, its bid for colonies was not based on any substantial interest in Africa beforehand. It was a simple assertion of her new position among the world powers. In 1875 the 'German Colonization Society' was founded in Berlin and as the result of its activities, Germany laid claim on the east African territories which included the areas of modern Tanzania.

#### SPHERES OF INFLUENCE AND THE ACTUAL DELIMITATION OF PRIMARY TERRITORIAL LIMITS

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##### The Anglo-German 'Sphere of Influence' (Fig. 25)

When the Germans established themselves in east Africa and extended into the interior of the continent towards Lake Victoria-Nyanza thus endangering the Nile basin, Britain resumed negotiations with Germany to delimit their respective 'spheres of influence' in the area, and at



From J. D. Fage's *An Atlas of African History*; Edward Arnold

European Advance into North-East Africa

FIG. 25

the same time announced that it was her intention to observe the rights of Egypt on the Nile.<sup>26</sup> Unexpectedly, the Germans readily agreed to give up their protectorate over the coast of East Africa between Wito and Kismayo in return for compensations elsewhere, and accordingly Britain was allowed to acquire territory west of Lake Victoria and north-east of Lake Nyanza.<sup>27</sup> To Britain, this arrangement was indeed very important, and Lord Salisbury announced in the Cabinet "there would be no European competitor to British influence from the first of south latitude (running through the middle of Lake Victoria) and the borders of Egypt along the whole of the country which lies to the south and west of the Italian protectorates in Abyssinia and Galaland."<sup>28</sup>

Though Germany had already agreed to the above arrangement in principle, Britain took the greatest pains to see that there should be no loopholes in the formal definition of the common 'spheres of influence';<sup>29</sup> therefore, when the two parties sat down to draft the agreement formally, the British Prime Minister insisted that the British 'sphere of influence' must extend from Lake Victoria to the north as far as the 'confines of Egypt', and to the west as far as the 'basin of the Nile'.<sup>30</sup> However, the agreement was ratified in July 1890 and the safety of the Nile was secured by sealing off Germany both at its headwaters in Uganda and throughout its upper courses, and neither through the Bhr El Gazal from the west nor through the east could Germany now threaten the Nile valley.

#### The Anglo-French 'Sphere of Influence'

The Anglo-German agreement just mentioned above was badly received by the French, due to the fact that they were totally ignored by the signatories of the above treaty in spite of the fact that France was a party in a previous declaration between Britain and France as regards to the status of Zanzibar. The French insisted that they had had a right

to be consulted in any changes which resulted in the map of Africa as the result of the Anglo-German agreement, and therefore demanded adequate compensation. Britain agreed to compensate the French anywhere outside the Nile valley and the latter accepted to be compensated in West Africa. Indeed, Britain considered this deal a success, and Lord Salisbury, briefing the Lords on the subject, said "I will not dwell upon the respective advantages of places which are utterly unknown, not only to your Lordships, but to the rest of white human race ... Anyone who looks at the map and merely measures the degrees will perhaps be of the opinion that France had laid claim to a very considerable stretch of country. But it is necessary to judge land not merely by its extent but also by its value".<sup>31</sup> So, to Britain, keeping France away from the Nile valley was cheap at any price.

#### The Anglo-Italian 'Sphere of Influence' (Fig. 26)

The Italians, having secured an easy position on the coast of east and north-east Africa, began to expand their colony further into the interior. This was, of course, not acceptable to Egypt and England as Italy would now reach the upper Nile. To stop any further advance of Italy to the affluents of the Nile, Britain proposed to fix the limits of the Anglo-Italian 'sphere of influence' in the area and delegated her Consul General in Egypt to negotiate a treaty with the Italians to this effect. Freed from other diplomatic struggles with Germany and France, Britain could now take a hard line in her talks with Italy. This was clearly disclosed in Salisbury's instructions to the British Consul in Egypt "... we should insist on the command of all the affluents of the Nile, so far as Egypt formally proposed them, but it is agreed ... we have no such well defined and imperative interests to safeguard to the Red Sea slope"; he added "it is possible that you may not persuade the Italians to accept this principle, or to keep their hands off the affluents

of the Nile. In that case we must be content to let the negotiations be adjourned ... I do not think England will lose by delay."<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, Italy was not prepared to give up her colonial aspirations in the eastern Sudan which was an essential hinterland of her colonies in north-east Africa if it was to stay there for any length of time. The negotiations were then called off, but the Italians had been adequately warned that Britain could not accommodate them on the upper Nile. However, in 1891 a new Government of less interest in African colonies came to power in Italy, and in March and April of the same year, Britain and Italy negotiated two agreements regarding their respective 'spheres of influence' in north-east and east Africa, in which the latter declined all her former claims over the Nile valley in return for British support in the Mediterranean and other parts of Europe. In the agreement of March the two powers delimited their respective 'spheres of influence' in East Africa from the River Juba to the Blue Nile. Article 1 of the agreement stated "the line of demarcation in Eastern Africa between the 'spheres of influence' respectively reserved to Great Britain and Italy shall follow from the Sea the midchannel (thalweg) of the River Juba up to latitude 6<sup>o</sup>N., Kismayo with its territories on the right bank of the river thus remaining to England. The line shall then follow the 6th parallel of North latitude Greenwich, which it will follow up to the Blue Nile".<sup>33</sup> In the agreement of April the two powers agreed to delimit their frontiers of influence from Ras Kassar on the Red Sea to the Blue Nile. Article 1 of the agreement read "the 'sphere of influence' reserved to Italy is bounded on the north and on the west by a line drawn from Ras Kassar on the Red Sea to the intersection of the 17th parallel north with the 37th meridian east Greenwich. The line having followed the meridian to 16<sup>o</sup>30' north latitude, is drawn from that point in a

straight line to Sabdarat, leaving that village to the east. From that village the line is drawn to a point on the Gash 20 English miles above Kassala, and rejoins the Atbara at the point indicated as being a ford on the map of Werner Muzinger, (Originalkarte von Nord Abessinien und den Landern am Mareb, Baraca und Anseba, de 1864) and situated at  $14^{\circ}52'$  north latitude. The line then ascends the Atbara to the confluence with the Rahad for the short distance between the confluence of Khor Lamsen and the intersection of  $35^{\circ}$  east longitude Greenwich, identified itself in a southerly direction with that meridian, until it meets the Blue Nile, saving ulterior amendment of the country."<sup>34</sup> Other articles of the same agreement asserted the right of Italy to occupy some territories of the Sudan temporarily, in case of need, on condition that Italy recognised the Egyptian rights over the said territories and granted to non-construction of irrigation works on the affluents of the Nile.

By comparing the terms of the two agreements cited above, one cannot fail to observe that to the north of the Blue Nile where the Italian threat to the waters of the Nile was expected, not only the wording of the treaty was put as explicitly as it could be, but the definition of the region was more carefully and clearly stated; while to the south of the Blue Nile the line separating the common 'sphere of influence' had for long distances followed astronomical lines without any details. To the north of the Blue Nile and on the Blue Nile itself was the real interest of Britain, while to the south of the Blue Nile the affluents of the Nile are not so vital to the irrigation system of Egypt.

#### The Anglo-Ethiopian 'Spheres of Influence'

It has already been mentioned that, when the Anglo-Italian protocols of their respective 'spheres of influence' in north-east Africa were announced, Menelek strongly protested and declared that the

Nile was the ancient frontier of Ethiopia and that he wanted to restore his 'ancient frontiers'. The details of Ethiopian frontiers with the Sudan, as stated in Menelek's declaration were as follows "from Arfale on the Sea stretches across the plain of Jegra toward the west, and extends to Mahio Halai, Digsa and up to Gura and Adibaro. Starting from Adibaro, it extends to the meeting point between Mareb and Arted rivers, and then extends farther south to the meeting point between the rivers Atbara and Setit where is the town of Tomat. From Tomat the boundary includes the province of Gedaref and extends to the meeting point between the White Nile and Sobat rivers."<sup>35</sup>

At the time when these Ethiopian claims in the Sudan territory were announced, Britain was facing difficulties both in the Sudan and elsewhere in south Africa so it delegated a peace mission to Ethiopia under one of the most experienced British diplomats, Sir Rennell Rodd, to negotiate a treaty in respect of the eastern frontiers of the Sudan with Ethiopia. In Ethiopia Sir Rennell started his negotiations with a previous treaty between the two countries according to which Ethiopia was to refer any problems of Egyptian frontiers with Ethiopia to England; then he continued to assure the Negus, as best as he could, about England's good intentions and her desires to settle amicably mutual frontier questions especially in the western frontiers of Ethiopia. But agreements concerning frontier delimitations were not easily reached as Menelek insisted on the east bank of the Nile. Nevertheless, Sir Rennell was able to convince him to leave the western border situation "for future solution, which I do not doubt will be an easy matter when approached in the spirit of mutual conciliation and goodwill."<sup>36</sup> However, in order to forestall any possible French threats from this situation, Sir Rennell was also able to convince the Negus to assure the British Government "none of

the territories included in the British 'sphere of influence' as defined in the Anglo-German agreement of 1890, and none of the territories formerly administered by Egypt on the western borders of Abyssinia (if there be any your Majesty may claim to have occupied) should, pending a final settlement, be ceded by your Majesty to any other power to occupy."<sup>37</sup>

In the meantime the British mission confidentially reported to London "while the Negus had not made any effective occupation of the territories he actually claims, it appeared that he could easily do so in those districts lying immediately to the north-west of his present limits and included within the lines traced in the proclamation of 1891 ..."<sup>38</sup> Finally the mission decided "that very little could be gained by the discussion of our claims, or of the claims of Egypt in the Nile valley until such time as Great Britain conquered the forces of the Khaliefa in the Sudan ... Until we should have that behind us in stating our claims in explicit terms which is wanting now."<sup>39</sup> Until such favourable time to deal with this problem, Britain instructed her Consul at Zeila to remove any doubts the Negus might have had regarding the concern of England in Egypt and the Sudan, and not to recognize any Ethiopian claims towards the west and north-west which would encroach on territory formerly under Egyptian rule. The Consul was to state to Menelek "that the rights of Egypt in the Nile valley generally are supported by Her Majesty's Government".<sup>40</sup> Indeed, such a policy, advocated by Sir Rennell, to postpone the Ethiopia-Sudan frontier question until Britain had regained the Sudan from the Mahdists proved to be a wise and farsighted one. When in 1902 negotiations were resumed, Menelek, knowing that the British were now in a powerful position, readily dropped his former claims regarding the western frontiers of his Empire without

any protests thus easing the way for the delimitation of a reasonable boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia to be fixed within the traditional frontiers which existed for centuries between the two countries without being adequately defined.

Summing up what has been detailed in the previous pages, it is now convenient to state that British diplomacy after 1890 in large measure made possible the setting up of a clearly demarcated boundary between the Sudan and its neighbouring countries in north-east Africa. In the Anglo-German agreement, Britain deflected Germany her most immediate rival out of the Nile valley and thus more or less determined the boundaries of the Sudan in its south and south-east corner. By agreeing to compensate the French in West Africa, Britain had secured the French threat to the Nile valley and thus barred them from extending their Empire across the Nile to Ethiopia. In the negotiations with the Italians, the British had shown once more that they were determined to keep any power out of the eastern Sudan and the Nile valley; and by the conclusion of the agreement of 1891, regarding the Anglo-Italian 'sphere of influence', the whole eastern frontiers of the Sudan had been generally allocated except for some details to be made in the future. Indeed, by the acceptance of the Ethiopians to the Sudan eastern frontiers as defined in the Anglo-German and the Anglo-Italian agreements mentioned above, the outlines of the present-day boundary of the Sudan with Ethiopia were fixed pending the arrangement of other details through survey, delimitation and demarcation which is the subject of the following chapter.

One important point for the purpose of this study is that all through the long negotiations, the Sudan as a country was not regarded as an integral unit in the whole problem. Though the Sudan was mentioned by name in most of the boundary agreements that followed, far more important

was its situation as a rather vague territory commanding the upper Nile waters which had really been the fundamental point of issue. The Sudan-Ethiopia boundary was, therefore, in every real aspect delimited and demarcated as the eastern frontier of Egypt rather than that of the Sudan as a state. This last point is more elaborated in Chapters Five and Ten.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

Having discussed the allocation of primary territorial limits in the previous chapter, it is now useful to consider the complex boundary negotiations which followed since 1891 between Britain and Italy on the one hand, and between Britain and Ethiopia on the other hand, that culminated in the actual demarcation of the existing boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia. This is particularly useful in considering the various boundary proposals maintained by each country, since these various proposals illustrate the changing attitudes and desires of the powers concerned in deciding the position of the present boundary.

According to its history of evolution and development the boundary under consideration can be divided into three sections:

1. Northern Section, from Ras Kassar, on the Red Sea, to River Setit (this is the boundary between the Sudan and Eritrea).
2. Middle Section, from the River Setit to the intersection of the north latitude  $6^{\circ}$  with east longitude  $35^{\circ}$ .
3. Southern Section, from the intersection referred to above to Lake Rudolf.

#### 1. NORTHERN SECTION

Eritrea which is at present a part of Ethiopia was originally an Italian colony until the end of the Second World War; therefore, its western boundary was negotiated between the Italians and the Anglo-Egyptian Government of the Sudan. As it has been noted in the previous chapter, by the year 1891 a frontier of primary territorial limits between the

PROTOCOL BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND ITALY  
 OF  
 15<sup>th</sup> April 1891.

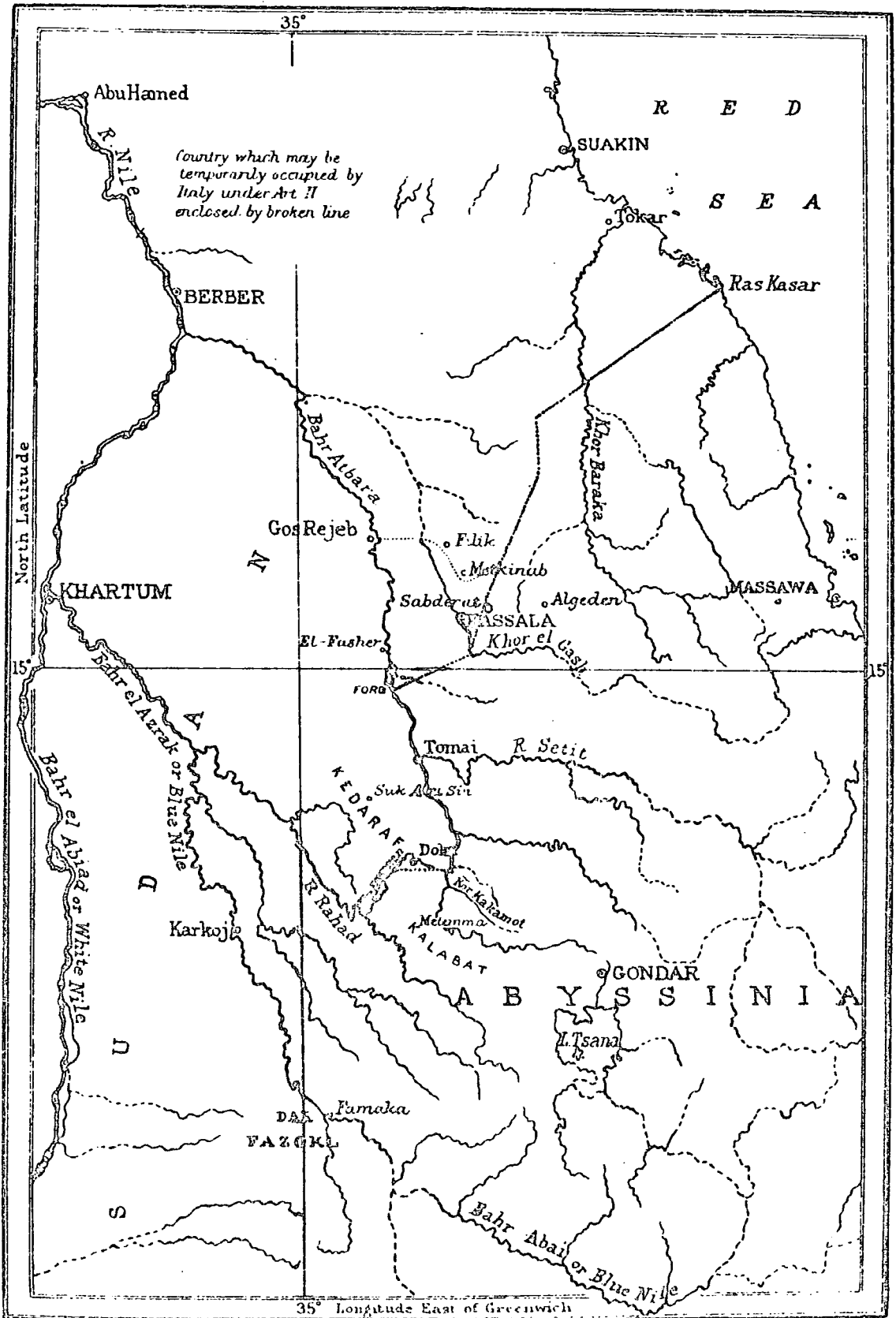
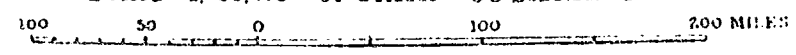


FIG. 26

Scale  $\frac{1}{90}$  or 1 Inch = 90 Stat. Miles



British and the Italian possessions in north-east Africa was traced out in a rough way with the scanty assistance of incomplete maps across countries scarcely known to the two powers. However, the establishment of that rough frontier between the Sudan and Eritrea enabled the two adjacent Governments to set up strong military administrations on both sides of the frontier. Consequently, various tribes of the Baraka, the Gash and the Setit rivers who had taken refuge from the Mahdists wars in the Sudan and the Egyptian wars in Ethiopia, were able to return once more to their traditional lands and began to lead their animals again to their accustomed pastures. There began that passing to and fro across the frontier traced on the map by diplomats. Still more troublesome were series of skirmishes from which often arose new debts of blood to be paid by one Government to the other. Worse still, when a tribal chief wished to escape the payment of a tribute or the execution of an order, it was both convenient and easy for him to cross the frontier with his family and possessions into the protection of another chief, or at least out of the range of the effective influence of his former Government. It was in consequence of those tribal migrations that the question of a more effective boundary between the Sudan and Eritrea put in an appearance.

#### Delimitation

As the two European powers on either side of the frontier were dealing with an unsurveyed country, they wisely divided the proposed boundary between Sudan and Eritrea into four sections:

(a) - from Ras Kassar to Khor Baraka (see Fig. 27)

This section of boundary was delimited in December 1898. It runs from the village of Ras Kassar<sup>1</sup> on the Red Sea coast along the line of Jebel Halabai, Jebel Gebi-Keli, the River Karora, Jebel Teglanait,

Mount Abberiedu and the watershed between the valley of Khor Karora-Tabet and that of Khor Aitera-Ararib. It then follows the same watershed in a westerly direction as far as the hill of Seiancdet and via Sigad-Talamai range joins the plateau of Hagar Nuch a little to the north of Mount Roribet. The boundary then follows the northern edge of the Hagar Nuch plateau as far as the top of Mount Hamoet; it then runs along Khor Afta to the water-holes of the same name, and then to Mount Haar through a hilly country which forms the water-divide between Khor Ambacta and Khor Lori. From this point it runs in a straight line to the junction of Khor Baraka and Khor Ambacta.

#### Demarcation

The first difficulty that faced the boundary commissioners was where to demarcate the boundary in the region of Hagar Nuch plateau. The Sudan Government commissioner insisted on the retention of the entire plateau by the Sudan on the grounds that it had been a camping station for the Sudanese tribes who, finding a limited pasturage in the barren mountains to the north, depended on the more fertile plateau for water and sustenance. It would, he maintained, lead to endless difficulties every time these tribes came down from the mountains to the plateau which is so intimately connected with them. He also argued that the tribes on the Eritrean side of the boundary were not in the habit of using the Hagar Nuch plateau because of the plentiful water supply among the mountains to the south of the plateau.

On the other hand the Italian commissioner insisted on demarcating the boundary along the northern ridge of the plateau, thus claiming it for Eritrea. However, an arrangement was made in such a way that the plateau was included in the Sudan and Eritrea was compensated elsewhere. In 1899 seventeen stone pillars were erected at different intervals along the boundary between the Red Sea and Khor Baraka to mark the exact position

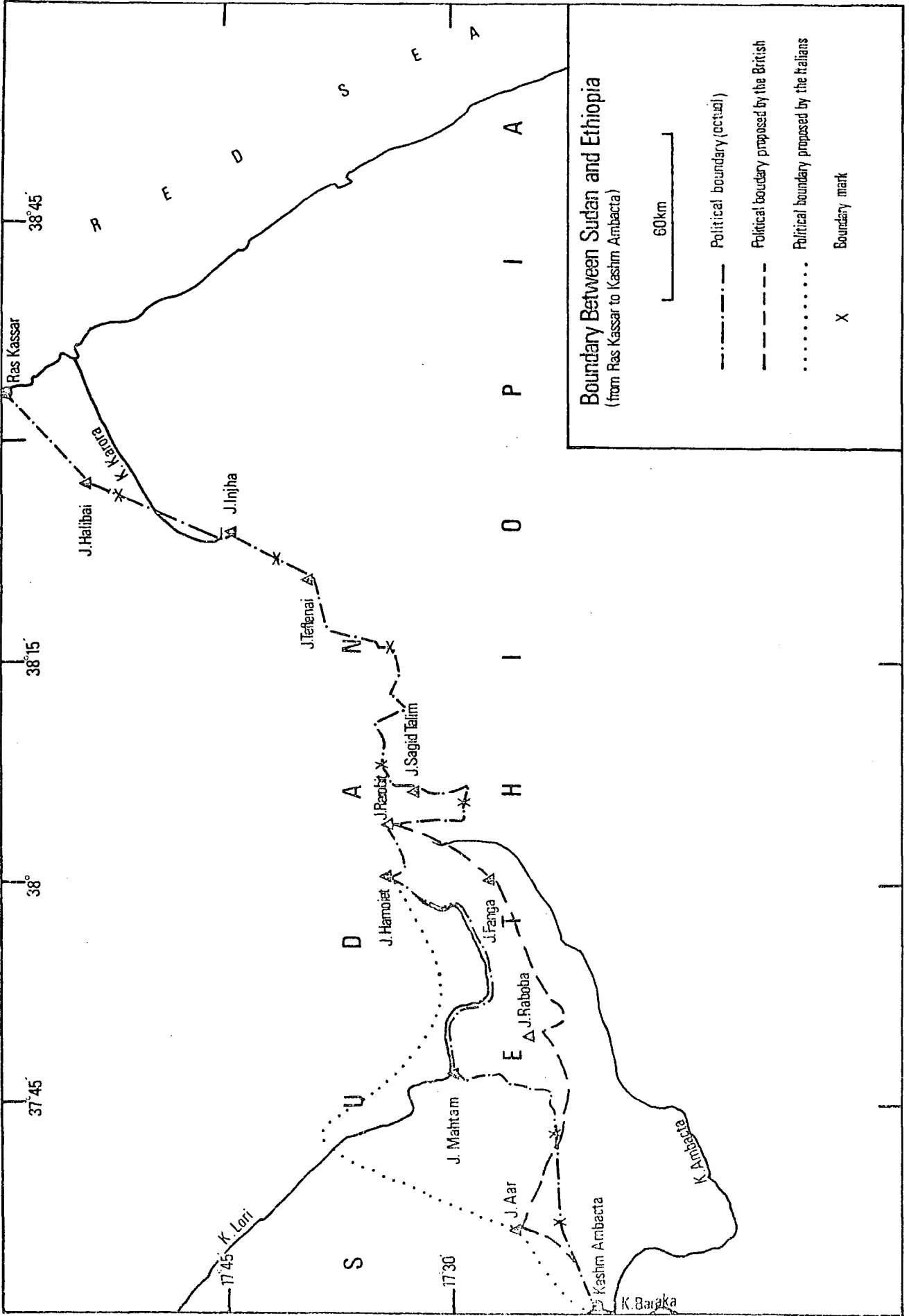


FIG. 27

of the line (a schedule shown in Appendix 1).

(b) - from the junction of Khor Ambacta with Khor Baraka to Sabdarat

(see Fig. 28)

#### Delimitation and Demarcation

This section was delimited in June 1899 and the boundary was arranged in the following way: from the point of junction of Khor Ambacta with Khor Baraka the line runs along the course of the latter (Baraka) upstream to its junction with Khor Dada, and then turning in a north-westerly direction, the boundary follows Khor Dada to its sources at the foot of the Esekenie range of hills. It then turns southwards and follows the watershed between the streams flowing directly to Khor Baraka on the east and those flowing to River Gash and Khor Langeb on the west. This watershed is defined by the Esekenie, Koreb and Ta-et ranges of hills, by Jebel Measat and finally by Jebel Benifer.

From Jebel Benifer the boundary runs in almost a straight line to the Sabdarat range which is defined south of Jebel Benifer by the low hill Tedelaie, by Jebel Afada-Gumbit, by the hills of Glemabia and Dobadob, and finally by the peak called Debrenis on the Sabdarat range.

From Jebel Debrinis the boundary crosses the Sabdarat range by Jebel Eunice to the peak called Gusan and then crosses Khor Sabdarat to a point west-north-west on the hills to the south of the same chor. This point is marked by a pillar. The whole boundary from the junction of Khor Baraka with Khor Ambacta is marked by ten beacons constructed at various distances from one another (a schedule shown in Appendix 2).

9-27

#### Redemarcation

Orderly administration on both sides of the boundary and the development of agriculture in the border zone, especially in the area

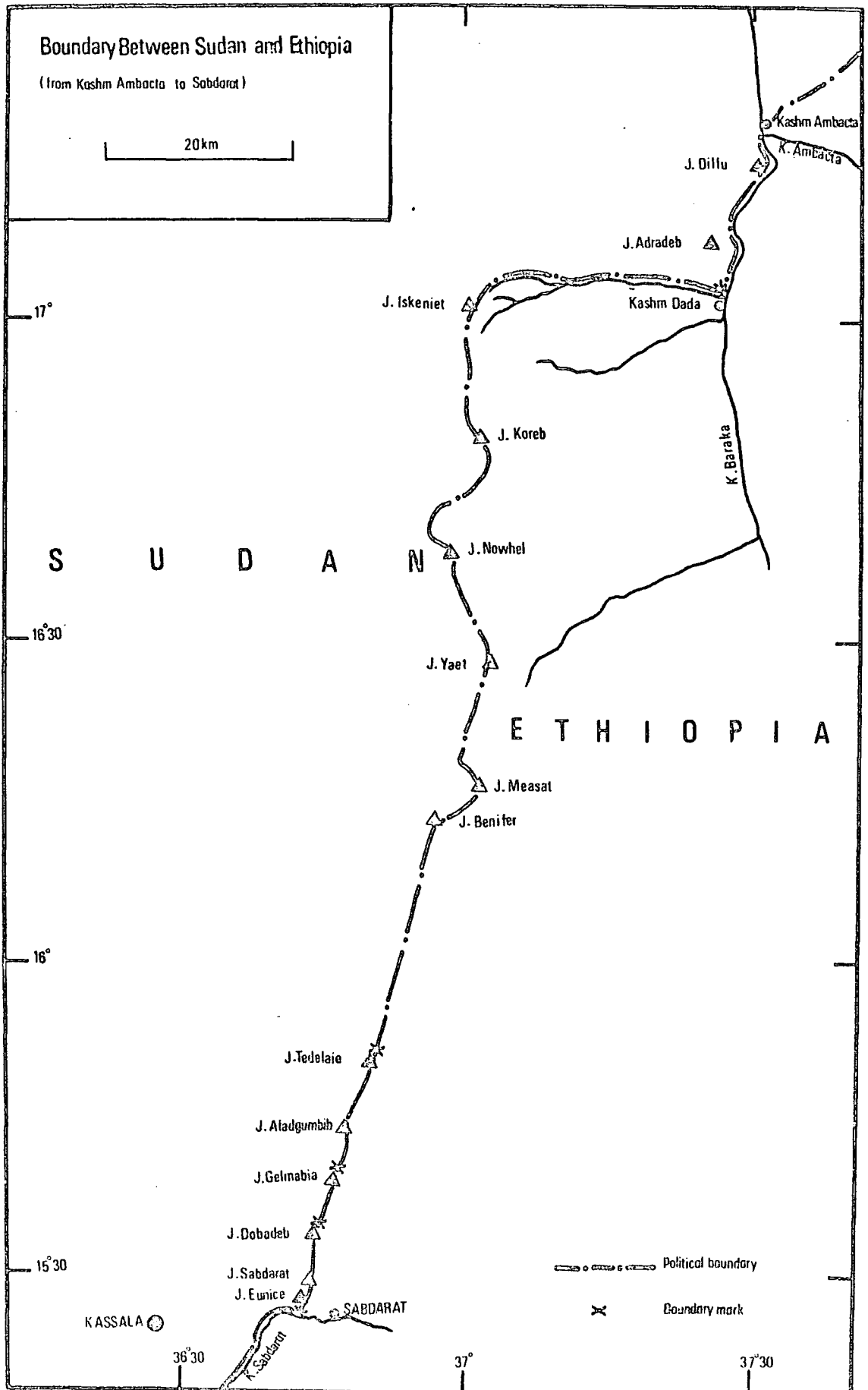


FIG. 28

to the north of Kassala town, had led to increasing pressures exerted on the political boundary as a result of population movement from one country to the other. In several places along this section, the border inhabitants were unaware of the exact position of the political boundary, therefore, in 1922 thirty-six additional boundary marks were erected between Jebel Dobadob and Jebel Benifer in places where the international boundary crosses khors, grazing grounds or arable lands<sup>2</sup> (a schedule shown in Appendix 3).

(c) - from Sabdarat to Todluk<sup>3</sup> (see Fig. 29)

Delimitation

From Sabdarat to the south, the primary line allocating the Anglo-Italian 'sphere of influence' defined in 1891 was still valid when this section was delimited. The Anglo-Italian 'sphere of influence' followed from Sabdarat to River Gash, where it touched the Gash a little above Kassala and then reached River Atbara near the ford of El Alim (Alyoya). Then it ran at first on the right and then on the left banks of the Atbara in such a way as to leave the Tomat village (which lies at the confluence of the Atbara and the Setit) on the Eritrean side.

At Tomat the question was even more complicated by a treaty concluded between Italy and Ethiopia in 1900 which defined the southern boundary of Eritrea in such a way that it ran from the very place (Tomat) to join the River Gash at Todluk (this line will be hereafter referred to as Tomat-Todluk line). Here the difficulty arose from the fact that the territory comprised between the lines defined by the Anglo-Italian Boundary Treaty of 1891 and that of Ethio-Italian Treaty of 1900 remained shut in by territories held or claimed by the Sudan. Thus an uneasy parallelogram was created as a boundary between the Sudan and Eritrea. Naturally, that parallelogram was a source of difficulty in the frontier

relations between the Sudan and Eritrea. The Sudan complained that the parallelogram was an uneasy salient in her territory. In addition, the parallelogram controlled the headwaters of the Gash, the Setit and the Atbara and thus endangered the water supply of Egypt and the Sudan over which Britain had long declared it would not allow any 'civilized' power to have such an advantage.

To make its claims on the parallelogram more effective, the Sudan Government actually occupied all the neighbouring territories of Gallabat and Mattema districts as far as Shelga. Moreover, to stop any possible expansion of the Italians or the Ethiopians westwards to the Sudan, Britain declared that the Sudan included "all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which:

- (i) have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882; or,
- (ii) which, having before the late rebellion in the Sudan been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive, were temporarily lost to Egypt, and have been reconquered by Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government acting in concert; or,
- (iii) which may hereafter be conquered by the two Governments acting in concert<sup>4</sup> ..."

Thus the disputed parallelogram was regarded as a Sudanese territory under the three terms of this very declaration. However, the Italians while admitting the validity of the Sudan Government's claims on the parallelogram, held that Eritrean Government too had equally valid reasons in claiming the same territory.<sup>5</sup> The Italian claim was primarily based on three counts: first, the local trade in Gallabat and Gedaref areas would, if well directed, follow its ancient

channels across the port of Massawa, along more direct routes than those of the Kessala-Suakin road. Second, the Tomat area could be a fruitful farm and a rich granary to Eritrea. Third, Kassala town, having been long regained from the Italians, the Italian public opinion at home was exerting pressure on the Eritrean Government not to compromise any of the lands which remained to Italy in the direction of the River Atbara and River Setit.

The boundary suggested by the Sudan Government to rectify the old line in the disputed area was as follows: starting at a point to the south of Kassala town on River Gash, and following the course of the khore as far as Todluk.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand the Italians proposed a boundary which included in Eritrea "the portion of the country between the Gash and the Atbara, bounded on the north by the line of protocol of 1891, from a point on the Gash twenty English miles above Kassala, to a point on the Atbara at latitude 14°52' and bounded on the south by the line of Todluk to Tomat".<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, to make effective their claim the Italians took actual possession of the disputed area and established an Italian administrative unit over which they placed a native chief, supported by a number of Italian advisors. Far more serious, the appointed chief attempted to place a dam across the River Gash to divert its waters for irrigation purposes.

Although the damming attempt of the Gash failed in front of the first flood, yet, at this point, the British Consul at Cairo treated the matter as one of major concern, and addressed the case to London complaining that "experience has shown that but little progress can be made in dealing with such questions here. I, therefore, venture to hope that it may be possible to make representations at Rome, at any

rate with regard to the all important question of guaranteeing the water supply of Kassala which would become untenable if the attempt made to dam the stream of the Gash were to be renewed on a large and successful scale."<sup>8</sup> Consequently, the British Foreign Office complained to Italy that "the Gash being a tributary of the Atbara, Article 3 of the Anglo-Italian protocol of the 15th April, 1891 by which the Italian Government engaged not to construct on the Atbara, in view of irrigation, any work which might sensibly modify its flow into the Nile, is applicable to the Gash".<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile as the Anglo-Italian boundary negotiations were being conducted in Rome to rectify the so-called parallelogram, the British Consul at Addis Ababa was negotiating a treaty with the Negus of Ethiopia in regard to the boundary between Sudan and Ethiopia. In the course of his approaches to the Negus, the British Consul was able to secure a provisional agreement whereby the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary was to start from Todluk. So, the British had achieved from the Negus what they failed to achieve from Italy. However, the British seem to have changed their strategy in the Sudan-Eritrea boundary negotiations which were being conducted in Rome when they suddenly accepted the Italian proposals. This sudden change in the British attitude was attributed to the fact that they wanted to conclude the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary agreement first before the Italians interfered to prejudice the arrangement with the Negus.

The details of the boundary agreed upon in 1901 between Sudan and Eritrea were as follows: Commencing from a point on the south of Sabdarat-Kassala road it ran in a southerly direction to Jebel Anderiab, situated about three kilometres from the right bank of the Gash. From there it ran due west to a point on the Gash south of Jebel Gulsa, which it left entirely in the Sudan territory. Then it ran in a straight line to the highest point of Jebel Abu Gamal.

# Boundary Between Sudan and Ethiopia

(from Sabdarat to Todluk)

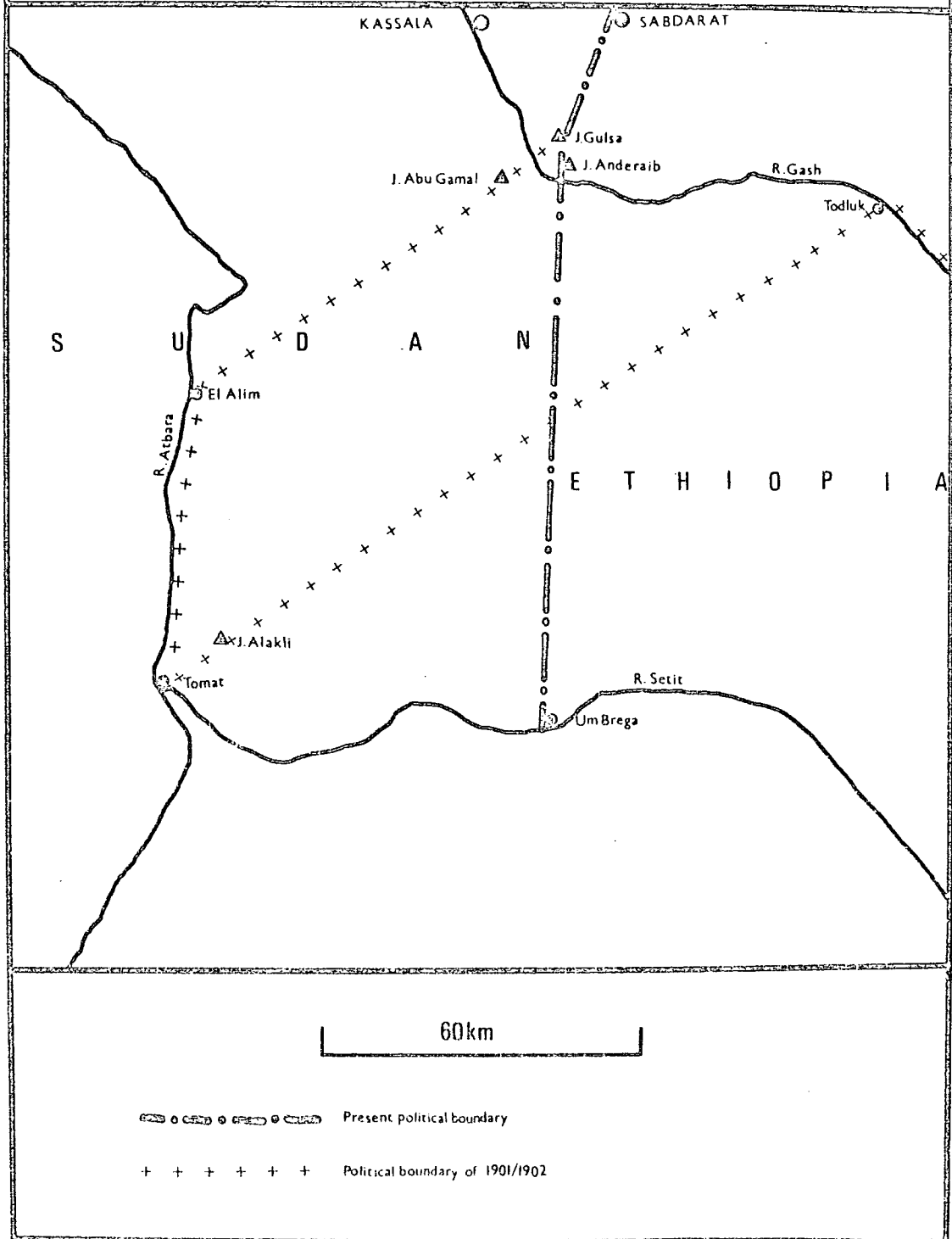


FIG. 29

From Jebel Abu Gamal it ran in a straight line to a point on latitude  $14^{\circ}52'$  north of the right bank of the Atbara. From this point it followed the deepest channel of the Atbara till it reached its junction with the Setit. Then it proceeded in a straight line to Todluk, leaving within Eritrea the group of low hills known as Jebel El Akalai.

(d) - from Abu Gamal to River Setit (see Fig. 30)

In 1891 when the Anglo-Italian 'spheres of influence' were allocated in this part of Africa a secret boundary protocol was signed between Britain and Italy in which it was provided "Que jamais le Government Italien voilait réduire sa sphère d'influence dans une partie quelconque du territoire entre la frontière actuelle de l'Ethiopie et la ligne de démarcation indiquée l'Article 1 du dit protocole, le Government Italien n'aurait pas d'objection à ce que le territoire, ainsi abandonné par lui, soit stablement occupé par le Government Égyptien."<sup>10</sup>

Having secured a boundary favourable to Sudan in their negotiations with the Negus, the British now communicated a skeleton map to the Italians on which was traced a provisional boundary between Ethiopia and the Sudan as proposed by the Negus. As the proposed boundary was traced in its northern portion to the east of the line laid down in the above-mentioned protocol, Britain was desirous of having the opinion of the Italians before coming to a final boundary arrangement with the Ethiopians.

The Italians, while ready to accept a boundary drawn in the direction of Um Brega village, maintained that a line demarcated from Todluk to the junction of Khor Meiateb with the Setit was too detrimental to their trade with Ethiopia. Their main objection was founded on the fact that the trade route from Eritrea into Ethiopia crossed the Eritrean boundary to the west of Todluk and followed a winding course through the

Sudan. Thus, in November 1901, when the boundary negotiations were resumed, the Italians were anxious to draw the boundary from Jebel Obar to Um Brega. They proposed that the Sudan should take over the territory to the north of the Tomat-Todluk line, and hand over to Eritrea, in exchange, all the country to the south of that line as far as River Setit.

This was unacceptable to the British for it involved the cession of the Hamran tribes, and did nothing towards the real anomalies of the disputed territory. However, as a compromise, the British side suggested an arrangement to be made with Ethiopia in which the Sudan was to cede a portion of territory to the south of the River Setit, the position of Nogara, to Ethiopia. In return the Negus was to be induced to make a similar concession to the north of the Setit, deflecting further east the Todluk-Meiateg line so as to include the whole of the Kunama tribe to Eritrea.

The Italians had no objection to this arrangement and thus accepted in principle a boundary to be drawn from Abu Gamal to River Setit giving the Sudan all territories to the west of this line and securing for Eritrea all the Sudanese territories to the east of the line, together with the territory which Ethiopia was to be induced to cede to the Sudan.

Having agreed upon the major points, the British and the Italians concluded a confidential boundary agreement (to be kept secret from the Ethiopians) in the following way: "as a boundary between Eritrea and the Sudan a line shall be drawn from Abu Gamal, to be eventually demarcated by special delegates in accordance with the geographical features in a southerly direction as far as the junction of Khor Um Brega with the River Setit. The territory to the east of this line, which has been

recognised as Sudanese territory by the Emperor Menelek, shall be transferred to Eritrea. The parallelogram west of this line shall be ceded by Italy to the Sudan. As a consequent to this arrangement, the boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia from the Setit to Mattema shall be deflected towards the west so as to leave on the Ethiopian side, Nogara and the trade route from Gondar northwards towards Eritrea. The British and the Italian Agents in Ethiopia will work together in concert to obtain from the Emperor Menelek, in return for this extension of the Ethiopian boundary, a zone of territory to the east of Todluk-Meiateb line, which will give to Eritrea the whole of the Kunama tribe up to the Mareb.<sup>11</sup>

#### Demarcation

By May 1902, the British and the Italians, working together, were able to induce the Negus to conclude the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary agreement with the necessary concessions proposed in the Anglo-Italian confidential agreement of November, 1901.

The existing boundary, which rectified the old regime, runs from Jebel Abu Gamal to the group of hills known as El Burak, the eastern ridge of Koriteb hills and Jebel Nuar. Then it runs to the road between Um Brega and El Hafera at a distance of about 250 metres from the point where the boundary crosses the nearest water channel west of the ridge. Then it runs straight to the bend of the Setit immediately opposite the mouth of Khor Royan.

Although the demarcation of this section was carried out in 1903 the entire section of boundary was redemarcated in 1916 and fifty-nine boundary marks of stone pillars, iron pipes and concrete were erected (a schedule shown in Appendix 4).

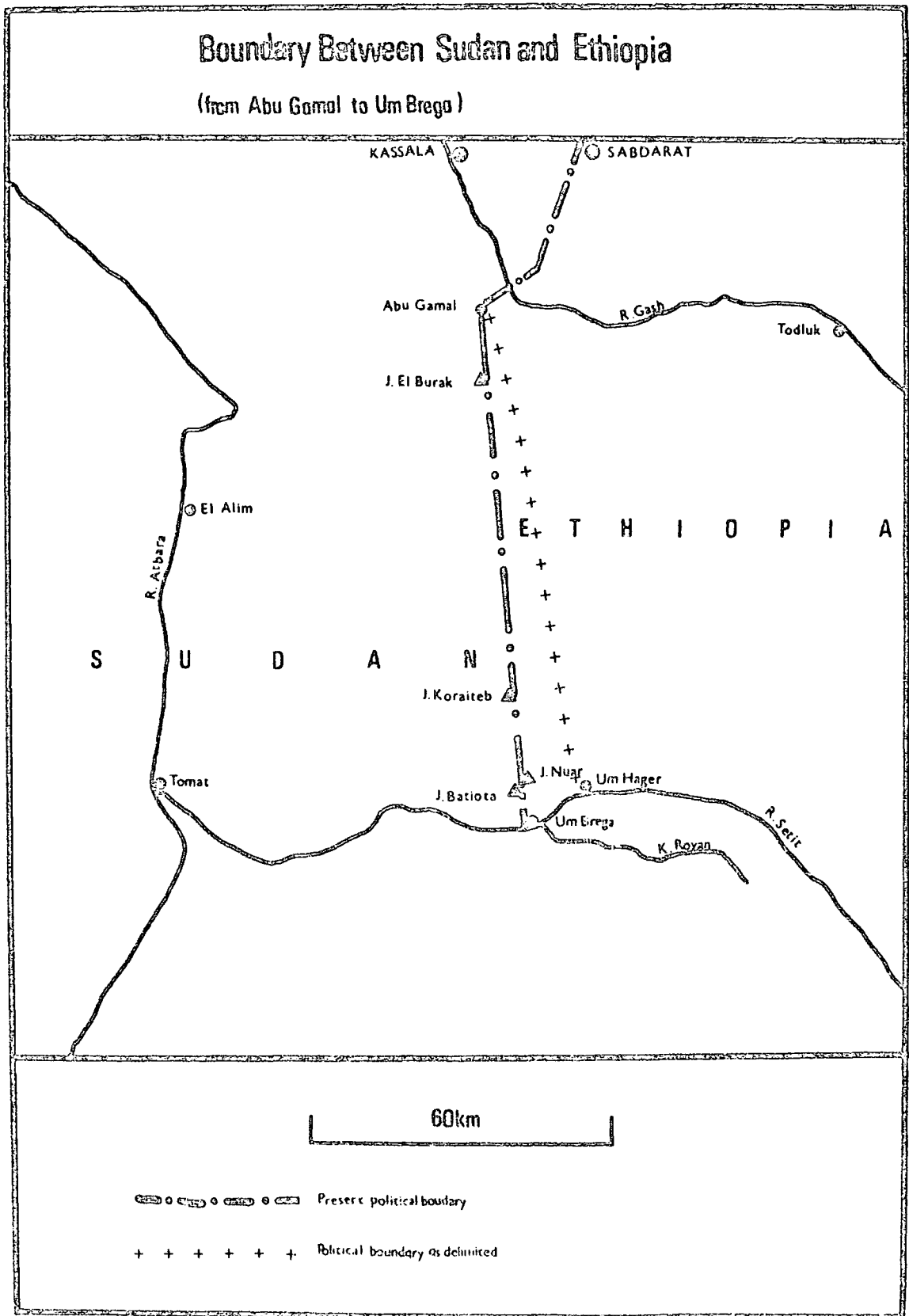


FIG. 30

MIDDLE SECTION (see Fig. 31)

When the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary negotiations were resumed in 1898 between the Negus and the British Consul in Ethiopia, the latter proposed a boundary extending south from Todluk to Melile. He included in the Sudan, the Hamran territories, Kedaw, Gallabat, Debana, Dar Somati, Dar Guba, Dar Gumz and Beni Shangul region. On the other hand, the Negus claimed all these territories as being part of his Empire but he showed particular interest in the Beni Shangul region.<sup>12</sup> Why was the Negus so interested in Beni Shangul?

There were three possible reasons put forward by the F.O. for Menelek's insistence on this area:

- (i) - that he wished to explore and exploit the gold known to be mined there.
- (ii) - that he realized the strategic importance of an area located within easy reach of the navigable portions of the Blue Nile, the White Nile and the River Sobat.
- (iii) - that by controlling the Beni Shangul region he was aiming to tap a considerable portion of the Sudan trade, and also obtain an outlet for that of Ethiopia for which the Sudan could offer a good market.

Apart from Beni Shangul, the Negus insisted on having two important territories: Mattema town and the region to the south of River Sobat. As to Mattema, the Negus requested the British Consul "tell your Government, I do not wish to claim Mattema as a right, I do not wish to make any question of right about it; even if I did, I have not the force to make my right good against you. I merely ask your Government, for

friendship sake, to let me have Mattema, on account of the Christians there, and it is for these reasons we wish to have it."<sup>13</sup>

It seems that Britain was only interested in the fort of Mattema and thus agreed to divide the town between the Sudan and Ethiopia in such a way that the latter was given the old section.<sup>14</sup> Beni Shangul was ceded to Ethiopia on condition that all the concessions for gold mining in the area were granted to British subjects but no agreement was reached regarding the area to the south of River Sobat.

As to the other territories, a provisional boundary delimitation was drafted in the following way:

- (i) - the boundary was to follow the tribal limits;
- (ii) - the Kedawi country, should it be found to be more west than east of what was claimed by the Negus, to be under the Sudan;
- (iii) - the boundary was to follow the eastern limits of Gallabat District, the Debana and Dar Somati countries;
- (iv) - Dar Guba and Dar Gumz countries were to be under Ethiopia but Famaka District, including the territories of Sheikh Abu Naama of Ras El Khor and the district of Fazughli, were to remain under the Sudan;
- (v) - the boundary thus roughly delimited when demarcated was to be amended in accordance with the topographic conditions of the country.

Since the time of delimitation, however, things went too slowly and the boundary agreement remained unfinished for nearly five years. This gap of time between the delimitation and the demarcation was mainly due to two reasons: firstly, since the boundary as provisionally delimited between the Sudan and Ethiopia ran considerably to the east of the Sudan-Eritrea frontier, the Italians were unwilling to see the Ethiopia-Sudan

boundary finalized before an arrangement was reached in respect of their boundary. Secondly, the Sudan Government had only inaccurate information concerning the frontier region between the Sudan and Ethiopia, therefore, two survey parties were arranged to report on the conditions of the border zones under consideration before any boundary demarcation.

For this purpose Captain Austin was instructed to explore the section of the border between the River Sobat and Lake Rudolf, and Major Gwynn was asked to reconnoitre the section of frontier between the Blue Nile and the Sobat. Their main object was to ascertain and define on maps the western limits of the Ethiopian influence. Moreover they were required to examine the country to the south of Roseris town with the view of subsequent construction of a railway line.

Gwynn's expedition started in December 1898 but his final report was not ready until September 1901. This long delay was partly because of the obstacles caused by the Ethiopians, and partly because of unfavourable climatical conditions. In spite of such difficulties, however, Gwynn surveyed the territories to the north of the Sobat with a considerable degree of accuracy. He cited three main difficulties in connection with the provisionally delimited boundary: firstly, the determination of the limits of Dar Somati, Debana and Gallabat; secondly, the ownership of Guessan; and thirdly, the fact that certain hills mentioned in the provisional delimitation as points on the boundary were found to be inhabited.

As to the first difficulty, Gwynn found that very little could be ascertained about Dar Somati, the name had completely dropped out of use by the local tribes. The Debana was found to be very thinly

populated and the Gallabat area was found to extend northwards as far as the River Rahad and include Jebel Mdbara and the territory between it and the Atbara. There were no regular Gallabat villages to the south of Mattema town, as indicated in the provisional delimitation. As regards to the second point, Gwynn was not able to gather enough evidence to decide whether the Guessan District was actually a Sudanese territory. Concerning the third point, he found that Jebel Menza, which was specified in the provisional agreement as a boundary mark, was the site of a considerable village which did not belong to the Guba group. The water supply and the farms of the village were found along Khor Zuar to the east and south-east of the hill. Also he found that Jebel Dindir was not a suitable boundary mark for it was the site of a village subject to Fazughli to the south of the Blue Nile. Khor Amilia was found not rising from Jebel Faronge as it was mentioned in the provisional delimitation; and there were at least two settlements at Jebel Fallabut and six at Jebel Farong. The farms belonging to these settlements were all found in the valley in which Khor Simba originates. Despite these difficulties, Gwynn suggested two boundary proposals concerning the area between the Setit and the Sobat (a description is shown in Appendix 5).

Meanwhile Captain Austin also completed the survey of the territory to the south of the Sobat as far as Lake Rudolf. He recommended a boundary following the course of the River Akobo to its origin in the mountain ranges to the north of Lake Rudolf, then crossing these mountains to the headwaters of what had been called River Schasi at north latitude  $15^{\circ}12'$ .

In September 1901 the findings of Austin and Gwynn were transmitted to the British Consul in Ethiopia with due authorization to conclude the

Sudan-Ethiopia boundary with the Negus. The British Agent was particularly instructed to obtain, if possible, a boundary not less favourable to the Sudan than that recommended by Austin and Gwynn. He was also requested to endeavour to arrange with the Negus a guarantee of no interference in the flow of the waters of the Blue Nile and Lake Tana, except in agreement with Britain or the Sudan Government. Navigation on the Blue Nile and the other Ethiopian rivers draining into the Mediterranean was to be free and Britain was to be allowed to construct a railway through the Ethiopian territory to connect the Sudan with Uganda.<sup>15</sup>

By May 1902 Britain, Italy and Ethiopia were able to conclude the final agreement as regards to the boundaries of Eritrea and Ethiopia with the Sudan. The boundary arrangements between Sudan and Ethiopia contained five main articles:<sup>16</sup>

- (i) - the definition of boundary;
- (ii) - the demarcation of the boundary;
- (iii) - construction of works on the Blue Nile, River Sobat and Lake Tana;
- (iv) - lease to Sudan of a territory on River Baro as a commercial station;
- (v) - the right to connect the Sudan with Uganda by a railway to be constructed through Ethiopian territory (Cape-Cairo Railway).

#### Demarcation

The Sudan Government appointed Major Gwynn who carried out the survey of the same territory to demarcate the boundary. It seems that the Ethiopians themselves had also entrusted him to represent them as they had no boundary experts.<sup>17</sup> Thus delegated by both Sudan and Ethiopia, Gwynn started the demarcation from the junction of Khor

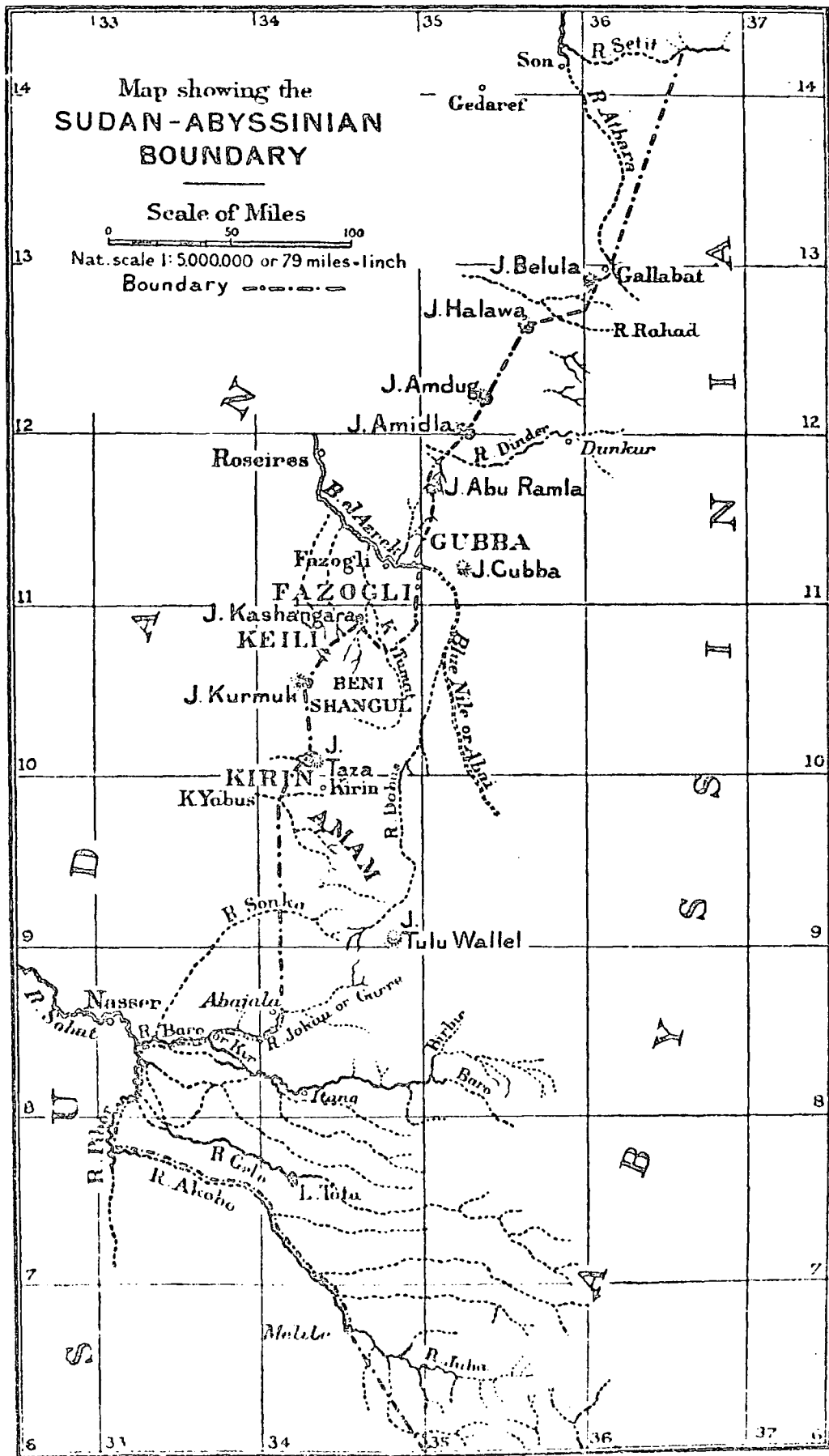


FIG. 31

(After Gwynn)

Royan with the Setit in December, 1902 and completed the work at Melile in June, 1903. He was authorized to deflect the demarcated line, if necessary, from the line delimited in the agreement in order to make the best boundary he could devise in the interests of both countries concerned. So he deflected the demarcated line from the delimited (see Fig.53) in several places to suit the human and topographic conditions of the border zone. The description of the demarcation and the boundary marks is given in Appendix 7.

#### SOUTHERN SECTION (Fig. 32)

This section of boundary was originally delimited as a territorial limit between Ethiopia and British East Africa in 1907 and the Sudan was not a party in its negotiations.<sup>18</sup> However, the boundary was demarcated in 1909 by Major Gwynn who was, this time, acting only on behalf of the Government of British East Africa. Ethiopia did not take part in the demarcation and the Negus was not happy with it from the beginning.

Despite the fact that Ethiopia did not take part in the demarcation the boundary was indeed effected and the Gwynn-line remained the international boundary between Ethiopia and British East Africa until 1914, when the whole territory to the north of Lake Rudolf was ceded to the Sudan by the Government of Uganda because of certain administrative difficulties.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly the Sudan boundary with Ethiopia extended from Melile to a point on the shore of the Gulf of Sanderson in Lake Rudolf. In this part the present boundary commences at Lake Rudolf and then follows to the mouth of River Kibish (schasi), it then, along the thalweg of this river, proceeds to north latitude  $5^{\circ}25'$ . From this point the boundary changes direction west to a point on east longitude  $35^{\circ}15'$  then it follows this longitude to its intersection with north latitude  $6^{\circ}$ .

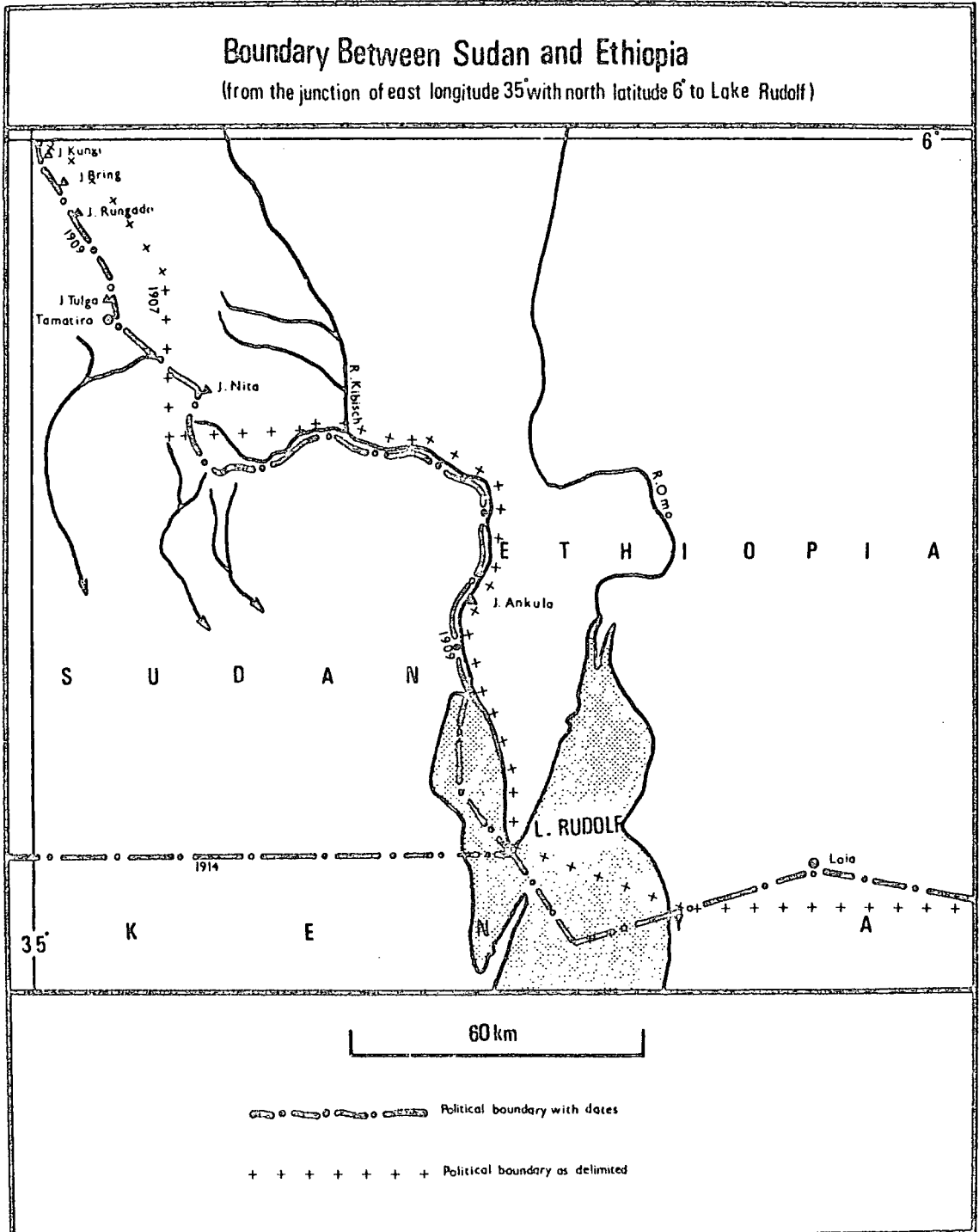


FIG. 32

It would seem that, with the establishment of the boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia in its existing position, both Britain and Ethiopia had accomplished their original aims: Britain had protected its interests in the Nile valley and secured a guarantee concerning the Blue Nile and the Lake Tana from Ethiopia. On the other hand Ethiopia had expanded its borders in the direction of the Nile as the Negus Menelek had set forth in his declaration of 1891; moreover, Beni Shangul, Mattema and several small territories were included within the Ethiopian Empire.

Today, despite the fact that much of the commercial and strategic factors which originally influenced the exact location of the political boundary in its present position have now lost importance, the abnormal care taken in the entire boundary negotiations can still be appreciated. Indeed, the boundary exists today much the same as it was at the beginning of the century when it came into being.

C H A P T E R   S I X

GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

## CHAPTER SIX

### GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

Having examined the territorial evolution of the boundary under consideration in the previous chapter, it is now proposed to analyse the line established, as it appears today, from a geographical point of view. In this respect three aspects of boundary analysis have been appreciated as being of particular interest to geographers: the types of boundary used, the relationship between boundary and distribution of population.<sup>1</sup>

#### TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

It has been suggested that boundaries can be classified on two main criteria, morphological and genetic.<sup>2</sup> The morphological classification generally deals with the physical and descriptive characteristics of the boundary; for example, whether the boundary follows a physical feature (mountains, rivers, roads, watersheds, etc.), a straight line joining two different points, or an astronomical line drawn through medians of longitudes and parallels of latitudes. This kind of classification has been attempted, or rather elaborated, by Fawcett in 1918, Boggs in 1940, Barbour in 1961 and Prescott in 1965.<sup>3</sup>

Fawcett<sup>4</sup> classified his types in the following manner:

1. Natural barriers such as: sea, desert, mountain, forest and swamp.
2. River boundaries.
3. Artificial boundaries such as: astronomical lines and lines of reference.

Boggs,<sup>5</sup> in what he called "a more comprehensive classification", distinguished four major groups or classes:

1. Physical types, that is, boundaries which follow some features marked by nature, such as: mountains (mountain crests, water divides, deserts, etc.); lakes, bays and straits (median line, principal navigable channel, bank or margin); rivers and canals (median line, thalweg, bank or margin), swamps and boundaries running through territorial waters to the high sea contour line (not the banks or margin of a river or lake).
2. Geometrical types, that is, straight lines, arcs of circles, and similar types that disregard the physical geography and topography of the country. Straight lines (meridians and other great circles); parallels of latitudes, rhomb line or loxodromic curves, arcs of a circle, lines parallel to or equidistant from a coast or a river.
3. Anthropogeographic type, that is, boundaries related to human occupants of the land, such as, tribal boundaries, linguistic boundaries, cultural boundaries and private property lines already existing.
4. Complex or compound boundaries, such as, compromise lines adjusted to a multiplicity of factors.

Barbour, from a study of individual treaties defining boundaries in tropical Africa, and following Fawcett, Boggs and others, drew up an alternative classification to be applied in the boundaries of Inter-tropical Africa.<sup>6</sup> His classification has been constructed as follows:

1. Astronomical lines (parallel or meridian).
2. Mathematical lines (straight line, arc of circle, line equidistant from a named line).
3. Mathematical lines, defined by reference to relief.
4. Mathematical lines, defined by reference to human occupation.
5. Relief features (foot of a mountain chain, edge of mountain or lagoon, stream or river usually the centre line, watershed).

6. One of the above which is also an inter-tribal boundary.

The other criterion on which boundaries were classified is the genetic classification which considers boundaries in respect of their relationship with the cultural landscape through which they run, that is, in relation to the development of pattern of settlements and human societies in the border regions or frontier zones at the time of the boundary making. The idea was first proposed by Hartshorne<sup>7</sup> who recognized three main types of boundaries:

1. Antecedent boundaries, that is, boundaries established before the development of the pattern of settlement in the border zone.
2. Subsequent boundaries, that is boundaries established subsequent to the development of the cultural pattern and the human societies in what would be the border region.
3. Superimposed boundaries, that is boundaries drawn without conforming to the cultural landscape and human societies in the region.

As one can easily see, so far as the boundary line itself is concerned, there are no clear dividing lines between the two different criteria of boundary classification (morphological or genetic) or indeed, between the various categories of the major classes of either of the two main classifications. A certain boundary might be mathematical, anthropo-geographic and superimposed at the same time. Therefore, it is unwise to draw any generalizations from the above classifications in that mathematical and astronomical boundaries must be antecedent or superimposed. Also it is not necessarily the case that conclusions drawn from the study of a certain boundary or boundaries are readily applicable to another boundary; every single boundary, even in the same state, must be considered separate and standing by its own. A scholar dealing with such a question like the study of types of boundaries is required to

grasp the history of the boundary evolution under consideration and the complex reasons that led to its establishment at that particular place and time.

From the study of various treaties of delimitation and demarcation of the boundary under consideration and following the classification of Fawcett, Boggs and Barbour, an alternative classification is constructed (see Table 1) and Fig. 33 is adapted from it. In this classification an attempt is made to combine both morphological and genetic criteria in the same sequence of division.

TABLE 1            CLASSIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

---

1	R	<u>Relief Feature Boundary</u>
	Rm	mountain
	Rmp	peaks
	Rmw	watershed
	Rl	lake
	Rr	river
	Rrm	median line
	Rrt	thalweg
	Rrb	bank or margin
	Rrx	not identified in the treaty
2	M	<u>Mathematical Boundary</u>
	Ms	straight line
	Mc	curve or arc of circle
3	C	<u>Cultural Boundary</u>
	Cr	roads
4	S	<u>Superimposed Boundary</u>
5	CO	<u>Compound or Complex Boundary</u>
		(comprising multiples of the above types)

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# Major Types of the Political Boundary

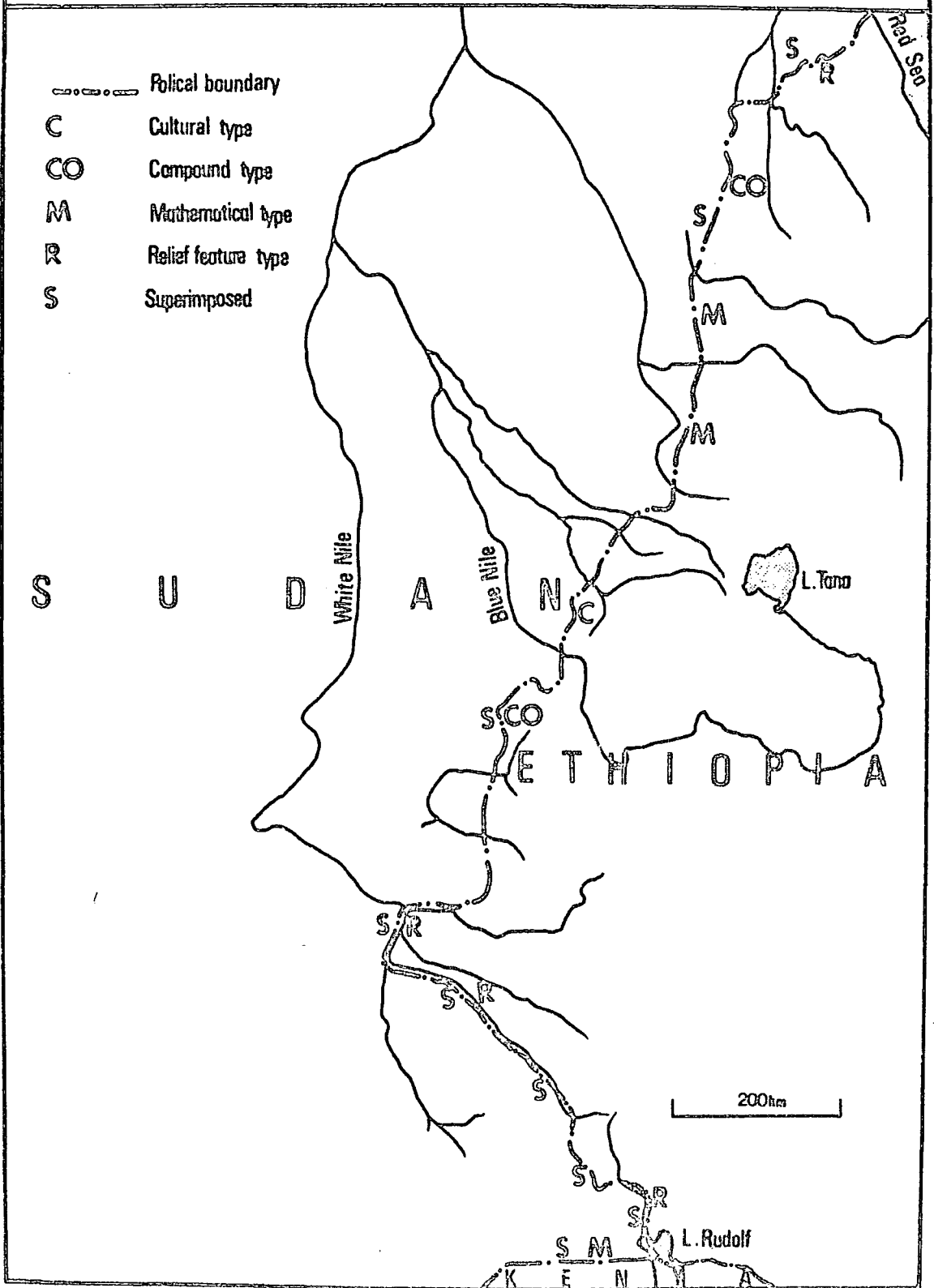


FIG. 33

Table 2 is constructed to examine the various types of the Sudan eastern boundary and show the relationship between the morphological and genetic classifications as applied in this particular case. It indicates the complete absence of the astronomical type. Fifty-two per cent of the total length of the boundary consists of relief features; 29 per cent of mathematical lines; 17 per cent of compound or complex lines, while only 2 per cent of the total length of the boundary follows cultural features. The relative proportion of boundary lines grouped under the compound or complex type, for want of a more exact term, shows that more than 50 per cent of its total length follows relief features. Therefore, the boundary under study, if taken by African standards where 44 per cent of the total length of boundary is astronomical, 30 per cent mathematical and only 26 per cent follows relief features, positively indicates that there has been an abnormal care taken by the boundary commissioners to establish a boundary following as best as could be obtained the physiographical features of the border landscape. In terms of the morphological classification, rivers and mountains are very widely used as boundary marks; 640 kilometres of the total length of boundary follow rivers and streams and 440 kilometres follow mountains. However, where a boundary is made to follow a river or a stream or a lake, the boundary agreements and protocols fail to show in explicit terms what type of water boundaries the boundary makers were intending to construct; for example, whether the boundary was intended to follow a median line, a thalweg, the navigable channel or either of the banks of the stream used as a boundary. The term which is often used in the agreements and protocols is the 'course of ... river, stream and etc.' Not surprisingly, the boundary under consideration

TABLE 2 THE MAJOR TYPES OF THE SUDAN EASTERN BOUNDARY

MORPHOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION			LOCATION	LENGTH		GENETIC CLASSIFICATION	
Major Classes	Type	Consist of		Km.	%		
1 - R	Rm	Rmp	from Ras Kassar to J. Gabikelli	1,160	52	S	
			from J. Nish to J. Roribet			440	S
			from J. Benifer to J. Debrimms				S
			from J. Magbara to J. Daglish				
			from J. Kugal to Mt. Nita				
	Rmw	from J. Teglanait to J. Nish		S			
		from J. Es'ekenie to J. Benifer		S			
	Rr	Rrm) Rrt) Rrb) Rrx)	along <u>Khor</u> Karora	640		S	
			along <u>Khor</u> Baraka and Khor Dada		S		
			along <u>Khor</u> Garre, River Baro		S		
River Bibor, River Akobo and River Kibish			S				
			S				
R1		in Lake Rudolf and Sanderson Gulf	80				
2 - M	Ms	Mc	from Sabdarat to River Setit	550	29		
			from River Setit to Bhr es Salam				
			from J. El shein to <u>Khor</u> Abanakara				
			from J. Shegik to J. Magabra				
			from J. Daglish to J. Wiz wiz				
			from <u>Khor</u> Yabus to River Garre				
			around J. Halawa, J. Umdaga and J. Jerok				
3 - C	Cr		along Nogara road and <u>Khor</u> Abanakara Gallabat road	40	2		
4 - S							
5 - CO			from J. Wiz wiz to <u>Khor</u> Yabus	385	17	S	
			from J. Nish to Kaskm Ambacta			S	

Total length of the boundary = 2,220 kilometres.  
 The figures are calculated to the nearest round figure.  
 The percentage of each major type is calculated in relation to the total length of the boundary.

J: Jebel

where it is made to follow water channels, is most unsatisfactory as it has never been represented in the official maps with any degree of exactitude. For instance, the Sudan Survey Department maps (Topo. No. S. 1105-66) locate the political boundary on the Sudan side along the rivers Baro, Bibor and Akobo, while other maps produced by the same department (Topo. No. S. 741-46) locate the same line on the Ethiopian side along the same rivers.

In fact water courses have a number of defects when used as boundaries. Fig. 34 is constructed to show the possible positions of a boundary defined to follow the thalweg, the median line or a navigable channel. It indicates that a river might change its course (b), branch (c), islands might be formed in the middle of the river (d) or dry out (f).

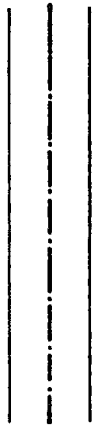
Fig. 34 (e) indicates the defect of a boundary when defined to follow either side of a river or the course of a stream. In this case a boundary may run along the bank of the river at its normal width, the bank of the river at its normal flood maximum or the bank of the river at its abnormal flood maximum.

This misrepresentation of the political boundary along the border rivers and the other smaller water channels has not as yet raised a very serious question between Sudan and Ethiopia, mainly because the border rivers are not intensively utilized. However, there is no doubt that any major development on or near one of these water channels would in future promote great difficulties to the two adjacent Governments.

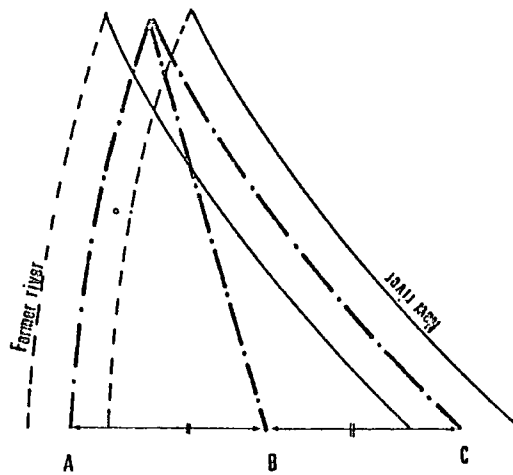
As for the genetic classification when applied to this boundary, one interesting point is that the line where it is superimposed does not consist of mathematical and astronomical types. This is rather unusual

## Defects of River Boundaries

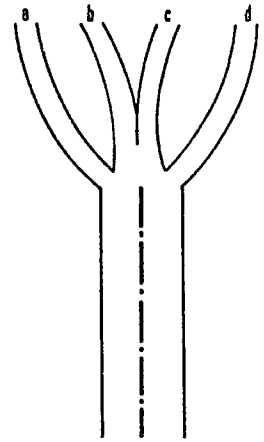
(a) Thalweg Only  
1 possibility



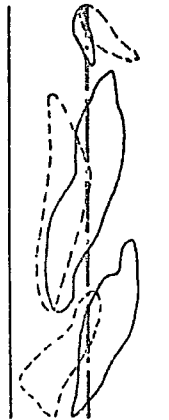
(b) Change of Course  
3 possibilities



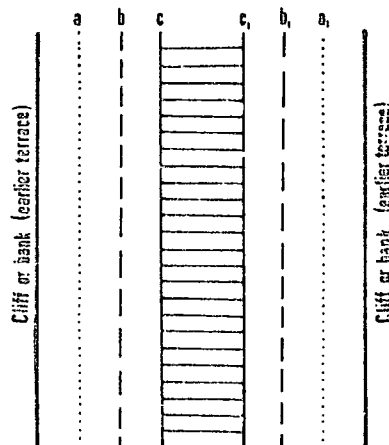
(c) Braided River  
Mainstream?



(d) Shifting Islands  
(Median line)



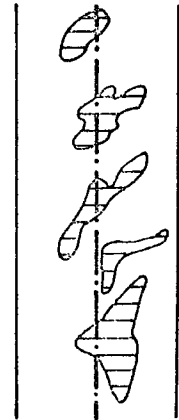
(e) Expansion of Water Surface



c -- c, Normal width  
b -- b, Normal flood maximum  
a -- a, Abnormal flood maximum

———— Existing river bank  
- - - - - Political boundary

(f) Seasonal Shrinking



River dries out to a series of pools of which particular ownership is recognised.

FIG. 34

if considered in relation to other boundaries in Africa where, in the vast majority of cases, the superimposed lines result from straight lines of mathematical and astronomical types.<sup>8</sup> As Fig. 33 indicates the superimposed boundaries here mainly result from the relief feature type: river boundaries divide the local tribes in two main regions and the mountain boundaries only in one region.

#### BOUNDARY MARKS (BEACONS)

The boundary marks along the entire length of the political boundary under study usually consist of massive stone cairns 1-3 metres high, on some occasions with iron pipes of varying lengths. At present, most of these beacons have either been deliberately removed by the border tribes, or unintentionally by individuals. In the former case the destruction or the displacement of boundary marks resulted from the fact that the tribes thought that these marks were tribal limits and did not believe that they were limits of an international boundary which was not yet known to them. In the latter case the boundary stones were taken away to sharpen the various tools, as well as for use in building fire-places and hut bases. Iron pipes were particularly attractive to the tribesmen as they were taken away to be cut into knives, spears and arrow heads. In some other cases boundary beacons were made of trees or even tree trunks which must have perished soon after the demarcation of the boundary.

What is more interesting regarding this boundary is not that it can be identified within Barbour's relief feature boundary type, or Hartshorne's superimposed type or whether the boundary beacons were made of masonry stones or iron pipes, but rather that neither the successive Governments at Khartoum nor the long lasting stable regime at Addis Ababa



PLATE 1 : Constructing a boundary mark at Gallat  
ez Zaraf (Gwynn 1903).

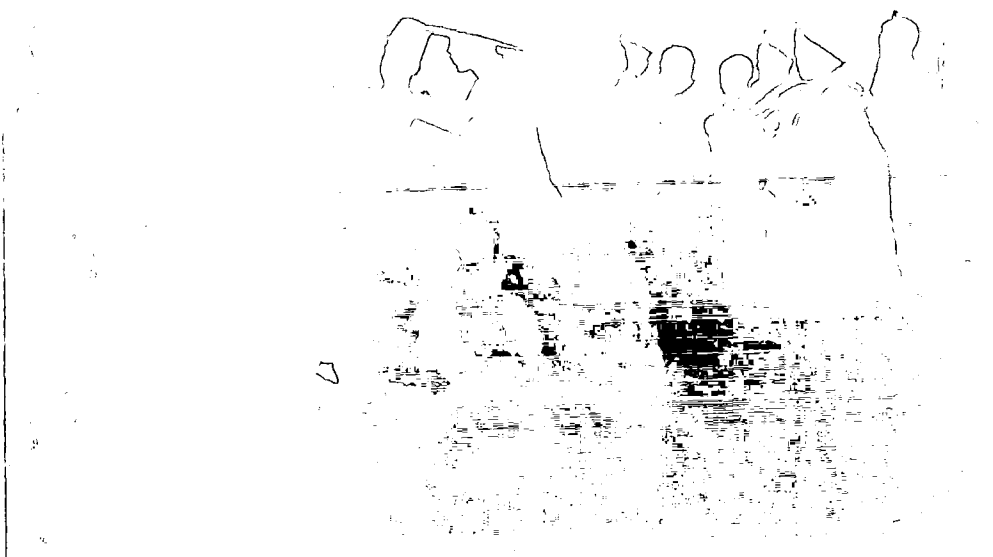


PLATE 2 : Ethiopian and Sudanese tribal chiefs  
observing the construction of the boundary  
mark at River Setit (Gwynn 1903).

could have but limited political influence in the border areas. The actual boundary, as we shall see later in more detail, has not affected in any considerable degree either the physiographical or the human landscape in the border zone. The border regions are still inhabited by primitive tribes who perhaps have not yet heard of Khartoum or Addis Ababa and would be very much surprised to hear that there is something called an international boundary in their tribal homelands.

#### THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY AND TRIBAL DIVISIONS

It has already been noted in the previous chapters that the existing boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia is superimposed upon the cultural and human landscape and, therefore, results in the division of tribes between two different administrations in three main regions. From south to north: (1) the Ellemi Triangle; (2) the Baro Salient; and (3) the boundary between the Sudan and Eritrea.

##### 1. The Ellemi Triangle

The south-eastern corner of the Sudan in the Eastern District of Equatoria Province, is known as the Unadministered Area, or more widely and loosely as the Ellemi Triangle or Ellemi Appendix (see Fig. 35). The Triangle is bounded to the south by the Sudan-Kenya boundary which is called the 'Uganda Line'. The line itself being reconstructed administratively in 1938 to allow the Turkana tribes of Kenya entry into their traditional grazing grounds inside the Sudan territory as they used to do before the establishment of the present political boundary between Sudan and Kenya. The 1938 line is known by various names such as the Provisional Administrative Line, Maud line or the Red line. To the north the Triangle is bounded by the boundary of Equatoria Province, to the east by the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary and to the west by the junction

of east longitude  $34^{\circ}22'$  with north latitude  $4^{\circ}37'$ .

The Triangle itself has never been inhabited permanently, but is frequented by more than a dozen tribes for the purpose of grazing and watering. The Ethiopian side of the Triangle was defined in general terms by the Treaty of May 1902, subject to demarcation as far south only as the intersection of east longitude  $35^{\circ}$  with north latitude  $6^{\circ}$ ; actual demarcation being only carried out to the junction of the River Akobo with River Bibor, and so does not in any case affect the Triangle. In 1907 another treaty, known as the 'Southern Frontier Agreement', was signed by Emperor Menelek and the Government of British East Africa. In an annex map the proposed boundary which was subject to demarcation was shown in red (generally referred to as Red Line). From the intersection of east longitude  $35^{\circ}$  with north latitude  $6^{\circ}$  (though it actually, and very confusingly, dealt with the boundary to the north of this point which was already the subject of the 1902 treaty) it included the whole of the remaining portion of the southern Sudan boundary as well as that of British East Africa. Major Gwynn (the British boundary commissioner), unable to obtain the attendance of the Ethiopian delegates, traversed by himself the part of the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary from Lake Rudolf to the Tirma plateau in 1909 making certain modifications in the so-called Red Line. In 1910, as we noted in Chapter Five, the Ethiopian Government notified the Government of British East Africa that they, the Ethiopians, could not agree to the Gwynn-Line, and insisted on the Red Line as the permanent and only binding arrangement between the two countries. Various subsequent proposals for demarcation always came to nothing and so the boundary question has remained unsettled ever since. Consequently, the situation has been that the local Governors of Ethiopia, at Maji, continuously refused to acknowledge the political boundary and insisted

on the Red Line, which they called the Menelek Line, but they did not know where this Menelek Line was located. Actually, as far as the Sudan is concerned the so-called Menelek Line coincides very nearly with the line demarcated by Gwynn who merely modified the Agreement Line in accordance with the geographical features of the border landscape. There seems no doubt that for many years Ethiopian influence has extended as far west as 35°E. and as they believed that the Sudan's occupation of Kapoeta (the headquarters of the Eastern District) was an act of aggression on the part of the Sudan Government, in 1928, an Ethiopian administrator arrived at the said post claiming that the Topotha area was an Ethiopian territory and planted an Ethiopian flag near the entrance of the post.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the probably genuine local belief that the political boundary is a great deal west of its actual position, some of the local tribes, especially the Nyangatom and the Tirma who are more or less administered by Ethiopia, live permanently astride the international boundary, and, should the Ethiopian authorities ever wish to impose disagreeable measures on them they can, with great ease, retire into the Sudan territory. However, the Nyangatom, who closely resemble the Sudan Topotha, intermarry with them and provide a refuge for their outlaws. The country to the east of longitude 34°E. is an extremely difficult and inhospitable arid desert in the dry season, and a morass in the wet season. So, the Sudan Government cannot, without great unremunerative expenditure, get at or administer to the country, which can be held to be clearly lying within the Sudan. Arising therefore is the problem known as the Ellemi Triangle Question.

The crux of the matter is that certain sections of the Turkana who are administered by Kenya extend across the Kenya-Sudan boundary into the Sudan. There they are generally harassed by Ethiopian tribes, sometimes

with the backing of Ethiopian soldiers. On some occasions the Sudanese tribes have also been accused of harassing the Turkana. The Kenyan attitude in the past was that the Sudan must be responsible to stop raids from and across the Sudan territories and that the Sudan should either administer the Area to make it safe, or allow them to do so, and to pay them for the additional expenses to which they were put.

In 1924 and 1928 the matter was further pressed by Kenya, and in 1928 it was admitted by the Sudan that there was no objection to Kenyan authorities pursuing raiders into the Unadministered Area inside the Sudan territory. In 1930 Kenya exerted even more pressure on the Sudan for effective administration of the said Area. The Sudan, however, was not then interested in the Area and thought the costs of administration unjustified. There were then serious thoughts of ceding the Area to Kenya (Uganda at the time) but the British Foreign Office turned the idea down on the argument that the Egyptian Government would not agree, for political reasons, to any adjustment of boundaries in Sudan in favour of the British Empire. The idea was, therefore, dropped, but the Sudan was told that it had got an international obligation to safeguard the Turkana tribe who had traditional grazing rights within the Sudan and should, therefore, administer the Area itself or surrender its effective administration to Kenya. The Sudan acknowledged this but would not administer the whole Area due to high costs. An alternative idea was then agreed, in 1931, that Kenya should be at liberty to administer the Triangle and protect the Turkana inside the Sudan on condition that the Sudan makes certain contributions to Kenya for her expenditure in building roads and posts inside the Sudan and administering the Ellemi Triangle on behalf of the Sudan Government. Subsequently, there was a brief period of calm until 1938 when the Nyangatom tribe jointly with the Topotha made an extensive

raid through the Sudan on the Turkana inside Kenya. Again there were Kenyan complaints against the Sudan which resulted in granting the duties of the safeguard of the Turkana inside the Sudan to Kenya with the full authorization to the Kenyan Government to deal with all the non-Sudanese tribes in the Area, but in accordance with the Sudan laws and regulations. This state of affairs prevails to the present day.

It seems that the attitude of the Sudan Government, both in the pre-independent period and after it, has always been passive towards the so-called Ellemi Triangle Question. It would seem that the Sudan has not been able to safeguard the political boundary sufficiently against the encroachments by non-Sudanese nomads who have no traditional grazing rights in the Area and protecting those who do in fact have such traditional rights. However, in equity, it must be mentioned that the Sudan has always had justifiable reasons for this passive attitude; these reasons are:

1. the Sudan has no real interest in the Area as it is neither inhabited nor frequented by Sudanese tribes;
2. the Area, as has already been mentioned, is far away from the Sudan centres of administration and practically inaccessible in most periods of the year. Indeed, access is much easier from Kenya;
3. it will cost the Sudan much money to build roads and maintain them. Against all this expenditure there appears no potential gain that the Sudan could expect from administering the Triangle, as such administration would only be in the interest of Kenya;
4. the independent Governments of the Sudan should not in any way hold the responsibility of such problems which they have inherited from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Government which undertook the establishment of the political boundary. However, it must be noted



FIG. 35

too, that while the British authorities in the Condominium Government were on many occasions desirous to make right and adjust the boundary anomalies in this region and other similar ones along the Sudan eastern boundary, their Egyptian partners in the Sudan administration made it almost impossible for them to reach any settlements with the neighbouring countries, and thus caused the non-settlement of the boundary questions.

#### SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ELLEMI QUESTION

To solve this rather irritating question. (which certainly results from the ill-definition of the political boundary in the Area in such a way that, when it was drawn, took little heed of the interests of the local population) there are four possible alternatives, of which only one can in the writer's view lead to a more workable condition in the region.

1. The Sudan should take over the whole territory and be responsible for its effective administration.

In this respect the following questions should be answered:

- (a) what would be the cost of building roads and establishing an orderly life in the area?
- (b) Would Kenya agree to meet the cost of services rendered by the Sudan to the Kenyan tribes who frequent the area?
- (c) If the answer is negative to (b) (as it most probably is) what would be the return to the Sudan for all this expenditure of administering a wasteland over which it has no interests?

2. The Sudan should cede the whole territory east of longitude 35<sup>o</sup>E. to Kenya.

If so, how will this take place, should it be: (a) a mere gift, or (b) an outright sale? It is, however, convenient here to note that there is no third possibility of exchange of territory elsewhere (which is usually adopted in such circumstances) as Kenya has no common boundaries with the Sudan except for the one under consideration. On the other hand, if Kenya refused to take over other parts of territories administered by the Sudan outside the area frequented by the Kenyan tribes, should the Sudan agree to hand over the Ellemi Triangle alone to Kenya? This last does not seem to be practical because the Sudan will be left with another problem of the same nature, that of safeguarding the Turkana from the Nyangatom in an even wider area.

3. Both Kenya and the Sudan should maintain the status quo, but regulate the matter with formal political agreements and protocols to the effect that:

- (a) the existing political boundary be recognized by Kenya;
- (b) that the Sudan allows Kenyan patrol duties (not administrative) within the Sudan territory in the Ellemi Triangle to protect the Turkana.

However, even if such a regulated status quo is agreed to be maintained in the Area, the Sudan still needs to have a definite policy towards the Ethiopian tribes of Nyangatom and Tirma.

4. Ethiopia should agree to take over the Nyangatom and the whole territory frequented by the tribes inside the Sudan east of longitude 35°15'E. in exchange for territory elsewhere (preferably in the Baro Salient) leaving the whole of the Ellemi Triangle to Kenya.

By examining the above alternatives, it is clear that (4) is the best workable solution to the Ellemi Problem, on condition that the

Sudan be compensated by Kenya and Ethiopia for loss of its territories.

#### THE BARO SALIENT

The area to the west of the foot-hills of the Ethiopian plateau between the Baro and the Akobo rivers is known as the Baro Salient. It is separated from Ethiopia by the high escarpment which forms a considerable barrier along the upper Sobat stretch of the border between the hill tribes of Ethiopia and the swamp dwellers of the Sudan. The Baro Salient would seem to be geographically and ethnically part of the Sudan (see Fig. 36) but its inclusion in Ethiopia was unsatisfactory in that the original boundary survey to mark the political boundary followed rivers running through the centre of the swamps, rather than the line running along the bottom of the Ethiopian escarpment which is the logical geographical and ethnical division in the area. The Ethiopian escarpment makes a remarkable barrier between the Ethiopian highlanders and the peoples of the Sudan plains. As it has been noted in Chapter Two, the Ethiopians fear the hot climate of the Sudan plains and keep a wide stretch of land at plateau level to separate them from the Sudanese Nilotic tribes. Indeed, it is easy to see from the previous chapter that the political boundary in this region has never been adequately demarcated, in any real sense, to the south of the Jaku post. The chief disadvantage of it is that it divides the area inhabited by the Nilotic Nuer and Annak tribes. Geographically speaking both tribes are really Sudan natives and have their centres of administration in the Sudan and in the portion of Nilotic swamp lands now shown on the political maps as part of Ethiopia. The Nuer tribe, moreover, live for the greater part of the year in the Sudan. As long as the present boundary is maintained the effect is that one small section of this tribe lives in

Ethiopia and other sections cross over into the Baro Salient for watering and grazing during the dry season, which lasts from November to April of each year.

A further problem is presented by the Annuak (the Chirru and the Adonga sections) who live, as the political boundary is now drawn, permanently in the Sudan on the west banks of the rivers Akobo and Bibor and to the south of Akobo administrative post, whilst many of their relatives live on the rivers Baro and Gila. This state of things has, in the past, caused inconvenience both to the tribesmen concerned and the two Governments involved.

So far as the Nuer are concerned, effective control and administration is essential to any orderly administration of the region in question and is in the best interests of the tribesmen themselves. Such control can only be secured by means of a modification of the political boundary, which would bring the whole Nuer tribal grazing grounds into the Sudan territory. At the same time, the cession of the Annuak to the Sudan should be effected. However, any boundary drawn through the Baro Salient itself, would have the same effect of cutting through the tribal area of the same tribes or other Sudan tribes, and would hence be open to the same objection as the existing line. The only logical political boundary would, therefore, be one which followed the western base of the Ethiopian plateau and hence gave the whole of the Salient to the Sudan. Thus the case for the rectification of the boundary is geographical, ethnical and administrative. To end the artificial and unsatisfactory division of the above mentioned tribes, in 1947, preliminary discussions were held between the Government of the Sudan and the Emperor of Ethiopia during which it became clear that the latter would not readily consider any alteration in the Baro Salient without a compensatory cession

to Ethiopia of the Sudan territory elsewhere on the common border. As far as the Sudan was concerned, the only areas which were thought to be available for the purpose of such compensation were the Boma plateau and the highlands just to the south of the Boma area as far south as the Ellemi area.

As regards to the proposed new boundary, it was suggested by the Sudan that the new line should run to the east of Gambela, or even Gambela itself (which was then administered by the Sudan as a commercial enclave) coinciding with the western side of the Ethiopian escarpment, then crossing the old boundary at Illembi village leaving, on the Ethiopian side, the Boma plateau and, generally speaking, all the area inhabited by the Beir tribe (see Fig. 36).

The territory which was proposed to be offered to Ethiopia in exchange had been, to a great extent, unadministered by the Sudan and used as seasonal grazing grounds for tribes coming from the Ethiopian side of the present boundary. It could thus be seen that the whole proposal was designed only to facilitate the satisfaction of both parties by including, in the territories of each state, areas used for seasonal grazing by tribes normally resident in that state. Since then, however, the matter has not been taken very seriously and no real attempts have been made towards the rectification of the clearly ill-defined boundary in spite of the fact that the two countries are always convinced that the existing boundary is most inconvenient. It seems that the reason for lack of settlement over this boundary problem so far, is that the Ethiopians, while ready to rectify the boundary to the Sudan's favour in the Baro Salient, are not prepared to accept the Boma plateau region as a compensation. Ethiopian interest has always been directed to the

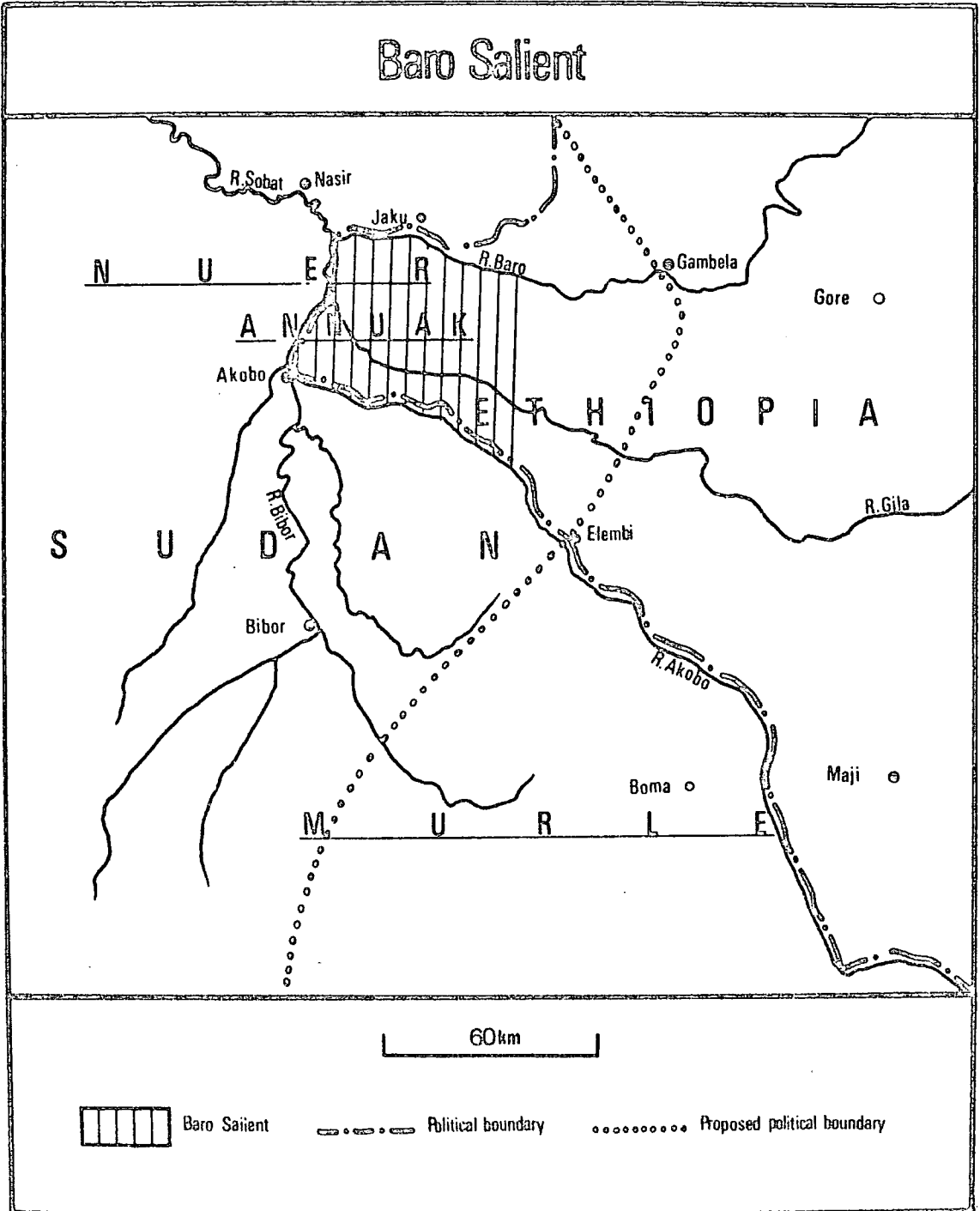


FIG. 36

areas between the Blue Nile and the Atbara, but it is very doubtful that the Sudan would give away this region, in exchange for the Baro Salient, especially at a time when the Southern Sudan problem is still in need of settlement.

#### TRIBES IN SUDAN-ERITREA BORDER

As we have seen in Chapter Two, the tribes involved in the division along this section of the political boundary are the Beni Amer, the Rashaida and the two small communities of Kunama and Baria. Unlike the Ellemi Triangle and the Baro Salient, the main disadvantage here is one of security in the establishment of law and order between two sections of one large tribe in matters of grazing and small scale cultivations. It does not involve the rectification or even the redemarcation of the political boundary. The existing line is well demarcated and well recognized, and, except for the previous mentioned security problems, satisfactorily administered. Moreover, the existing political boundary, since its establishment, has undergone several redemarcations and intensifications to suit the local conditions at the border region. Nevertheless, because of the ethnic and cultural divisions in the region, there has been great concern in both countries as to the future of these tribes since the collapse of Italian rule in Eritrea at the end of the last Great War. In 1945 Longrigg wrote:

"In view of their (referring to the Beni Amer) position astride the present frontier, their kinship with the rest of the Beja group, their history of allegiance to a Nile valley power (but never to an Ethiopian) and their Islamic faith, it is difficult to resist the suggestion to attach the Beni Amer tribe group to the Sudan, where it would without effort find a congenial place."

He continued:

"The case for the transference of tribes of the northern hills and the Sahel is almost as strong. Their present frontier is as artificial and as frequently ignored by their own migrations; nor have they, at least for centuries, supported the pretence of the Ethiopian rule. The (Nilotic) tribes of the Kunama and the Baria should accompany the Bani Amer."<sup>10</sup>

Longrigg was writing about the future of Eritrea before the developments that led to the incorporation of Eritrea into Ethiopia in 1962. He was advocating the division of Eritrea between the two neighbouring states (Sudan and Ethiopia). At present, the conditions have changed a great deal and many other factors other than the ethnic criterion of the problem have been added. The present author, therefore, strongly supports the maintenance of the status quo in the area as it exists today for the following reasons:

- (a) the cession of the Beni Amer and the other minorities in Eritrea to the Sudan, if approved, would certainly encourage other minorities, who face similar problems, to make increasing troubles to the mother states to be treated as the Beni Amer. Indeed, this will have a very dangerous effect on the Ethiopian Empire which is so far only superficially united and waiting for such a precedent, when it will disintegrate into the traditional kingdoms that existed until the close of the last century. The Tigré in the north, the Somali in the south, the Shankala in the west and the numerous Muslim pockets all through the Empire are only kept loyal to the state by both the wisdom and the strong hand of the present Emperor;

(b) the Beni Amer, who themselves are not a unified tribe but rather a fragmented set of smaller tribes federated under one leader, have traditional feuds with the Sudan Hadendoea and would not readily co-exist together and lead a peaceful life for any length of time.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, there might be a great feeling of sympathy towards the Beni Amer and the other Muslim communities in Ethiopia by the Sudanese Muslims, and there are great pressures being exerted by them upon the Sudan Government to act on the basis of the above-mentioned proposals of Longrigg. But such a step, if ever taken by the Sudan, would certainly be both unwise and unfortunate in many ways. There is nothing good that the Sudan as a civilized country could gain from helping the disintegration of the Ethiopian state. On the contrary, a healthy united Ethiopia can do much more good to the Sudan than a fragmented unstable neighbour. It may be true that the present regime in Ethiopia is not on good terms with the Sudan, and it may be true also that the Muslim communities (including the Beni Amer) in Ethiopia are not very well treated by the ruling Amhara tribe; yet, it will be a short-sighted decision to base an international policy of a state on the relations of two ruling regimes. Ruling regimes come and go, and it is the interests of the two states which should matter in long range policy making. Unfortunately this is not the case now.

(c) Finally, and most important, it must be the aim of any wise policy maker in any part of the African continent not to encourage or help the emergence of the 'micro states' based on arguments of racial and cultural differences of certain minorities within the existing boundaries, for example, such as 'Eritrea' claimed

by the 'Eritrean Liberation Front', or 'Nile Republic' claimed by the 'Southern Sudan Liberation Front'. This trend, if encouraged in Africa, would no doubt lead to several 'Biafras' in the entire continent. For example the Masai in Kenya, the Ewe in Ghana and Togoland, the Yoroba in Nigeria and several other minority groups in Mali, Upper Volta and Uganda.

#### THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Several cultural and tribal maps of Sudan eastern borders, while clearly indicating the division of tribes by the political boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia, are completely silent as to the numbers of people involved in the division. This is mainly due to the lack of any adequate population census in the countries concerned. Ethiopia has had no population census in its history and the Sudan has had it only once in 1955-56. That of the Sudan cannot be of great help as far as the border population is concerned, for the sample centres were taken from localities at a considerable distance from the international boundary.

Fig. 37, which is a very general and extremely approximate one, is mainly constructed to show the relationship between the border population and the political boundary in the area under consideration. As expected, such an approximate figure cannot be expected to show much detail. Moreover, it poses a number of disadvantages. In the first place it does not show whether the present distribution of population along the frontier zone is the same as that of the Pre-boundary period nearly three quarters of a century ago when the political boundary was first established. Secondly, any attempt at population mapping in such a border zone occupied by primitive nomadic tribes must suffer the

FIG. 37



The Political boundary in Relation to the Density of Population

the disadvantage of the effect of seasonal population movements. A population census taken in the region during the dry season will certainly not resemble that taken in the wet season on either side of the political boundary. Even if these disadvantages are overcome, there is every possibility that the tribes concerned would not easily avail themselves and give true information to population officers because any attempts of counting and documenting would be explained by the tribesmen in terms of taxes and dues.

Keeping these limitations in mind, in the northern section of the border, the Beni Amer and the other smaller tribes are divided between the two adjacent countries in the ratio of 2:1, the majority being in Ethiopia. But, during the dry season, the entire tribe migrates into Eritrea except for a negligible portion remaining near the river banks and the small urban centres. With the exception of the migration of about twenty seven thousand Ethiopian Beni Amer<sup>12</sup> into the Sudan in the recent years (after 1967), there is no reason to assume that the distribution of population in this region has changed since the demarcation of the international boundary. Neither the tribes involved changed their traditional way of life nor were there great movements to or away from the political boundary in such a way as to affect the distribution of population to a measurable extent. The same thing could be applied to the Nilotic tribes of the Baro Salient and the Quasi-Masai of the north and west of Lake Rudolf.

Therefore, broadly speaking, the population map for any season along the Sudan eastern boundary will directly vary in relation to the seasonal tribal movements and the amount of rains falling in certain times of the year at certain places of tribal homelands. Nevertheless, generally speaking, the population map for this border zone indicates that the areas of more than 50 persons per square kilometre are found

around the banks of large rivers like the Atbara, the Blue Nile and the Sobat. Banks of smaller streams are inhabited by less than 50 persons per square kilometre and a very limited number of urban centres in the border region are inhabited by more than 100 persons per square kilometre.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON THE  
BORDER LANDSCAPE

C H A P T E R   S E V E N

THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON THE  
BORDER LANDSCAPE

In this and the following chapter, an attempt has been made to examine the effect of the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary on the border zone of the Sudan side of the boundary. Unfortunately, such an examination is not possible as regards the Ethiopian side of the boundary, for two main reasons: Ethiopia has had no population census, and other relevant statistics on settlements and population movements in the frontier area under consideration are entirely lacking. Because of the present state of unfriendly relations between the two countries and lack of security, the author was not able to cross the political boundary into Ethiopia and remain there for any length of time for the purpose of field work. Nevertheless, the writer did visit several important Sudanese localities close to the international boundary and interviewed a number of local chiefs and administrative officers.

SUDANESE SIDE OF THE ARGUMENT

A zone of two hundred kilometres measured from the political boundary was taken for the purpose of such an analysis. It was then divided longitudinally into four equal zones (A, B, C and D) of fifty kilometres distance in width (see Fig. 38). In each of the four zones an evaluation of settlements, trade, population and population movements was then made in relation to the international boundary. Besides his own field work, the writer made use of the materials in the 'First Population Census of the Sudan' (hereafter referred to by F.P.C.S.), the 'Sudan Government Internal Statistics' and the 'Sudan Government Annual Reports For Foreign Trade and Commerce'.

# Statistical Grid For Areas Within Two Hundred Kms of the Sudan-Ethiopia Boundary

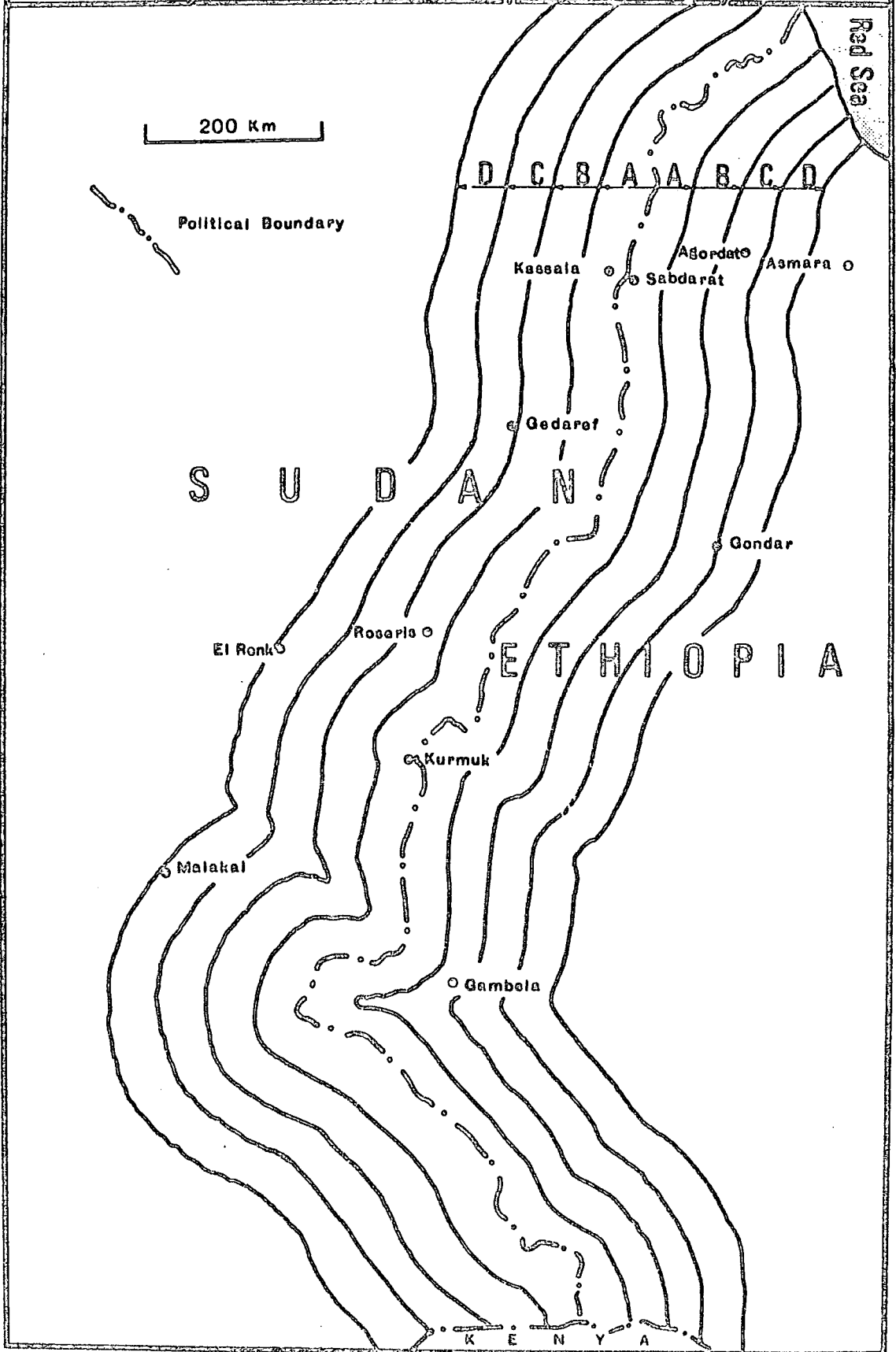


FIG. 38

EFFECT OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON THE FORMATION OF FRONTIER SETTLEMENTS

In an underdeveloped country like the Sudan it is not an easy matter to distinguish or define a settlement. Internationally comparable statistics of the urban and rural population are needed for a number of reasons. The measurement of social and economic development is often a function of urbanization; the distinction of urban and rural patterns of living as well as urban-rural distribution of population in a large and primitive area is required. The precise definition of what constitutes an urban locality as distinguishable from a rural locality is necessarily arbitrary, since there is no dividing line between large villages and small towns in terms of size or any other criteria. What is urban and what is rural largely vary in different parts of the world according to the definition adopted in each country. Some countries define population by size, some by certain other criteria such as economic activities, legal or administrative status, or the presence of certain services and facilities associated with urbanization. Also the criteria used by economists, sociologists, housing and town planning experts and others concerned with urban problems from professional or technical points of view may differ both from the official criteria and from each other. The same locality may be urban according to one set of criteria and rural according to the other.

In most countries, however, the dividing line between towns and villages is held to be somewhere between 1,000-5,000 inhabitants. In the Sudan, villages often reach a fair size, hence localities of this size range could be rural rather than urban in character. Therefore, a new division of settlements applicable to the area under study was constructed for the purpose of this work (see Table 3).

TABLE 3 TYPE OF SETTLEMENTS IN THE SUDAN EASTERN BORDERS

Type of Settlement		Total Number of Population
Urban	Large	50,000+
Urban	Medium	20,000-50,000
Urban	Small	10,000-20,000
Rural	Large	5,000-10,000
Rural	Medium	1,000- 5,000
Rural	Small	100- 1,000
Hamlet		- 100

Table 4 indicates the absence of urban large settlements within the total distance of two hundred kilometres from the political boundary. In zone A, there are 15 settlements, 1 urban medium, 1 rural medium and 13 rural small. In zone B, there are 22 settlements, 4 rural medium and 18 rural small. In zone C, there are 11 settlements, 1 urban small and 10 rural small; and in zone D, there are 27 settlements, 3 rural large, 2 rural medium and 22 rural small.

In terms of the total number of settlements the largest number is found in zone D, then zone B, then zone A, while the least number of settlements is found in zone C. In terms of the size of the settlements the largest settlement is encountered in zone A, while the second largest is found in zone C.

Regarding the total number of sedentary population (see Table 5), zone A has the largest number, of such a population, of 42,259 out of the grand total sedentary population of 107,876; while zone D has the least number of sedentary population of 17,537.

Considering the location of the settlements it is clear that

TABLE 4 SETTLEMENTS WITHIN AN AREA OF TWO HUNDRED KILOMETRES  
ON THE SUDAN SIDE OF THE ETHIOPIA-SUDAN  
BOUNDARY

Type of Settlement	Zone A	Zone B	Zone C	Zone D	Total
Urban Large	-	-	-	-	-
Urban Medium	1	-	-	-	1
Urban Small	-	-	1	-	1
Rural Large	-	-	-	3	3
Rural Medium	1	4	-	2	7
Rural Small	13	18	10	22	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>75</b>

TABLE 5 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SEDENTARY POPULATION WITHIN AN  
AREA OF TWO HUNDRED KILOMETRES ON THE SUDAN SIDE  
OF THE ETHIOPIA-SUDAN BOUNDARY (\*)

Type of Settlement	Zone A	Zone B	Zone C	Zone D	Total
Urban Medium	40,612	-	-	-	40,612
Urban Small	-	-	17,537	-	17,537
Rural Large	-	-	-	26,504	26,504
Rural Medium	1,647	14,225	-	7,004	22,876
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,259</b>	<b>14,225</b>	<b>17,537</b>	<b>33,508</b>	<b>107,529</b>

(\*) The population of Rural Small Settlements  
is not included.

the vast majority of the settlements are either located on river banks or large khors. Others are located on the railway lines and main roads. This may explain the comparative increase of settlements in zone D, which extends over a large catchment of large rivers such as the Blue Nile, the White Nile, the Atbara and other numerous khors and wadis. Conversely, zone C, lies completely outside the influence of any rivers and streams and, except for the railway line and the main roads passing through Gedaref town, all the important roads keep away from this zone. Not surprisingly, except for Gedaref, there are only two settlements of any considerable size within the whole zone. In zone A, close to the international boundary the absence of settlements of considerable size, except for Kassala could be explained by its sheer remoteness and perhaps the lack of security as well as the unfavourable climatical conditions.

According to the Government assessment, there are 12 settlements (see Table 6) which have town status within the whole of the Sudan eastern frontier zone. Nearly all of them owe their status to administrative functions.

From the following table, it is clear that there is no settlement having town status to the south of the River Sobat. Akobo, Nasir and Bibor posts are all Council headquarters but none of them is legally or administratively regarded as a town and as we shall see later in this chapter, all of them have a de facto population of below 1,500.

One of the most distinctive features of the border landscape resulting from the establishment of the political boundary in the frontier area under consideration, is, probably, the build up of a number of settlements, mainly customs, police and other frontier control posts, close to the political boundary (see Fig. 39). On the Sudan side

TABLE 6

STATUS OF TOWNS ON THE SUDAN SIDE  
OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

Town	Status or Function
1. Kassala	Provincial Headquarters
2. Malakal	Provincial Headquarters
3. Gedaref	Council Headquarters
4. Roseris	Council Headquarters
5. Singa	Council Headquarters
6. Kurmuk	Rural Council Headquarters
7. Suki	Rural Council Headquarters
8. Gala el Nahal	Rural Council Headquarters
9. Wagar	Rural Council Headquarters
10. Aroma	Rural Council Headquarters
11. El Hawata	Railway Terminal Control
12. El Shuak	Railway Terminal Control

of the boundary these control posts were not often founded in previously existing settlements. For instance, such settlements as Basunda, Kurmuk Gambela, Akobo, Nasir and Bibor were, prior to the demarcation of the boundary, either hamlets of below 100 inhabitants or non-existent as settlements. However, the growth and development of the new frontier posts into a considerable size was on account of other neighbouring villages which were of more importance in the past. As the result of the establishment of the political boundary, villages like Fazughli and Gallabat which were district and provincial headquarters in the nineteenth century, ceased to hold their traditional status. Today, they have no significance except for the shifita, smugglers and local traders.

As to the degree of change in the geographical landscape of the

# Frontier Control Posts on the Political Boundary



FIG. 39

area under consideration, the pattern and the formation of a number of frontier settlements have been examined. Examples were selected from different parts of the Sudan side of the frontier: Kassala, Kurmuk and Gambela were selected from the area to the north of River Sobat, and Nasir, Akobo and Bibor posts were selected from the region to the south of the Sobat.

#### Kassala Town

Kassala town is located at the head of the Gash Delta which was formed as the result of a mass of gravel and silt brought down from the Ethiopian plateau by the River Gash (see Fig. 40). Surprisingly, the town has little to do with the Gash development schemes. In Barbour's words "Its primary function is that of a garrison town, situated near the traditionally lawless lands of Eritrea over the border".<sup>1</sup>

The modern town was built by the Egyptians in 1841 as a control post to guard the eastern frontiers of their 'Empire' with Ethiopia and in an attempt to subdue the unloyal and often rebellious Beja tribes of the eastern Sudan. The best account of the town in its early stages is given by Legean, who passed through it to Gallabat in 1860. Fig. 41 clearly indicates that the town was, indeed, designed in the form of a big fortress only pierced by three gateways. Inside the town wall there was a garrison, a granary, a market place and administrative offices. Outside the town wall was surrounded by different tribal settlements coming from all over the country, each tribe being settled in a separate compartment. Also West Africans and a number of Ethiopian tribes lived outside the town wall.

The main gateway was Bab Sabdarat, acquiring its name from a nearby village in Eritrea. All trade routes leading to Suakin port

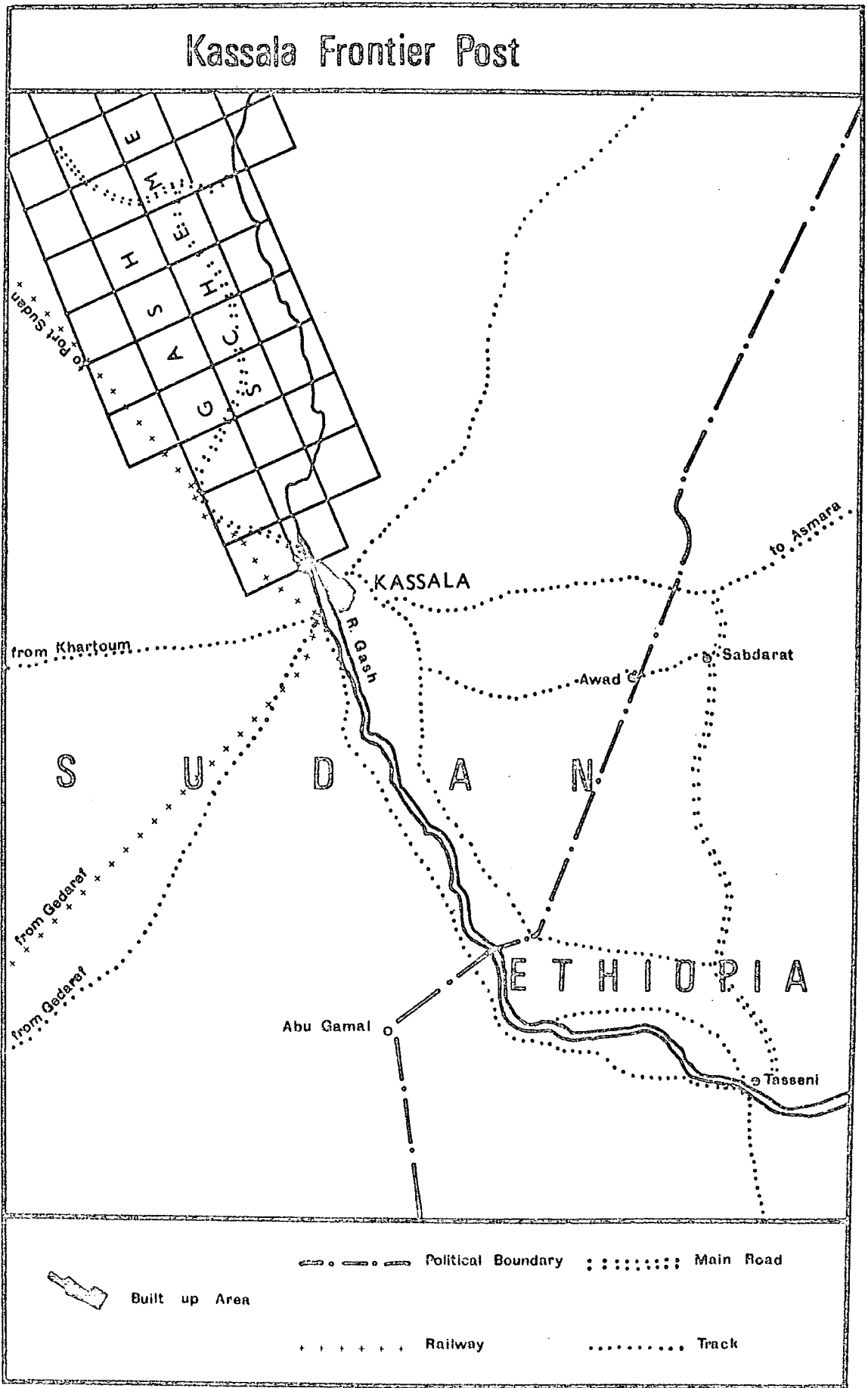


FIG. 40

from the direction of Ethiopia, south eastern Sudan and those leading to Massawa port from the Sudan were funnelled through the Bab Sabdarat for customs handling.

In Chapter Five we have seen how, at the end of the last century, during the allocation of the existing boundary, Kassala town and its hinterlands became a subject of considerable political complications between Sudan and Eritrea, or more precisely, between Britain and Italy. Probably, those political complications were more than any other factor responsible for the growth of the town and its development, since the struggle for its control had certainly induced the Sudan Government to show more interest towards the whole region of eastern Sudan. Not only more effective administrative measures were imposed upon the town, but also more social services and development schemes were extended to the whole province. The main purpose of this move towards north-eastern Sudan was to persuade the people from other parts of the country to move towards the disputed area. As a first step the existing security stations were intensified, a number of new ones were built and the town was then connected to Khartoum and Port Sudan by a main road and a railway line. A mechanized cotton plantation was developed in the deltas of the Gash and the Baraka. Subsequently, the town grew considerably and attracted a number of Governmental departments, of which customs, immigration and other frontier security stations have provided its main features. Today, the town is the headquarters of Kassala Province and with Port Sudan is one of the two largest trading centres in the whole region. As expected, the concentration of such important activities in the town has attracted a considerable amount of population from other parts of the country. In the year 1900 the total population of the town was estimated at 12,400,<sup>3</sup> in 1956 it was found to be a little above 40,000<sup>4</sup> while in 1965 it was estimated at 68,130.<sup>5</sup>

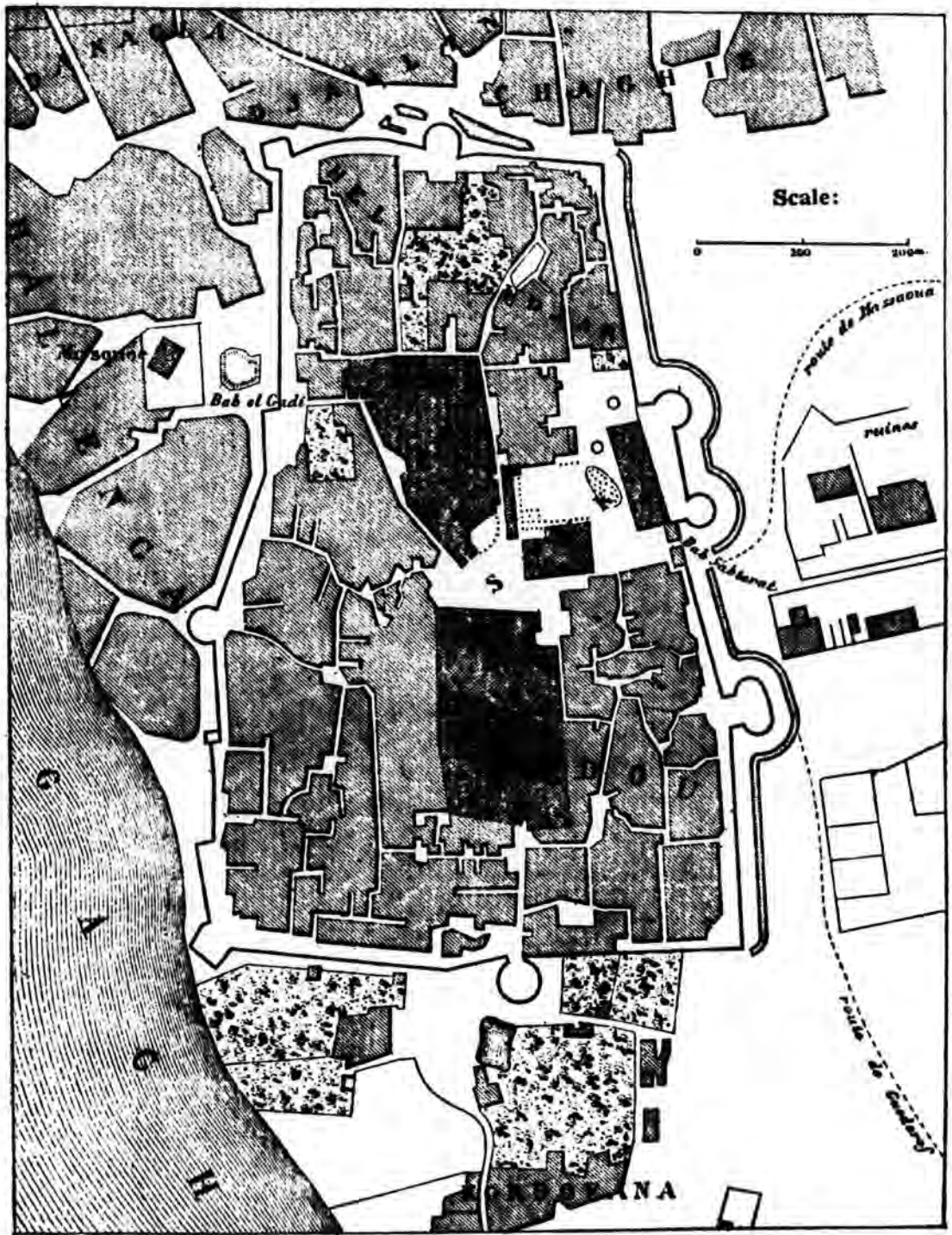


FIG. 41

Kassala in 1860-61, after Lejean

In Tables 7a, 7b and 7c an attempt has been made to examine statistically the pattern of population formation in Kassala town. Table 7a examines the pattern of population in relation to the place of birth, Table 7b indicates the tribal group or nationality group, and Table 7c shows the main occupational groups by nationality group or tribal group. From Table 7a it can be seen that of 21,197 persons who represent the total male population in the town, 7,439 were not born in it. Similarly, out of 19,415 persons that represent the female population, 5,567 were born outside the town. Regarding the total number of people born outside the town, 3,163 of them came from foreign countries. Table 7b indicates that the vast majority of the town's population do not belong to the local tribes (the Beja, the Shukria, the Rashida and the Hamran) who only form a little more than 10 per cent of the total population. About 28 per cent of the population are Arabs of various tribes, mainly from the Northern Province (Jaaliyin) who since the past times used to handle local and international trade from and to the Red Sea ports of Suakin and Massawa. After the establishment of the political boundary, they settled in the town as traders and farmers. Over 20 per cent of the population are West African Fellata, who originally came to the town on their way to Mecca but decided to settle in the town until they gained enough money to cross the Red Sea.

Surprisingly, the Ethiopian nationals only form about 2 per cent of Kassala population, but since the Eritrean tribes often identify themselves as Sudanese rather than Ethiopians, one should assume that a fair number of those who were assessed in the F.P.C.S. as Sudanese must include individuals and tribal groups of Eritrean origin. Therefore, the total number of Ethiopians in the town is rather under-estimated.

TABLE 7a. THE POPULATION OF KASSALA FRONTIER TOWN IN RELATION TO PLACE OF BIRTH\*

SEX	TOTAL PERSONS BORN POPULATION IN KASSALA	PERSONS BORN OUTSIDE KASSALA												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
	TOTAL Numbers %	PLACE OF BIRTH												
Males	21,197	13,758	7,439	35	1,700	790	542	3,557	305	294	211	22	14	4
Females	19,415	13,848	5,567	29	1,463	557	420	2,649	195	191	69	6	4	13
Both Sexes	40,612	27,606	13,006	32	3,163	1,347	962	6,206	500	485	280	28	18	17

1 Born outside the Country (not necessarily aliens)

2 Kassala Province

3 Khartoum Province

4 Northern Province

5 Kurdofan Province

6 Blue Nile Province

7 Darfur Province

8 Equatoria Province

9 Bahar El Gagai Province

10 Upper Nile Province

\* From the F.S.P.C. 1956

TABLE 7b POPULATION OF KASSALA FRONTIER TOWN  
IN RELATION TO NATIONALITY GROUP  
OR TRIBAL GROUP

Nationality Group or Tribal Group	Numbers	%
<b>ARAB</b>		
Gaaliyin	10,091	24.7
Guhayna	554	1.4
Baggara	401	1.0
Eastern Arab Tribes	346	0.8
Gawama-Bederia	296	0.7
Northern Arab Tribes	152	0.4
Unknown Arab Groups	128	0.3
Shukria	117	0.3
Western Arab Tribes	105	0.3
Dar Hamid	89	0.2
North-eastern Arabs	57	0.1
Central Sudan Arabs	44	0.1
<b>FOREIGNERS WITH NON-SUDANESE STATUS</b>		
West Africans	7,458	18.1
Ethiopians	741	1.8
Asians (other than Indians)	631	1.5
Indians	350	0.9
East Africans	89	0.2
Egyptians	47	0.1
Greeks	43	0.1
Lebanese	8	0.0
Italians	4	0.0
<b>WESTERNERS</b>		
Nigerian Tribes	5,707	14.0
Tribes of Western Sudan (Darfur)	1,131	2.8
Tribes of Chad and the Republic of Central Africa	833	2.0
Nubians	570	1.0
Unknown groups of Westerners	300	0.7
<b>BEJA TRIBES</b>		
Unidentified group of Beja	4,111	9.8
Beni Amer	1,876	4.6
Hadendoea	663	1.6
Amarar	364	0.9
Bisharin	49	0.1
<b>NUBIYIN</b>		
Nubiyin	923	2.3
<b>CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SUDAN TRIBES</b>		
Dinka	353	0.9
Other Southerners	143	0.3
Nilotic Tribes	129	0.3

contd...

Table 7b contd.

Nationality Group or Tribal Group	Numbers	%
FOREIGNERS WITH SUDANESE STATUS		
Sudanese of West African origin	345	0.8
Sudanese of Ethiopian origin	167	0.4
Sudanese of East African origin	86	0.2
Sudanese of Asiatic origin	79	0.2
Sudanese of Egyptian origin	32	0.1
Sudanese of Lebanese origin	18	0.0
Sudanese of West European origin	6	0.0
EASTERN FRONTIER TRIBES		
Funj tribes	186	0.5
Baria tribes	117	0.4
Ethiopian tribes	98	0.2

The assessment of gainfully occupied population of the town (see Table 7c) indicates that of all the nationalities represented in the town, the West African Fellata and the Ethiopians take the second and third places nearly in 90 per cent of the enumerated occupations. Also there are certain numbers of peoples of Asiatic origin (mainly Indians and Pakistanis) who mainly keep Indian shops or run agencies of large Indian stores in Port Sudan and Jidda.

Almost 35 per cent of the professional, semi-professional and clerical occupations in the town are more or less related to the working of the international boundary. Indeed, had Kassala failed to function as a frontier post, probably any other smaller town or village, such as Kashm el Girba or Goz Rajab, might have taken its present status as a provincial headquarters. Presumably, Kashm el Girba, which is located at the control of the River Atbara, with larger agricultural and industrial potentialities as well as better facilities of permanent fresh water supply and hydro-electrical power may one day seriously challenge the status of Kassala by attracting its population. Although Kassala has always been an important border garrison, yet, to the writer's mind, it is no longer a reasonable place to provide adequate frontier functions. In an under-developed country like the Sudan and, indeed, in a most neglected region like the one under consideration, customs, health and other frontier control works should be handled at a point or points as near as possible to the political boundary. In this boundary, as well as in many other African boundaries, the location of the customs and other frontier control stations at points away from the political boundary helps the development of illegal trade, causes serious frontier violations and results in the transfusion of both human and animal diseases from one side of the boundary to the other.

TABLE 7c

## MAIN OCCUPATIONAL GROUP OF KASSALA FRONTIER TOWN BY NATIONALITY

Main Occupational Group	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Farmers, Hunters and Fishermen	5,142	3,659	1,410	43	22	-	2	-	6	-	-	
Craftsmen	1,472	1,249	162	35	22	-	-	2	-	2	-	
Shop and Workshop Owners, Supervisors of Commerce and Industry	942	665	51	6	136	74	2	2	4	-	2	
Labourers (except Farm Labourers)	855	673	123	53	4	-	-	2	-	-	-	
Unproductive Occupations	646	538	74	14	10	8	-	2	-	-	-	
Machinery Operatives	524	444	64	12	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	
Farm Labourers and Forestry Workers	445	376	4	55	8	-	-	-	2	-	-	
Productive Services	382	346	2	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Unskilled Professional Services	381	305	31	18	25	-	2	-	-	-	-	
Junior Clerical	225	215	2	4	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	
Shepherds	171	155	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Semi-Professional Technical	128	122	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	-	
Farm Owners and Farm Managers	96	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Senior Clerical	26	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Professional Non-Technical	24	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Managerial Commerce and Industry	18	16	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	
Professional and Technical	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	
<hr/>												
Total Number of Gainfully Occupied People in Town	12,305	9,525	2,025	314	293	88	20	88	14	6	2	
<hr/>												
1 - Sudanese	2 - West Africans	3 - Ethiopians	4 - Asians	5 - Indians	6 - Other Africans	7 - Greeks						
		8 - Egyptians	9 - Lebanese	10 - Italians								

Kassala frontier control post is located at about forty kilometres distance from the international boundary measured through the main road connecting Sudan to Ethiopia. The main road itself is seasonal and it often takes over two hours by automobile until the customs post is reached. Such a distance is immense in a region where reliable roads, quarantine and other necessities are lacking. Thus, in these circumstances it would not be surprising if one ventured to suggest the transference of customs, quarantine and other frontier control offices to Awad village, located exactly on the political boundary with a good command of principal roads leading to and from Ethiopia.

#### Kurmuk Town

According to the classification of settlements adopted in this work, the town of Kurmuk (see Fig. 42) falls under the category of rural medium settlements. It is the third important frontier checking post along the boundary under consideration. Prior to the establishment of the political boundary, Kurmuk was no more than a mere hamlet of less than 50 inhabitants. Today it has a population of 3,540. Its growth, however, is on account of Fazughli, a former provincial capital during the Funj Kingdom of Semmar, and an important frontier post and trading centre until the beginning of the present century.

Kurmuk is an ideal example of insignificant villages developing to settlements of considerable size and importance for reasons of mere coincidence of being located at a point where a political boundary has been established.

Today, more than 70 per cent of the wage paid population of the town are either directly employed in the customs, immigration, quarantine, frontier security offices or indirectly accommodated in jobs related to

# Kurmuk and Roseris Frontier Posts

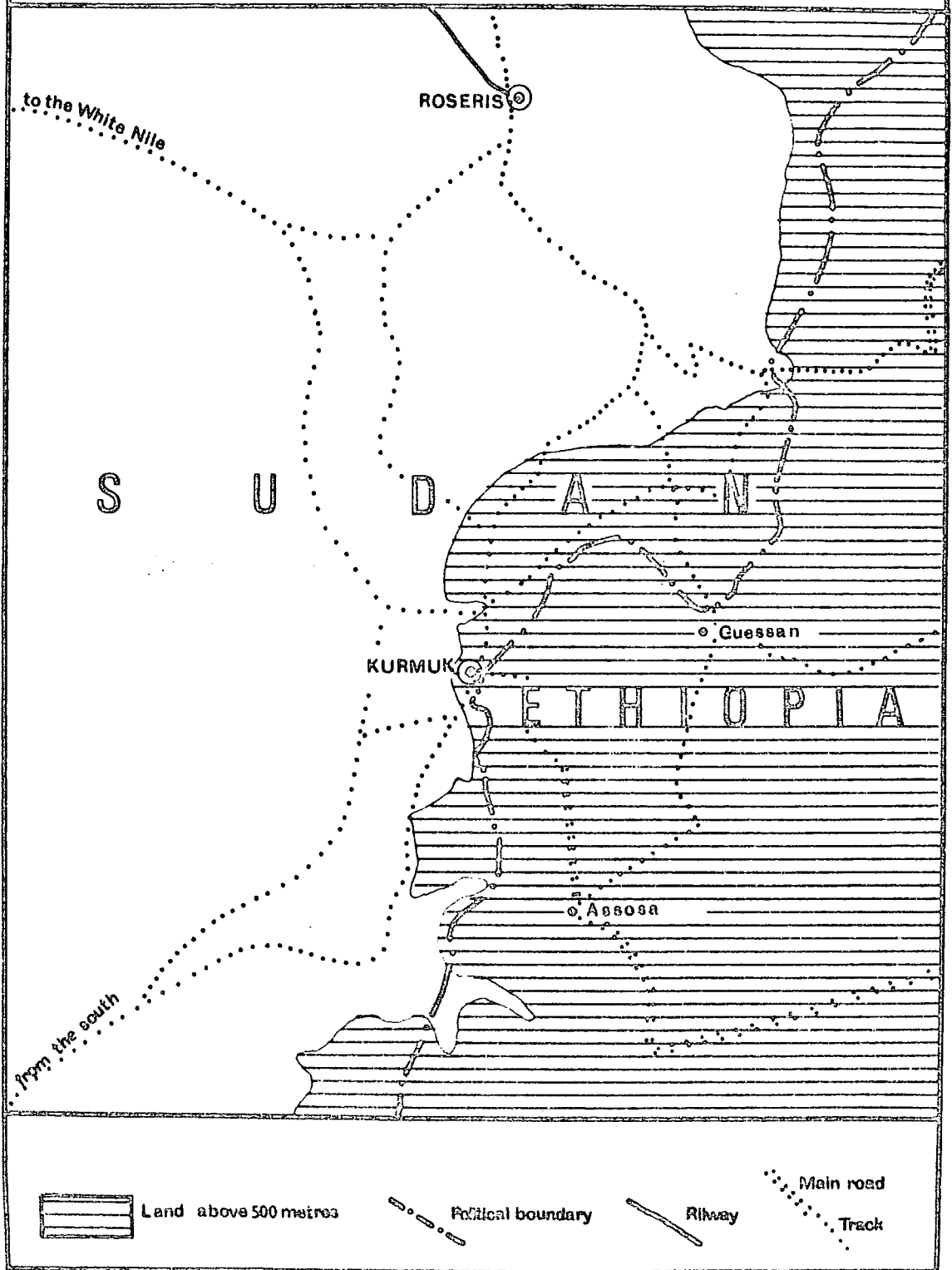


FIG. 42

these offices. Once the frontier control posts were established at Kurmuk, other Governmental departments such as the Rural Council Headquarters, Rural Development Department, health and education organizations, were all grouped in the town for the convenience of supplying the necessary social services to the different Government officials in the whole area from one centre. These Government officials with their families provide a relatively rich market in comparison with the surrounding villages and thus attract many petty traders. Moreover, since the demarcation of the political boundary, all traffic has been funnelled through the town for the purpose of customs handling. Twenty per cent of the total population of Kurmuk are not born in it, and since 1966 the population has increased even more because of the influx of large numbers of Sudanese security forces as the result of the recent frontier instability between the two adjacent countries. Thus the town's function has largely become one of a defensive frontier control post in which the security forces are often seen at the main entrances from Ethiopia.

The extent of the influence of the political boundary upon the functions of a frontier settlement like Kurmuk is shown in Fig. 43, where all the areas occupied by the buildings of frontier control offices are shaded in black. Areas shaded in crossed lines indicate the frontier security stations and the areas shaded in parallel lines show the native quarters in which most of the people earn their living from the working of the town as a frontier post.

#### Gambela Enclave

By the terms of Article 4 of the Anglo-Ethiopian frontier Agreement of May 1902, an area of forty hectares of Ethiopian territory

# Town Plan of Kurmuk Frontier Post

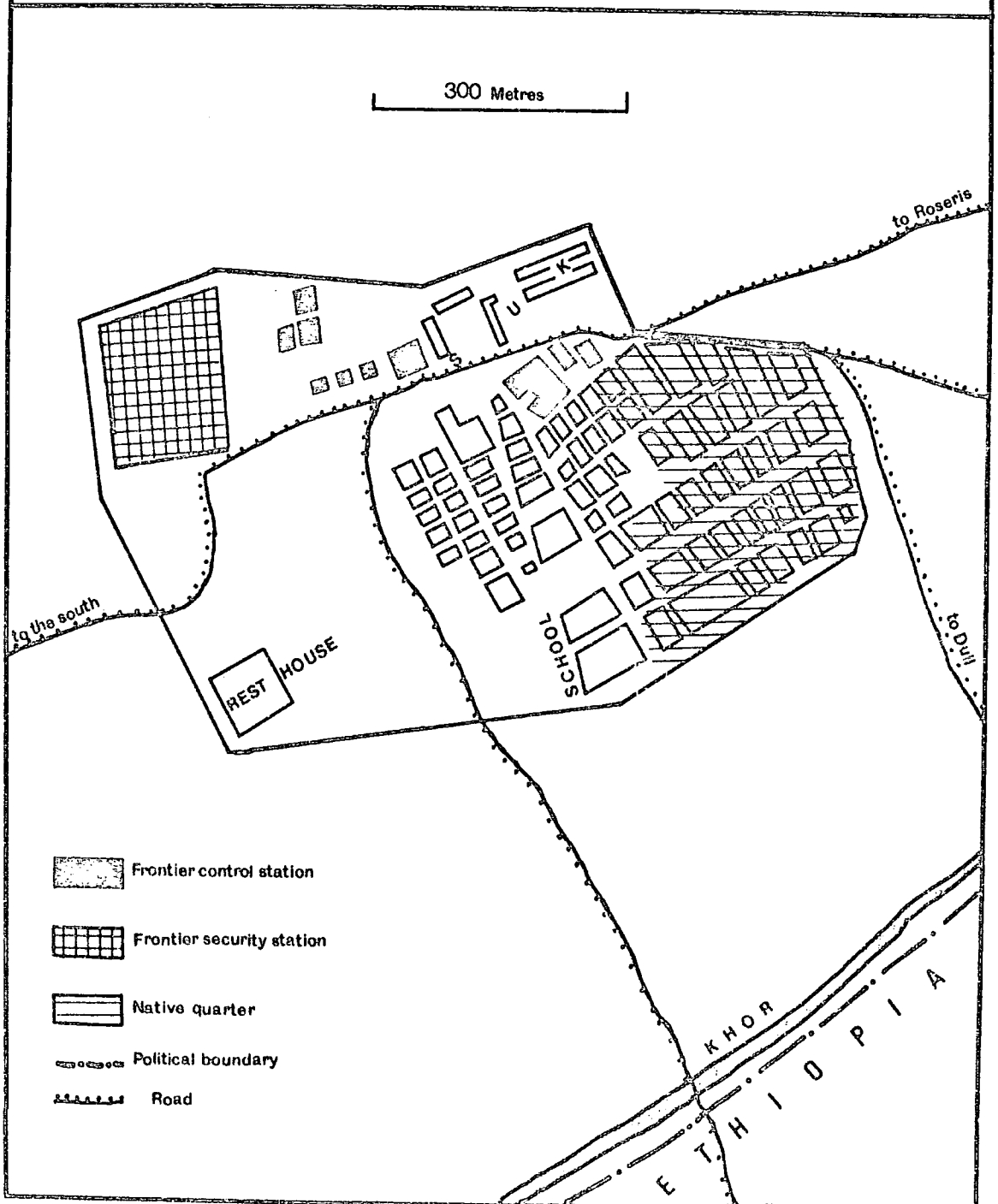


FIG.43

on the River Baro was leased to the Sudan Government for the purpose of forming a trading station.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Gambela enclave was, it could be supposed, in every way a unique post. The original concession granted to the Sudan Government was at a point near Itang village on the River Baro, but, finding that site unsuitable as a trading post, since it is cut off entirely from its hinterland during seven months of the year, the first parties going up the Baro to establish the post in 1904 pushed on further to the east up the river until they found a high and convenient ground at which they established the so-called 'Enclave of Gambela'. The site of the settlement, under the circumstances mentioned above, was not defined in terms of physical site but was more or less recognised as follows: triangular in shape (see Fig. 44) the north boundary at Sugar Leaf, to the River Baro from the mouth of Khor Jajiba west a distance of 640 metres, and an undefined line from that point to the Jebel Jajiba bounded the west.

From its establishment the enclave was under a Sudanese Government's customs officer until 1921 when an administrative commissioner was appointed in charge of the post. Gradually, together with the post, there also developed a native village of a considerable size behind or to the northern part of the enclave. Besides the local inhabitants, who for the most part were and still are Annuak, it was used by large numbers of various Nilotic tribes from the Sudan when they came to the post to purchase things or seek work. Other than the Nilotic tribes, the population of the enclave was a mixed one, consisting of the district commissioner and his staff, a treasurer, a dispenser, a post master and a varying number of Egyptian Irrigation Department staff and a small frontier security force. In addition the population was composed of Gala and a few Sudanese subjects. Greeks were the main traders and store



PLATE 3: Gambela Trading Enclave (1910)



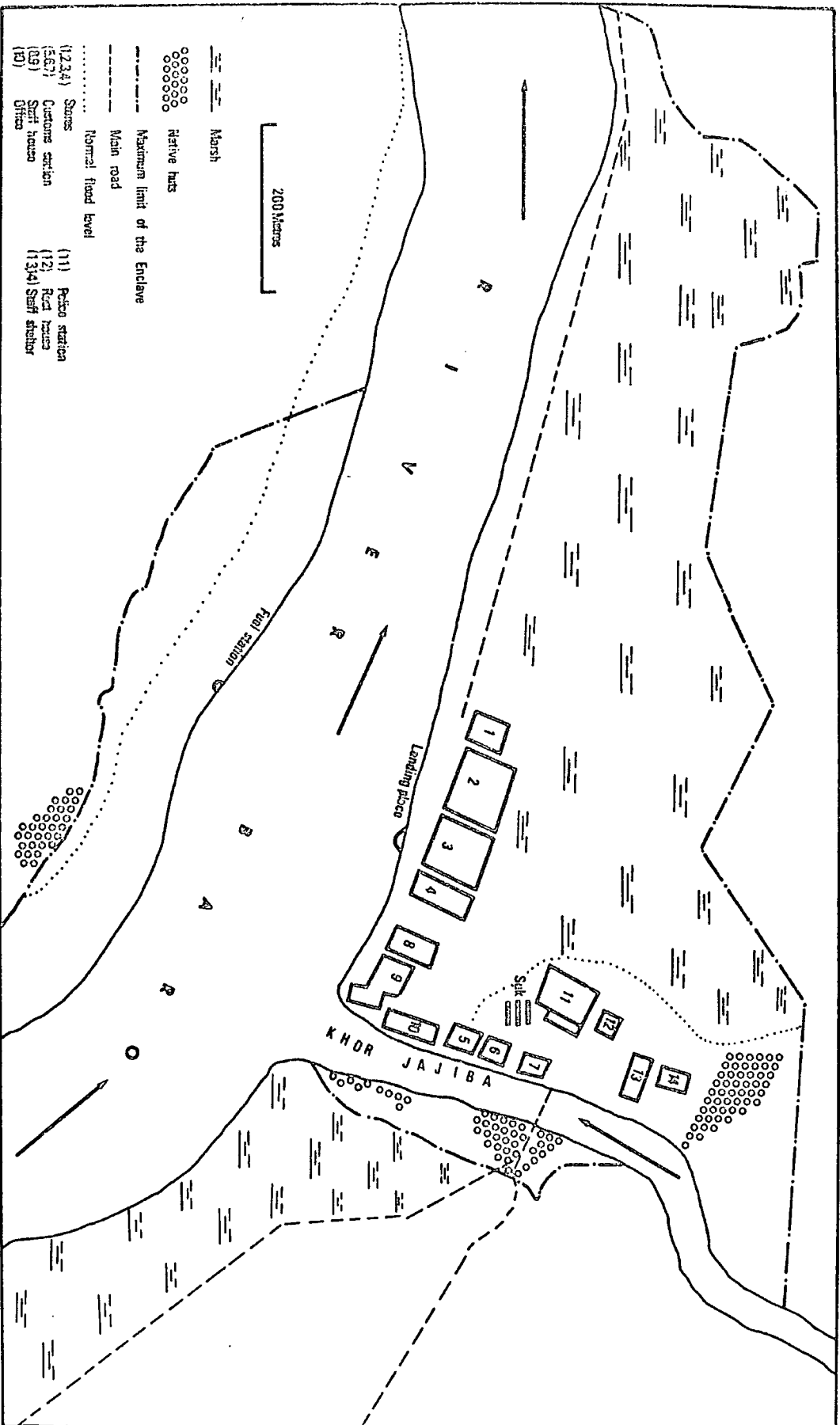
PLATE 4 : Sudan Steamer Services showing Gambela Enclave in the background (1937).

holders or agents and representatives for commercial activities. The Gala did the portage to and from the enclave and the interior.

From the Sudan to the enclave the steamers were able to function up the White Nile, the Sobat and the Baro during the rainy season between May and October when rivers were high. The cargo handled by those steamers is shown in Table 8. At the conclusion of the steamer season, mail and other necessary materials were carried from Malakal or Nasir post to the enclave by canoes. The enclave continued to function normally until 1956 when it was handed over to Ethiopia after the lease agreement was terminated. However, the disadvantages of the enclave were many. If trade was to expand to any extent the limited area of the site was not convenient. A large marsh shut in the enclave to the west and the marsh was often a cause of Malaria and other diseases. There was also a marsh to the east on the other side of Khor Jajiba stretching away for more than three kilometres, and in spite of the fact that the Jajiba khore provided a very clear boundary between the enclave and the Ethiopian territory, it was very inconvenient for the Sudanese authorities to have no control over peoples within a few metres from the heart of their own trading station. A mass of native huts huddled together in a small space outside a newly established trading post without any health services maintained by Ethiopia must have been a dangerous centre of diseases, the main dangers being Malaria and Smallpox. These risks were and still are considerable. Finally, as the enclave was established directly on the river, the whole bank with Government offices, merchant's stores and houses was liable to flooding. In Fig. 44, it can be seen how limited the space of the enclave was, since the western marsh bounded the enclave on one side and the khore on the other.

In 1962 the steamer services from the Sudan to Gambela were

# Gambela Trading Enclave



- (1234) Stores
- (567) Customs station
- (89) Staff houses
- (10) Office
- (11) Police station
- (12) Rice houses
- (13,14) Staff shelter

FIG.44

TABLE 8  
SUDAN-ETHIOPIA TRADE VIA GAMBELA POST 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955

GOODS FROM SUDAN TO ETHIOPIA		GOODS FROM ETHIOPIA TO SUDAN							
Commodities in Tons	1952/3	1953/4	1954/5	1955/6	Commodities in Tons	1952/3	1953/4	1954/5	1955/6
Beer	11	12	4	6	Bees Wax	22	-	18	17
Benzine	-	216	-	82	Coffee	557	2,114	607	534
Cement	16	84	5	33	Hides and Skins	1	6	3	4
Cotton ginned	1	-	-	-	Timper	18	14	71	6
Dates	1	-	-	-	Butter (Masil)	-	-	1	1
Kerosene	1	-	-	-	Onions	-	-	2	2
Flour	8	5	3	9					
Household Effects	5	2	-	1					
Iron	-	2	3	1					
Machinery	1	2	4	1					
Motor Vehicles and parts	3	1	2	-					
Paraffin	-	25	-	37					
Oils, Fuel	1	406	-	153					
Oils, Lubricating	2	1	-	3					
Oils, Cooking	8	16	5	6					
Provisions	6	3	4	3					
Rice	1	1	2	1					
Sacks	-	11	9	6					
Salt	310	593	147	1,113					
Soap	22	26	5	76					
Sugar	3	-	-	2					
Tea	1	-	-	1					
Textiles	44	5	3	5					
Tobacco	-	-	3	-					
Various	44	39	24	32					
TOTAL	489	1,450	223	1,570		598	2,134	702	564

Source: Sudan Railways Annual Report, Ministry of Communications

finally terminated partly because the running of the post became a liability to the Sudan Government rather than an asset, and partly because of the activities of the southern Sudan 'national rebels'.

Today, the former Sudanese trading enclave has been considerably expanded by the Ethiopian authorities. It is the district headquarters of the Illabour Province of western Ethiopia, with a population estimated at 1,306.<sup>7</sup>

#### Nasir Post

During the nineteenth century Egyptian expansion in the region under consideration, one of the advance posts was chosen, presumably, by an Egyptian officer named Nasir on a hillock called Moor by native population. After 1898 the post was occupied by the Condominium forces who found a French flag flying on the settlement and lowered it soon after the Fashoda incident. In every practical aspect, the entire area seems to have been a sort of no-man's land between the Sudanese administrative posts on the White Nile and the foot-hills of the Ethiopian plateau. Sudanese administration was confined to tax collecting expeditions by steamers organized by the Inspector Sobat River District. Such expeditions were, therefore, little more than organized raids to show the power of the Government to the natives. Even for a considerable time after the establishment of the political boundary, the Sudan Government did not attempt to establish permanent settlements or even semi-permanent frontier posts within two hundred kilometres distance from the political boundary. The first frontier post in the region to the south of River Sobat was built in 1912 (that is, ten years after the demarcation of the boundary) at the old village of Nasir. But a few years later a new post under the same name was built on another hillock not far away from the old one.

Today, the frontier post at Nasir (see Fig. 45) consists of one street of shops with a second line of buildings up at right angles to the upstream end of the Sobat. A quarter named the Malakia (meaning non-military) consisting of ex-military men and a number of locals who work in the various jobs provided by the working of the post. Also, there is another quarter for the Government officials and market employees. Just outside the town and on every side of it are the army barracks and police stations guarding the post, as well as the whole frontier region, against the attacks of the southern Sudan 'national rebels' who often operate from Ethiopian territory.

Permanent buildings, usually of burnt bricks built in a rectangular shape with corrugated iron sheets and grass roofs, are found in the Government official quarters, the market quarters and the barracks. The remaining buildings are very inferior grass huts, except for a few wooden shanty buildings in old Nasir.

The population of the post consists mainly of the Sudanese armed forces, police and various staff of Government offices, and about sixty traders of northern Sudan Gellaba. In addition, there are some Annuak natives and a number of Ethiopian refugees. The total population of the post is estimated at 850, who mainly come from Northern Sudan.

#### Akobo Post

It has been mentioned in Chapter Two that in the early eighteenth century the Nuer invaded the whole area from the site of Malakal to the Sobat. During this invasion, the Nuer raided the Annuak (the original inhabitants of the region) and drove them up the rivers Baro and Bibor. Since then, hostilities between the two Nilotic tribes remained consistent and the Annuak continued to raid the Nuer for revenge.

# Nasir, Akopo and Bibor Frontier Posts

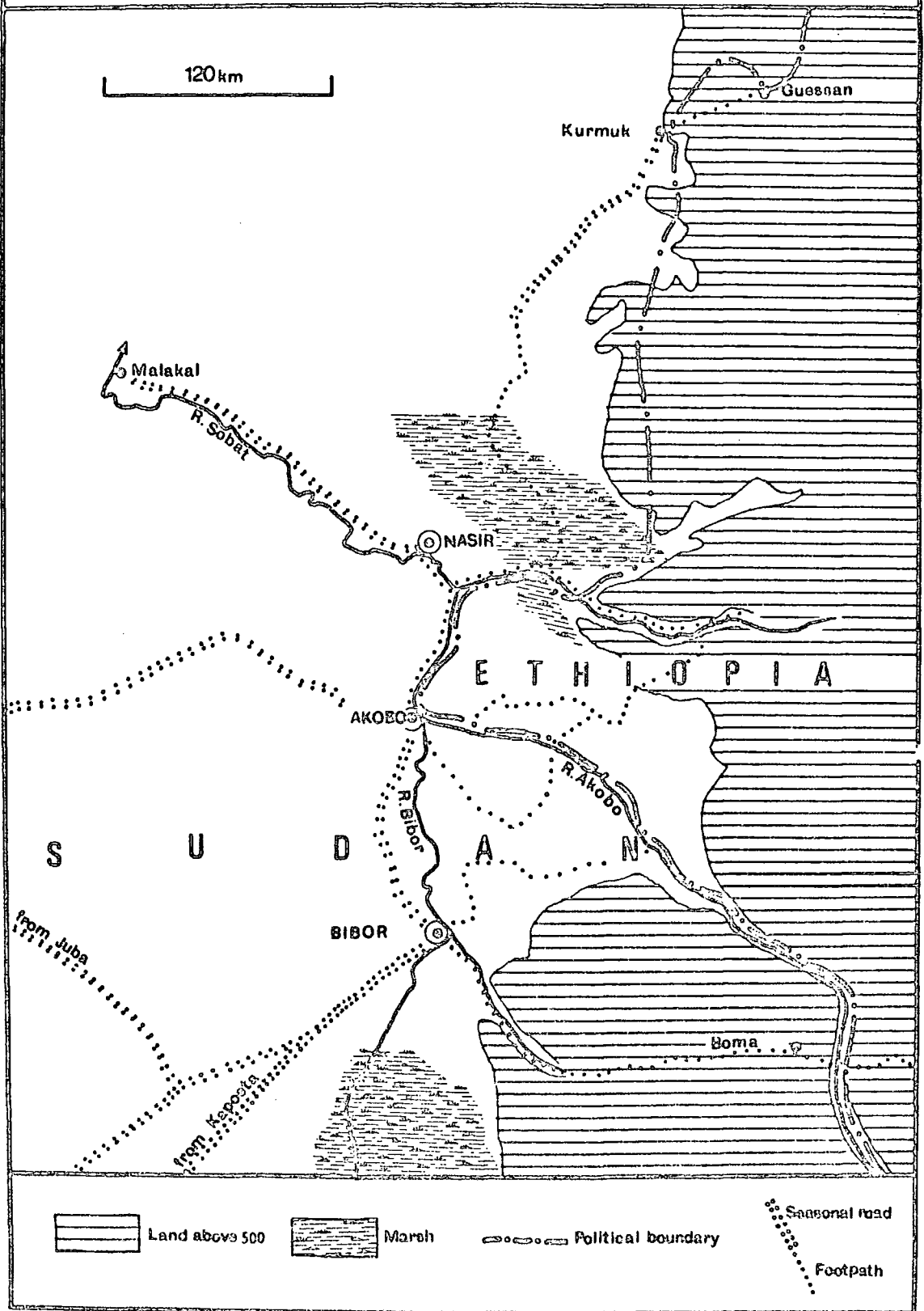


FIG. 45

On many occasions, the Government post at Nasir was also raided. Hence it was decided by the Government that military operations should be undertaken to control the frontier tribes. In 1912 a Government gunboat destroyed the Annuak villages on the right bank of the Bibor river and the region above the Akobo river. The base of the operations was located at the mouth of the Akobo river, and on the termination of the operations Akobo village became a permanent military station. By 1925 the unfriendly tribes were brought under control and Akobo was made a permanent frontier post. Some five permanent and semi-permanent houses were built for the Government officials and with it grew a small native quarter. In the last ten years, however, the post developed into a considerable settlement due to the influx of the Sudanese armed forces to check the increasing attacks of the S.S.L.F. on the Government possessions.

Like Nasir, the Akobo post is divided into four quarters: Government officials' quarter, the Suk, the Malakia and the native quarter. The outskirts of the post are occupied by the army and police barracks. The type of houses vary from rectangular burnt brick buildings to the traditional native huts of reeds.

In 1956 the population of the post was estimated at 800, but at present the de facto population could be about 1,200, due to the continuous influx of the security forces. As the natives traditionally keep away from the Government stations, the post is generally occupied by peoples coming from other parts of the country.

#### Bibor Post

The Bibor Post (see Fig. 45) is not very much different from Nasir and Akobo neither in its set up nor in its present conditions.



PLATE 5 : Akopo Frontier Post ( the political  
boundary follows the river).



PLATE 6 : Akobo Frontier Security Station.

Like Akobo and Nasir, Bibor was established in 1912 upon conclusion of a patrol over the Quasi-Masai tribes on the banks of the River Bibor. It was first of all sited at the junction of the Kengen and the Lottela rivers and known as 'Fort Bruce'. But later it was discovered that the site was liable to flooding and the station was removed about four kilometres northwards to a mound on the left bank of the Bibor river. The name of the new settlement was then altered to Bibor post. The formation of the post represented in fact a show of effective administration at the south-eastern frontiers of the country rather than the promotion of frontier functions between Sudan and Ethiopia. Its main function was to put an end to the inter-tribal troubles on the one hand, and on the other hand, to provide protection for the natives in the area against the traditional raids of the Ethiopian lawless tribes and the elephant hunters of the Amhara and Gala.

Today, Bibor is considerably smaller than Nasir and Akobo. Its de jure population is estimated below 1,000, most of whom are frontier security forces. But since the Quasi-Masai tribes in the area do not take part in the S.S.L.F.'s activities, the armed forces are not found in the post in large numbers as we have seen in the case of Nasir and Akobo.

Bibor, Akobo and Nasir are connected to each other and to Malakal by steamers that run only between May and October, when the Bibor, Akobo and the Sobat rivers increase in volume. During the dry seasons when the rivers decrease in volume the steamer services are terminated but road services are possible to Malakal and Juba in the Sudan, and Gambela in Ethiopia. Canoes are also used all through the year for light transport. However, most Government officials now use light aircraft between the three posts, or between the three posts and Malakal or Juba.

Considering the effect of a political boundary on the frontier posts on the Sudan side of the boundary as a whole, one cannot fail to observe the following facts. Firstly, a number of frontier settlements which were already in existence since the nineteenth century, such as Kassala and Nasir, had been augmented to a considerable size, while other previously important towns of the same period, such as Fazughli, Gallabat and Doka declined to tiny hamlets. This could mainly be attributed to the gradual but effective change taking place in the pattern of trade and trade routes.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, several new towns such as Kurmuk and Basunda were set up, merely because of their location on the political boundary. Other new frontier posts like Akobo, Bibor and Fashala were established mainly to serve as frontier garrisons. Thirdly, because of the very limited inter-boundary functions between the two countries, there are no significant urban centres, except for Kassala, within 100 kilometres from the political boundary. The same case also applies to the Ethiopian side of the boundary.

#### EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON POPULATION MOVEMENT

There are four types of population movement in the area under question:

1. Seasonal tribal movements from one side of the international boundary to the other.
2. Movements across the political boundary with the purpose of trade, tourism, work or farming ... etc.
3. Movements of refugees and dissatisfied nationals from one state to the other.
4. Movements on one side of the political boundary, towards, away from, or alongside it.

Type (1) has already been considered in Chapters Two and Four, this chapter will therefore only deal with types (2), (3) and (4).

2. Movements Across the Political Boundary for the Purpose of Trade, Tourism, Work, Farming, Immigration or Emigration:

This type of movement may last for a day, a week, a month, a year or several years. Also it may be a short distance movement, that is, from a frontier village, farm or town in one country to that of the other. Long distance movements between Ethiopia and Sudan usually occur either from one capital to the other, or between Kassala and Asmara.

Effect of the Political Boundary on Local Population Movement: As regards the influence of the Political boundary functions on the movement of the people and the goods over short distances from village to villages or village to farm or a watering hole across the boundary, it could be seen that the political boundary has relatively little effect. Such movements were allowed for in the boundary agreements<sup>9</sup> and provided for in the local administrative regulations.

Cultivators and shepherds who were cut off from their traditional farms and grazing grounds when the boundary was established, continue to utilize them today, in the way their grandfathers had done before the demarcation of the political boundary. Such short distance movements are either daily or seasonal. The farmer or the person involved leaves his home in the early morning on foot or animal back (usually followed by the grown-up members of his family) and travels through the innumerable tracks and footpaths across the political boundary until he reaches his traditional patch of ground, which could well be six or seven kilometres inside the other country. For instance, in the Khor Baraka, the Gash, the Rahad and the Sobat there are a number of Sudanese families having lands in Ethiopia, while some Ethiopians around the Blue Nile, the Beni

Shangul and the Gallabat districts have large areas and own farms in the Sudan.

Another type of local movement is that by petty traders. The political boundary has hardly any effect on this pattern of movement. Markets are held at various intervals in the northern part of the political boundary and the petty traders often leave their families and move from market to market and village to village on animal backs without any regard to the political boundary.

Apart from the movement of farmers, shepherds and petty traders, there is a minor cross-boundary local movement which takes place once, twice or several times a day. This is the movement of the frontier people for the purpose of watering animals and water carrying for domestic use. Once again the political boundary has had no effect as an obstacle. The waterholes are daily meeting places between the individuals of both countries and become a centre of attraction in places where the boundary is meant to be a dividing line.

Intermarriage across the political boundary is fairly common among most of the frontier people all along the international boundary, especially in areas where the boundary is superimposed on tribal lands and divides the same people. On interviewing a number of local frontier people in the province of Kassala near the political boundary they indicated that the boundary has had no separating effect on their social lives and that there is no difficulty in moving across the political boundary to visit relatives or to attend certain social occasions such as births, weddings and deaths. However, certain types of population movements in a local scale have mainly developed from the mere fact of the demarcation of the political boundary and the creation of two

distinctive state systems on either side of the political boundary. For example the Sudan always attracts a considerable number of Muslim families living in Ethiopia, mainly in the northern section of the boundary. Also along several sections of the political boundary, especially in the area of River Sobat, there is a temporary but seasonal movement from one country to the other to avoid taxation and evade debts.

Social services such as education and health have also become a factor of attraction. For example, many members of the Eritrean Muslims as well as peoples from other Muslim pockets in various parts of Ethiopia cross the political boundary to the Sudan mainly for the purpose of education, learning of Arabic language or attending some religious occasions and festivals.

Effect of the Political Boundary on Long Distance Population Movement:

In pre-boundary times, traditionally the main trade routes between Sudan and Ethiopia had been from Sennar to Gondar, the main centre of commerce in Ethiopia, by way of Mattema to the south along either side of Lake Tana to southern and south-western Ethiopia. Another branch of the same route went eastwards to Debre Tabor and Disse to the coast and then to the north-west to Um Hagar and again to Sudan. From Um Hagar it continued north-eastwards across the River Tekaze to Eritrea. These routes are still used by caravans today. They are only rough trails but adequate for the persons and pack-animals that use them.

In the nineteenth century the caravan route from Khartoum and Sennar to Gondar was an important one, and the border town to Mattema a highway station of great significance with a considerable market for the exchange of Sudanese cotton and salt for Ethiopian coffee and gold dust. In Mattema over a century ago Sir Samuel Baker observed heaps of cases

of cotton and coffee and large numbers of transport camels, mules and donkeys.<sup>10</sup> The status of Mattema town was a peculiar one but very well suited as a frontier trading post. It was and still is occupied by Fellata migrants from West Africa and the peoples from the Darfur Province of Sudan. The town was ruled by a Sheikh loyal to Abyssinia but paying tributes to the Egyptian Government which was also in control of Sudan. Although limited by the modern standards, the pre-boundary long distance movement through the traditional routes was extensive. It is known that through centuries the Sennar-Gondar route connected western Ethiopia and central Sudan with Egypt, the Mediterranean world, and West Africa. Peoples from areas now in Darfur, Republic of Central Africa, Chad and Northern Nigeria followed the same route on their way to Mecca and Hijaz.

After the establishment of the political boundary, Mattema trading post and the pre-boundary trade routes from Sudan to Ethiopia both lost their importance by the mere fact of the existence of the political boundary as a division between two distinctive political systems. Accordingly, the east-west movement of population and trade have been very much reduced. The establishment of a number of customs posts and the imposition of tariffs on goods passing through them have even more limited the size of movement between the two countries. However, a number of new routes between the two states were developed. A seasonal road was made to connect Khartoum, Gedaref and Kassala with Sabdarat and Asmara in Eritrea. Another seasonal route was improved to connect Kurmuk, Roseris and Gallabat to Gondar and Addis Ababa, while a third seasonal road was opened to connect Nasir, Akobo and Bibor posts to Gambela, Gore and Maji in south-western Ethiopia (see Fig. 46). The Kassala-Asmara road today handles only a very limited amount of movement in trade and people across the political boundary. An average of six

# Road Pattern in the Border Zone

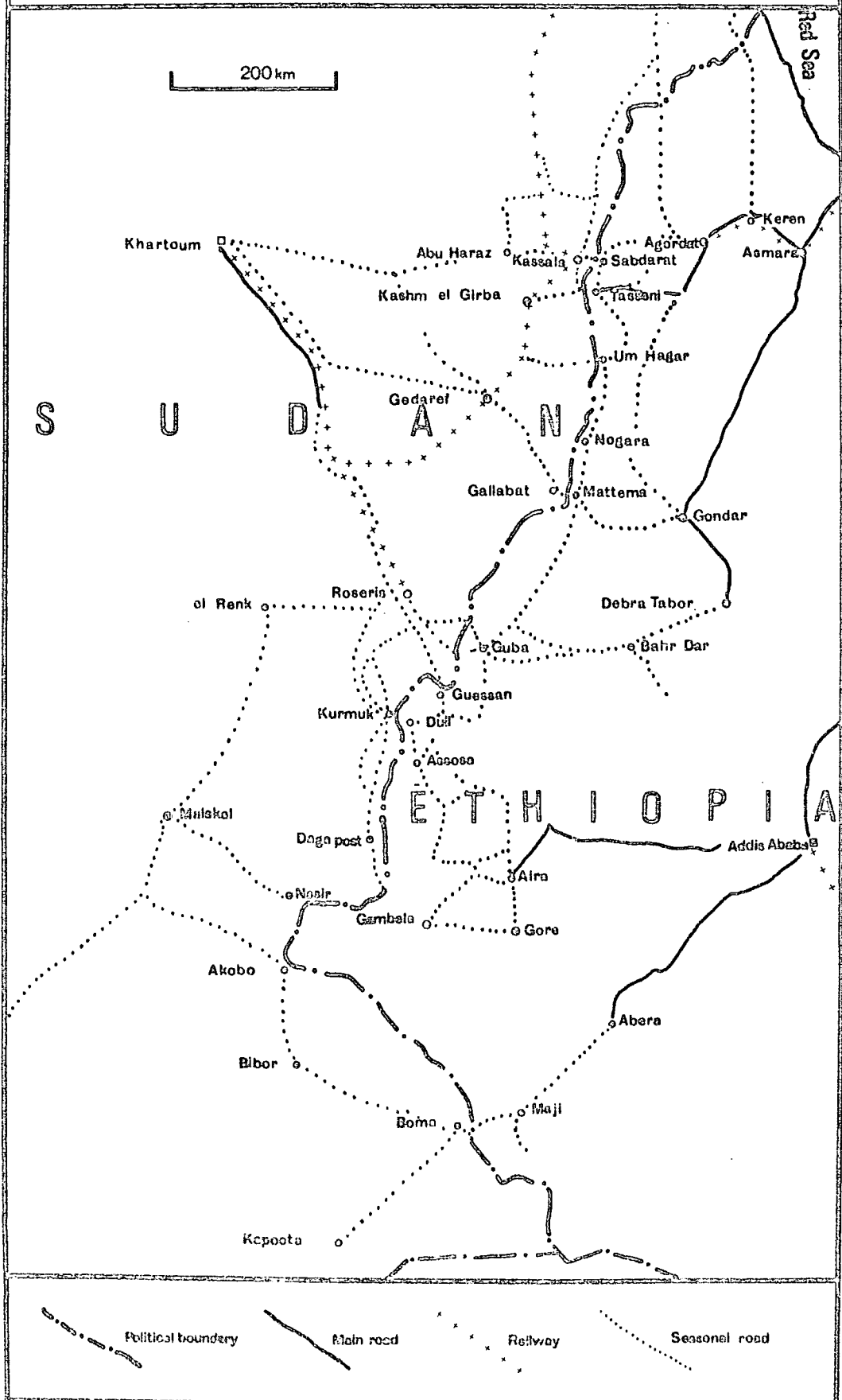


FIG. 46

vehicles per day has been reported to have crossed the political boundary in a sample year, 1969.<sup>11</sup> More than 70% of the vehicles which crossed the political boundary from the Sudan did not go beyond the Tasseni village in Ethiopia, and no Ethiopian vehicles went beyond Kassala. Only about 2 per cent went to other Ethiopian towns and the remainder continued their journey to Asmara.

The exact number of people crossing the political boundary is not known but an estimated number of 2,000 persons were reported in 1969 as crossing the political boundary from Kassala to Asmara and vice versa (see Table 9). In the same year less than 100 persons were reported as legally crossing the boundary at Kurmuk and Roseris customs and immigration posts. No comparable records are normally taken in the region to the south of River Sobat.

The foregoing figures do not give the complete picture of cross boundary movements as there are no data available to show the number of petty traders and the movements of local peoples. Also there is no way to know the exact or even an estimated number of those peoples who cross the political boundary illegally for such purposes of smuggling, shifta activities, evading taxes, avoiding debts and escaping state laws. For the local population no travelling documents are issued except for people crossing the boundary through the main route joining Kassala to Tasseni, where travelling documents not valid for more than fourteen days are usually required. The holder of such travelling documents are not allowed to go beyond Tasseni. Similar travelling documents are also issued to Ethiopians to cross the boundary to Kassala only.

### 3. Movement of Refugees and Dissatisfied Nationals (see Fig. 47)

The U.N.H.C.R. office defines a refugee as a person who is

TABLE 9 APPROXIMATE SIZE OF MOVEMENT ACROSS THE SUDAN-ETHIOPIA  
BOUNDARY FOR THE YEAR 1967/68

Type of Movement	Approximate Figures	
	in each country	total
Refugees		36,300
in the Sudan	27,300	
in Ethiopia	9,000	
Tourists		3,341
to the Sudan	1,640	
to Ethiopia	1,701	
Immigrants		130
in the Sudan	66	
in Ethiopia	64	
Temporary Departures		120
to the Sudan	69	
to Ethiopia	51	
Re-entrants		18+
in the Sudan	?	
in Ethiopia	18	
Transits		326
<b>TOTAL Movement</b>	<b>39,909</b>	<b>40,235</b>

N.B. The above figures represent only the Sudanese and Ethiopian nationals. No data is available as to the movement of other nationalities as such movement is negligible.

Source: Ethiopia Statistical Abstract 1967.

Immigration and Passports, Ministry of the Interior, Sudan

outside the country of his nationality because he has well founded fear of persecution by reason of his race, religion, nationality or political opinion, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself to the persecution of the Government of his nationality. Thus, according to the status of the U.N.H.C.R. the definition of the refugee is based on individual status for each person who claims to be a refugee. Following the same definition, the refugees from both Ethiopia and Sudan can be divided into two categories: (1) political refugees, who are generally known in Africa by 'freedom fighters' or 'national liberation fronts', and (2) mass movements of ordinary people (not necessarily politically active) from one side of the boundary to the other.

From Table 10 it could be seen that there were no refugees of any kind in either of the two countries in any considerable numbers before 1963 except for less than 50 Eritreans in the Sudan and a little more than 100 southern Sudanese 'national rebels' in Ethiopia. In October 1964 soon after the change of Government in the Sudan, some 100 Eritrean 'national rebels' sought refuge in the Sudan. In 1965 after strong objections to the action of the Sudanese new Government towards Eritrean political refugees, Ethiopia welcomed about 120 southern Sudan political refugees as a counteraction to the Eritrean political refugees given asylum in the Sudan. By 1968 the southern Sudanese political refugees in Ethiopia numbered more than 5,000 while the Ethiopian political refugees in the Sudan remained at 300, that is, the 1965 figure.

However, since the beginning of 1967 a number of refugees (mass movements) from Eritrea began to cross the political boundary into the Sudan in large successive waves. By 1968 the total number of Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan was estimated at 27,000 with further small waves

# Movement of Refugee and National Rebels Across the Political Boundary

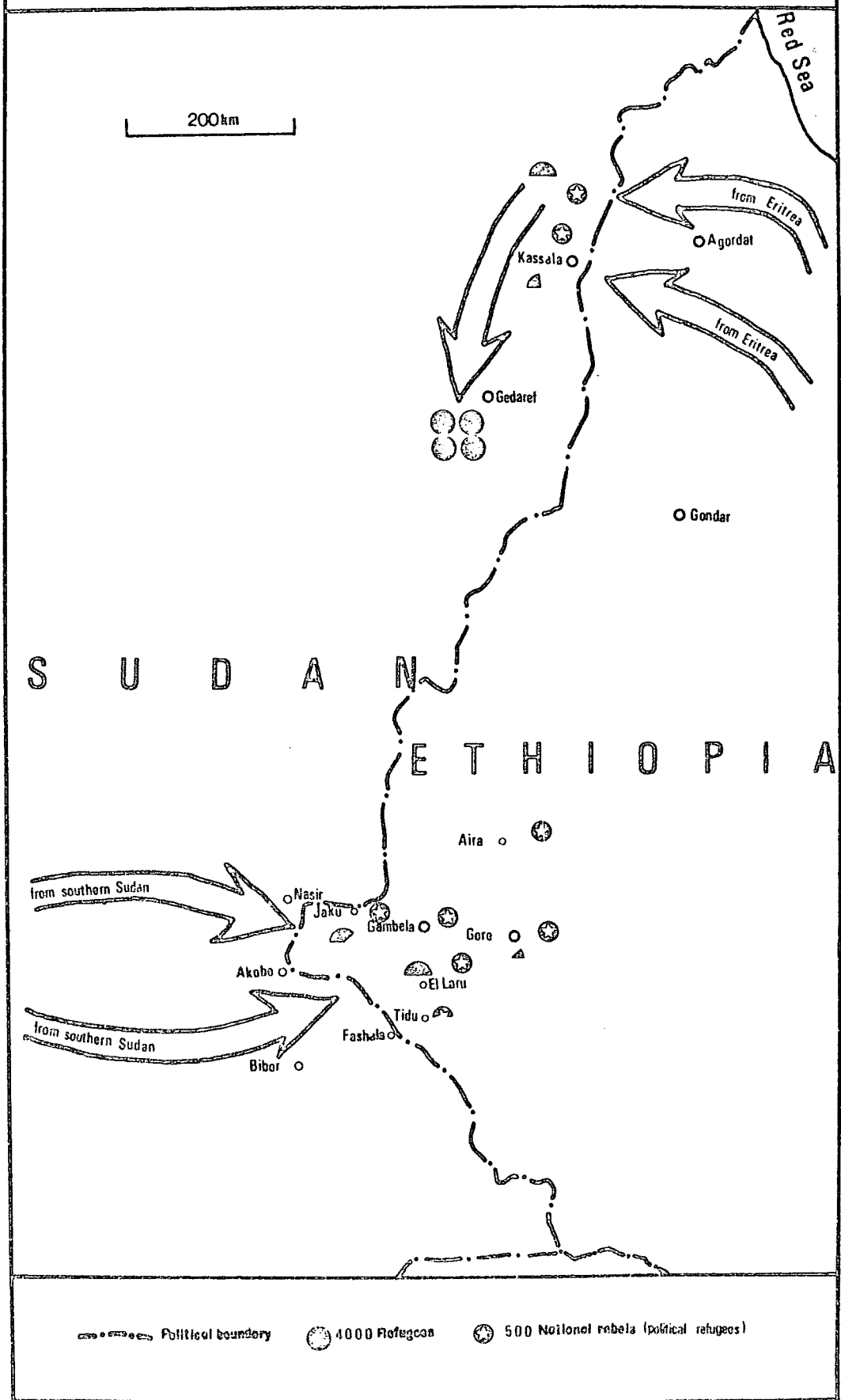


FIG. 47

TABLE 10 APPROXIMATE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES IN THE SUDAN  
AND ETHIOPIA UNTIL JULY 1968

Type of Refugees		Type of Refugees		Date of Movement
Political	Mass movement	Political	Mass movement	
50+	-	100+	-	1963
100+	-	?	-	1964
150+	-	120	-	1965
?	-	2,000	-	1966
?	20,000	?	-	1967
?	7,000+	2,780+	4,000+	1968
300+	27,000+	5,000+	4,000+	Total

+ Could be more

Source: Refugee High Commissioner's Office, Ministry Of Interior, Khartoum, 1968

still being reported at various frontier posts. In the same year, Ethiopia, probably, failing to induce the Sudan to close the boundary in the face of the Eritrean refugees welcomed some 4,000 Nilotic tribes in the Illabour Province of western Ethiopia. At present there are about 10,000 Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia and 30,000 Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan.

4. Movements on one Side of the Political Boundary, Towards, Away From or Alongside it

For the purpose of statistical analysis, the total population of six towns and five rural councils was fully enumerated (see Table 11). Of the six towns, Kassala, Gedaref, and Malakal were selected for they constitute the largest urban centres within the two hundred kilometres zone from the political boundary. The basic assumption being if there

TABLE 11 SELECTED TOWN AND RURAL POPULATION BY NATIONALITY GROUP OR TRIBAL GROUP TO SHOW THE EFFECT OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON POPULATION MOVEMENT

TRIBAL GROUP OR NATIONALITY GROUP	SELECTED TOWNS					SELECTED RURAL COUNCILS						
	Name	Kassala (1)	Gedaref (2)	Malakal (3)	Khartoum	Juba	Atbara	Kassala Rural	Cedaref South	Eastern Nuer	Southern Funj	Bibor District
ARAB												
Baggara	401	633	256	2,840	56	355	5	9,931	2	959	-	
Dar Hamid	89	30	6	380	2	105	?	476	6	80	-	
Gawasma	296	366	304	3,659	60	2,682	?	1,923	-	3,664	-	
Shukria	117	398	4	381	10	28	4	772	-	49	-	
Gaaliyin	10,091	3,672	808	25,954	238	14,361	-	8,972	93	9,220	6	
Guhayna	554	842	80	3,836	54	1,655	?	10,820	10	3,492	5	
Other Arabs	704	896	290	3,632	50	608	22,966	5,035	22	3,903	4	
MISCELLANEOUS TRIBES	655	750	82	6,078	248	4,961	31	645	-	651	10	
NUBA TRIBES	570	642	1,104	3,896	234	697	2	3,598	16	381	24	
BEJA TRIBES												
Amarar	364	2	-	91	-	30	?	13	1	4	-	
Bisharin	49	30	6	143	-	93	?	30	-	1	-	
Hadendosea	663	79	36	351	2	84	8	3,170	-	13	-	
Beni Amer	1,867	938	2	146	4	26	39,569	1,097	-	113	-	
Other Beja	3,961	397	-	1,042	24	535	8,486	468	44	99	3	
NUBIYIN	923	672	592	16,927	106	5,788	-	1,175	8	2,013	-	
SOUTHERNERS												
Dinka	353	171	1,240	1,377	462	518	-	1,023	704	111	36	
Nuer	2	-	306	165	2	28	-	-	104,344	2,270	41	
Annuk	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	23	934	69	?	
Other Southerners	370	155	3,690	1,061	7,714	139	66	1,732	116	3,530	52,848	
WESTERN SUDAN TRIBES	6,971	4,079	440	1,061	143	73	1,316	61,305	8	20,957	2	
FOREIGNERS WITH SUDAN STATUS												
Sudanese of West African origin	345	4	-	189	2	6	547	5,535	-	122	-	
Sudanese of Ethiopian origin	167	122	-	83	8	18	-	874	4	120	23	
Sudanese of Egyptian origin	32	8	-	256	6	578	-	94	-	-	-	
Sudanese of Asiatic origin	79	105	-	599	-	54	-	364	-	87	-	
Sudanese of other African origin	86	117	-	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sudanese of European origin	6	4	10	138	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	
FOREIGNERS WITH NON-SUDANESE STATUS												
Western Europeans	49	38	58	3,355	138	136	-	66	-	52	-	
Americans	-	-	18	30	-	4	-	-	-	-	9	
West Africans	7,458	105	48	4,521	48	422	18	19,055	149	12,678	-	
Ethiopians	741	491	16	535	14	130	1	798	-	159	23	
Other Africans	89	72	10	20	28	1,061	-	233	-	7	-	
Asians	988	299	16	982	14	168	-	309	-	20	-	
Other Nationalities	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
FUNJ TRIBES	186	224	306	550	18	67	-	3,629	2,984	98,830	6	
EASTERN FRONTIER TRIBES	215	161	-	407	-	28	?	254	-	17	-	
TOTAL	40,612	17,537	9,680	193,103	10,660	36,298	73,152	144,140	109,535	162,592	53,061	

is a population movement within the frontier zone, then the main destination must be the largest urban centres within the same area. Khartoum was assumed to be the second best choice. Juba and Atbara, the former in Equatoria Province and the latter in the Northern Province were selected to measure the extent of population movement away from the frontier area on one hand, and to see how far the peoples from the other parts of the country are attracted to the frontier areas under study on the other hand. Similarly, the five rural councils, Kassala Rural, Gedaref South, Funj South, Eastern Nuer and Bibor, were selected to examine the extent of population movement in relation to rural areas.

In Table 11 the main frontier tribes and tribal groups are underlined and the frontier towns are numbered (1, 2, 3). This is to make it easier to follow the trend of population movement into or out of the area under consideration. The above-mentioned table (11) indicates that both in Kassala and Gedaref towns the local tribes do not constitute a majority, as might be expected. The same is true with the population of Kassala Rural and Gedaref South Rural councils. The same table also indicates that other eastern frontier tribes such as the Funj, the Annuak and the Nuer are not found in any considerable numbers in the region to the north of the Blue Nile. This might well indicate two major aspects in the trend of population movement in the north-eastern frontiers of Sudan. Now the main direction of movement is clearly from west to east rather than from south to north or vice versa, and even the comparatively large urban centres like Kassala and Gedaref, with their better potentialities of work and better standards of living, have no great impact upon the indigenous peoples in the area. Similarly, Malakal town has so far failed to attract the south-eastern frontier peoples (Annuak and Nuer). Analysis of the population of Bibor and Eastern

Nuer Rural Councils indicates the absence of any considerable movement of local tribes away from their traditional habitats. Except for a negligible number of Arabs (mainly Government officials and traders) the whole region is occupied by the natives. Not surprisingly, Khartoum city comprises peoples from all over the country but not very large numbers of eastern frontier peoples. The population of Atbara and Juba shows that both Equatoria and Northern provinces are non-attractive to the eastern frontier tribes.

In tables 12a, 12b and 12c an attempt has been made to study the movement of population towards the political boundary under study after 1955/56. The in-migration of seven frontier settlements is given. Unfortunately, no data are available for out-migration. It seems that in-migration towards the frontier settlements has grown very fast since 1955. However, there is no considerable change in the trend of movement which is still largely from west to east. Peoples from Northern Province as well as others from the same Province who previously immigrated to Kassala Province provide the largest in-migration to the seven enumerated settlements.

TABLE 12a      IN-MIGRATION FOR THE SELECTED SETTLEMENTS  
ON THE SUDAN SIDE OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY  
FOR THE YEAR 1966, BY PLACE OF BIRTH

Place of birth or place of latest out- migration	Town of in-migration or town of residence						
	Kashm el Girba	Doka	Gala el Nahal	Kurmuk	Roseris	Singa	Abu Hugar
Total Population	5,070	5,560	5,180	3,540	7,300	15,470	3,960
Kassala Province	1,410	410	290	2,840	50	30	10
Blue Nile Province	970	410	160	-	1,390	1,920	480
The Three Towns	290	80	100	20	150	380	30
Northern Province	500	150	130	100	250	840	50
Kurdofan Province	1,170	240	190	10	20	360	120
Darfur Province	300	80	370	10	20	170	160
Southern Provinces	20	-	20	10	20	120	10
Khartoum Rural	40	-	-	-	-	-	-
Foreigners	30	150	250	100	120	170	10
<b>Total in-migration</b>	<b>1,220</b>	<b>1,360</b>	<b>1,510</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>4,260</b>	<b>870</b>
<b>Ever lived in the place of residence</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>4,200</b>	<b>3,680</b>	<b>2,840</b>	<b>5,280</b>	<b>11,210</b>	<b>3,090</b>

Source: Population and Housing Survey for Kassala Province 1964/66;  
and for the Blue Nile Province 1964/66, Department of  
Statistics, Khartoum

TABLE 12b

THE POPULATION OF THE SELECTED SETTLEMENTS  
ON THE SUDAN SIDE OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

SETTLEMENT	TOTAL	BY NATIONALITY						
		SUDANESE		FOREIGNERS*		SUDANESE		
		By Birth	By Status	Total	West African	By Birth	By Status	Foreign
Kashm el Girba	5,070	4,980	10	80	20	98.2	0.2	1.6
Doka	5,560	5,070	-	490	240	91.2	-	5.8
Gala el Nahal	5,180	4,730	10	440	410	91.3	0.2	8.5
Kurmuk	3,540	3,390	-	150	-	98.5	-	4.2
Roseris	7,300	6,630	30	640	540	90.8	0.4	8.8
Singa	15,470	15,250	70	150	100	98.6	0.4	1.0
Abu Hugar	3,960	3,950	-	10	-	99.7	-	0.3

\* Of the total foreigners

Source: Population and Housing Survey for Kassala Province 1964/66; and for the Blue Nile Province 1964/66, Department of Statistics, Khartoum.

TABLE 12c

IN-MIGRATION FOR THE SELECTED SETTLEMENTS  
ON THE SUDAN SIDE OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY  
BY YEAR OF IN-MIGRATION

Year of In-migration	Town of in-migration or town of residence						
	Kashm el Girba	Doka	Gala el Nahal	Kurmuk	Roseris	Singa	Abu Hugar
1955 and earlier	390	770	1,050	160	1,310	2,100	510
1955-1960	740	280	270	230	110	540	140
1961	560	30	20	50	150	210	10
1962	430	20	20	30	120	290	40
1963	670	110	70	30	30	500	30
1964-1967	940	150	80	200	300	620	140
Total	3,730	1,360	1,510	700	2,020	4,260	850

Source: Population and Housing Survey for Kassala Province 1964/66; and for the Blue Nile Province 1964/66, Department of Statistics, Khartoum.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

ON TRADE AND TRADE PATTERNS

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY  
ON TRADE AND TRADE PATTERNS

CONTACTS BETWEEN SUDAN AND ETHIOPIA AND THE 'PRE-BOUNDARY' TRADE

From the earliest times the northern part of the Sudan has had links northwards with Egypt and the main trade routes were north-south along the Nile and also east-west across the Nile from Darfur to Suakin.<sup>1</sup> These two routes and especially the former from Egypt through Nubia to Ethiopia was an important line of communication for the Ethiopian Plateau. When in 1636 Gondar became Ethiopia's capital city, this route became even more important for merchants and travellers. The two trading centres of Shelga and Sarki, the former in Ethiopia about 40 kilometres south-west of Gondar and the latter in the Sudan near the present boundary, were active and prosperous with considerable markets being held every day.<sup>2</sup> Ethiopia exported honey, wax, butter, salt and slaves to Sudan and the latter exported horses, mules, donkeys and cotton to Ethiopia. From Egypt and the Mediterranean world came brassware, ironware, vermilion, arsenic and Mahleb of Egypt (spices).<sup>3</sup>

For the purpose of handling customs duties both Sudan and Ethiopia had customs officials in their border towns. The process of collecting customs seem to have been very complicated. Poncet says:

'The King of Semmar had in this town (Shelga) by the consent of the Emperor of Ethiopia an officer of the customs to receive all the duties of the cotton which they bring from his kingdom into Ethiopia, and the duties are equally divided between the two princes.'<sup>4</sup>

The external trade in both kingdoms seems to have been mainly a state monopoly, but certain people of experience and influence were selected

to run the business. In Ethiopia the merchants were exclusively Muslims. At the border village of Guessan, Poncet saw a caravan of Geberties (Ethiopian Muslims) who were trading between Ethiopia and Sennar and probably with Egypt and the Mediterranean world through Nubia. When James Bruce visited Ethiopia the chief of the merchants in Gondar was a certain Mohamed.<sup>5</sup>

For the most part of the year the land route connecting the two countries was kept safe from robbers to safeguard the normal flow of trade. Especially, Ethiopia was more interested in keeping the route open to secure its connections with Egypt in general and the Coptic Christian head of the Church (Abuna) in Alexandria. However, in 1774 trade between the two countries was terminated and commerce was practically interrupted for a long time as the result of the breakout of the 'Second Abyssinian War' between Sennar and Abyssinia.

The means of transportation were camels for long distances, through the dry waterless areas of northern Ethiopia, and horses, mules and donkeys for short ranges. There is no adequate information on the currency used although, at that time, florin was accepted as a standard currency in the Sudan, but there is no evidence whether it was accepted in Ethiopia or not. In the latter, gold dust and salt were regarded as means of exchange.<sup>6</sup> It is most probable to assume that trade between Ethiopia and Sudan was based on barter since there is no clear evidence about a standard currency that was acceptable in both countries.

Since the Egyptian occupation of the Sudan in 1821 the pattern of Sudan trade was more and more directed towards Egypt. Trade in the Sudan as well as in Egypt was a state monopoly and strict orders were issued in the Sudan to the effect that Sudanese sellers should not issue their commodities to any but Government agents. Commodities like gum arabic, ostrich feathers

indigo, ivory and slaves were all collected and sent to Egypt through the Nile route. But, generally speaking, the new economic policy of the Sudan under the Egyptian rule rested on the old foundations, the commercial customs of the Sudan. Each established commercial community had its own organization with a senior merchant, known as Siretudjar, as a community representative. The Egyptians returned the same system and through him conducted business with the local merchants. But Egyptian experts and Egyptian petty traders from Upper Egypt were introduced into the Sudan in great numbers. As a result of this monopoly of trade by Egypt, the former centres of trade in the Sudan eastern borders gradually lost their traditional importance and the whole business was shifted further to the north towards Khartoum, Berber and Dongola.

The state trading monopoly pursued by Egypt in the Sudan was, however, met with great criticism on the part of European advocates of free trade and the European states strongly objected to the Egyptian monopoly of trade which deprived their own merchants of gain. Britain, for example, concluded a commercial convention with the Ottoman Sultan of Turkey in 1838 in defiance of the Egyptian commercial policy in Egypt and Sudan. The convention stipulated freedom of trade inside the Ottoman Empire, of which the Sudan was a nominal part. Even then, the Egyptian trade policies were not relaxed until the death of Mohamed Ali Pasha. By 1856, however, a number of European and non-European commercial houses were established in Khartoum and free trade in the Sudan was secured to all nations including Ethiopia. Gradually, the former trading centres of eastern Sudan once again gained considerable importance and trade with Ethiopia revived as before. Musallemia village, not very far from Sennar, became one of the greatest commercial centres in the country and Abu Haraz at the confluence of the Blue Nile and the Rahad became the main trans-shipping point on the trade route between Khartoum and Ethiopia. Gedaref, on the other hand, was a rising

town, an entrepot for the Ethiopian trade through the frontier town of Gallabat and much frequented by West and Central African pilgrims to and from Arabia. All Ethiopian exports and imports through Gallabat and Mattema on the way to the Red Sea ports at Suakin and Massawa and vice versa passed through Kassala, a centre of rising commercial importance.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had a number of effects in the pattern of the Sudan trade and the redirection of the trade routes both inside the country and to the outside world. Since then, the Red Sea became a vital link in the communications between the Sudan and Egypt and significant improvements were made in the desert trade route joining Berber and Suakin which was now established as the principal outlet for the imports and exports of Sudan. For several years Suakin became a regular calling post and received a growing tonnage of ocean merchant ships on their way to and from Europe through the Suez Canal. Such growth of shipping facilities at Suakin had a marked attraction for the Sudan trade which steadily deserted the traditional routes of the Nile valley and the Ethiopian plateau for the Red Sea coast.

Coincidentally, with the opening of the Suez Canal, the Egyptians were expanding their southern and eastern frontiers in Equatorial Africa and the Ethiopian Empire. Continuous wars between Egypt and Ethiopia nearly all through the nineteenth century had reduced the Ethiopian-Sudanese trade to almost nothing. Far more serious, the concentration of the Egyptian forces in towns like Kassala, Gedaref and Suakin created a comparatively rich market in these towns, thus largely attracting the Sudan eastern frontier commodities. Upstream of Khartoum the White Nile trade had felt the effects of the greater security which accompanied the southwards extension of the Egyptian rule and the Blue Nile had become an important river route for lifting gum arabic, sesame and durra from Sennar region.

From 1885-1898 the Ethiopian-Sudanese relations in the Mahdist time were no better, if not much worse, than those maintained in the Egyptian period. Continuous wars between the two countries and internal unrest in both states especially at the common frontiers did not allow for the revival of trade in this direction.

NEW CONTACTS BETWEEN SUDAN AND ETHIOPIA AND 'POST-BOUNDARY' TRADE

Having occupied the Sudan in 1898 the Anglo-Egyptian Government was decided to maintain friendly relations with Ethiopia and Eritrea which was now under Italian rule. Within less than five years the whole length of the Sudan eastern boundaries were negotiated and a great part of them were demarcated. Communications, customs and commercial agreements were concluded and at first the traditional trade routes connecting the three countries (Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia) with each other were revived. As already mentioned elsewhere, new trade routes were opened, especially in the region to the south of the Blue Nile which in pre-boundary times had but very limited contacts with Ethiopia. A new route joining the Beni Shangul area and the whole region of western Ethiopia with Kurmuk, Roseris, Gedaref, Renk and Khartoum was opened. Another trade route was made to connect the south-western parts of Ethiopia with the Sudanese trading post of Gambela then with Malakal and Khartoum through the Baro, the Sobat and the White Nile during the rainy seasons when the first two rivers increased in volume. Another route was developed from Kassala to Asmara and Massawa.

In spite of the good intentions of the two states to develop and maintain an east-west flow of trade, however, no considerable results were achieved. Soon after the establishment of the political boundary, trade between the two countries began to decline once again. The decline was brought about principally by two developments:

- (i) the establishment of railways and other surface routes in the Sudan which opened new and more profitable markets for the Sudanese cotton and also enabled the Sudan to obtain coffee from abroad at low prices; and
- (ii) the construction of rail and motor routes from the highlands of Ethiopia to the Red Sea which directed more Ethiopian trade in that direction.

As time went on, the newly established political boundary began to act as an effective dividing line and an effective economic barrier between the two countries. Consequently, the Sudan had abandoned a number of its formerly important trading posts (Gallabat in 1946 and Gambela in 1962) in its eastern frontiers with Ethiopia. Other posts, such as Kurmuk, Basunda and Roseris, were reduced in function though they have continued to handle a considerable volume of local and regional trade. Moreover, maintenance of high tariffs by Ethiopia on its common frontiers with the Sudan had led to high prices for imported goods which in turn stimulated organized smuggling and encouraged the frontier people to cross the political boundary from one state to the other to trade. However, in spite of the fact that, at present, the frontier posts have lost their importance as inter-boundary trading centres, the border region itself continues to be an important source of cotton, durra and sesame for the Ethiopian highlands and acts as a bridge for supplying coffee, wax and honey from Ethiopia to the eastern parts of Sudan. In villages like Kurmuk, Mattema, Basunda, Um Hagar and Awad, traders from the highlands of Ethiopia and others from the heart of the Sudan are often seen exchanging their goods. The Ethiopian petty traders usually come from towns like Sabdarat, Gondar, Gambela and Gore. Such traders camp in the frontier villages sometimes for several weeks until they can obtain enough cotton, from the villages by barter (or

by money only in Sudanese currency) to load their animals or lorries for the trip back to the highland or to the major centres of their trade. The Sudanese currency is well favoured on both sides of the boundary since it can be handled in the black markets of Asmara and Tasseni, while the Ethiopian dollar is not accepted a few kilometres from the political boundary inside the Sudan. Besides selling cotton directly to the Ethiopian petty traders, the Sudanese border villagers have contacts with the Ethiopian highlanders through the intermediary of the Beni Shangu and the Beni Amer (both Ethiopian nationals of Sudanese origin) to move cotton and durra to Ethiopia and exchange them for coffee and honey. In the northern part of the boundary under question there is a continuous trade in cotton between Ethiopia and Sudan at Um Brega, Um Hagar and other border villages.

#### SIZE OF TRADE AND TRADE BARRIERS

##### 1. Physical Barriers

"The governing influence upon human society is never clearer than in the regions where the physical features show extreme characteristics and where the inhabitants have not developed the equipments to master or modify greatly their effects."<sup>7</sup>

In most African countries, physical geography still plays a great role in shaping the pattern of trade. Mountains, deserts, rivers, marshes and sheer distance hinder both the movement of population and trade. In the area under consideration, deserts and aridity in the north, high plateaux and deep gorges in the middle and sudd, tropical forests and vast marshes in the south are responsible among many other factors for the decline of trade between the Sudan and Ethiopia.

As we have seen in Chapter One, to the east of the boundary



PLATE **7** : The main road between Kassala and Eritrea.

under consideration and generally coterminous with it runs the massive Ethiopian plateau. Except for extreme north where it emerges into the Red Sea highlands the plateau is remarkably well defined by escarpments of great continuity with an overall dip towards the Sudan which has affected the drainage pattern. Long rivers like the Abai-Blue Nile, the Tekaze-Atbara and the Baro-Sobat flow westwards from their sources in the high plateau carving massive gorges across the plateau edge. Such gorges divide the main plateau into detached segments of varying sizes ranging from a few thousand square metres to several hundred square kilometres. These extensive systems of gorges have been mainly developed by the rivers Tekaze-Atbara, the Abai-Blue Nile and their tributaries. In most cases these river banks are edged by high cliffs even at the gorge head where there is usually a waterfall. The gorges themselves are extremely deep and wide, varying from some 500 metres wide to 500 metres deep at the head of small tributaries, to 4,000 metres deep by several kilometres wide at the middle and lower parts of the gigantic Abai-Blue Nile gorge. Obviously, such gorges are great barriers to communication. It is practically impossible to travel along the gorges and there are hardly any places where they can be crossed easily. There are also other difficulties and barrier factors; there is the heat, absence of surface water away from the main rivers and streams, which are in themselves very difficult to reach, and there are dangers from wild animals, shifta bands and hostile tribesmen. Until very recently the gorge rivers could only be crossed at very limited places, even at present there are only two bridges over gorge rivers (on the Abai and the Tekaze) at the frontier region. Therefore, crossing in many cases has to be made by canoes or at fords. Even this is possible only during the dry season because the tremendous violence of the frontier rivers



PLATE 8 : A Bridge on the River Yabus on the boundary between Sudan and Ethiopia formed from a tree trunk.

in the rainy season makes movement impossible for the larger part of the year.

Below the plateau to the western rim, where the political boundary under question runs, and beyond the boundary into the Sudan plains the changes in geographical conditions are remarkably abrupt and greatly emphasized by three main characteristics:

- (i) it is hot and arid,
- (ii) life is very difficult and the environment is hostile to man due to the scarcity of fresh water and the prevalence of endemic diseases. Farming is marginal and pastoralism, which is the principal economy of the region, is precarious;
- (iii) it is a barrier region, movement being difficult and dangerous because of the natural conditions and because of the attitude of the hostile tribesmen and the activities of the shifta.

People of the Woyna Dega (temperate lands at plateau level) and the northern Sudan tribes have little immunity to Malaria and other tropical diseases and often hesitate to cross the frontier region from east to west, or vice versa.<sup>8</sup> In 1953-57 Simons reported:

'Many Amhara of highland Begmadir and Semyen flatly refuse to go into the lowland along the Sudan border, which is practically dangerous during and immediately after the rainy season when the risk of contracting Malaria is greatest; even at the height of the dry season when the danger is at its minimum, highlanders need strong inducement to venture into the Sudan border country ...'

'Mattema', he says, 'is considered a punishment post for the police, civil officials and school teachers who are assigned there by the Government.'<sup>9</sup>

In spite of the inhospitality of the lowlands, however, there are a limited number of gates at Kassala, Um Brega and Mattema through which traditional routes passed from the plains of the Sudan to cross the Ethiopian plateau at its northern limit to the Red Sea ports of Suakin and Massawa. The routes east of the gateway towns across the north of Ethiopia are the only trans-Ethiopian routes of any importance. To the south of the Blue Nile, the River Baro which is annually navigable from May to early November connected the western Ethiopian country with central Sudan until 1961. Here large areas of flood, extensive marshes and the sudd act as effective barriers separating the Ethiopian plateau from the rest of Africa. The area enclosed between the upper reaches of the Bibor and the Akobo rivers and the foot of the Ethiopian plateau as far south as north latitude  $5^{\circ}15'$  offers perhaps more difficulties to the travellers than any part of the north-east Africa. In the rainy season it is practically a vast swamp, while in the dry season it is practically a desert where water is hardly found. In the rainy season, rains also make movement almost impossible, the tall thick grass which grows up in the rains is only swept away and made passable by the grass fires (hariq) in the middle of the dry season.

## 2. Other Barriers

As in many other African countries the political boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia, once established, maintained a negative influence on the movement of trade. Wright, commenting on this phenomenon of the barrier effects on boundaries, says:

"Political boundaries are obstacles to movement of population, commodities, capital, management and information not only because of the legal regulations but also because the familiarity of the producers and consumers with native law, administration,

language and culture and the identification with national symbols and territory favour the home markets."<sup>10</sup>

To this one could add the differing monetary systems, taxation and banking regulations and other trading formalities which may vary from one state to the other.

In the case of the boundary under consideration a certain amount of trade across the political boundary does exist but in a very limited volume. Table 13 gives the details of the international trade of the two adjacent countries for the sample year 1969. For example, in this year the total trade between Sudan and Ethiopia was less than half a million L.S. A similar situation also applies to the external trade of most African countries with one another though the Ethiopia-Sudan trade is certainly among the lowest figures in the continent as a whole. There are a number of reasons which have created this situation apart from the barrier effects of the physical geography. First, in most classifications both Ethiopia and Sudan would figure as 'under-developed' countries with a low per capita income and a high proportion of population living from subsistence agriculture.<sup>11</sup> Their main agricultural products are shown in Table 14. The similarity of agricultural products in the two countries illustrate the way in which the economies of the two countries, as indeed, the economy of Africa as a whole, are linked more with the overseas markets than with each other.

Recently, in both countries there have been considerable attempts at introducing certain industries over the past few years, but with a strong tendency for the same type of industry to be established in each country (see Table 15). This trend has been partly initiated by the

TABLE 13

SUDAN-ETHIOPIA TRADE FOR 1969-70

COMMODITY	UNIT	DUTIES	IMPORTS		EXPORTS		RE-EXPORTS	
			Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Qua-	Value
Cattle	No.	3	323	3,640	10	200	-	-
Cheese	Kilo	-	20	5	-	-	-	-
Potatoes	Kilo	-	8,373	352	-	-	-	-
Lentils	Kilo	-	4,026,834	302,136	-	-	-	-
Horse Beans	Kilo	-	1,033	61	-	-	-	-
Garlic	Kilo	36	59,894	2,651	852	30	-	-
Sweets	Kilo	-	10	30	-	-	-	-
Coffee	Kilo	926	118,822	21,871	-	-	-	-
Pepper & Other Spices	Kilo	-	3,988	81	-	-	-	-
Ivory	Kilo	-	85	5	-	-	-	-
Vegetable Materials for Planting	Kilo	-	642,271	3,160	-	-	-	-
Other Plants	Kilo	-	2,360	14	-	-	-	-
Books	Kilo	-	-	7	40	28	-	-
Carpets	Kilo	-	447	15	-	-	-	-
Mats	Kilo	38	741	138	-	-	-	-
Glassware	Kilo	-	148,716	9,272	-	-	-	-
Bars & Rods	Tons	-	3	339	-	-	-	-
Air Conditioners	No.	-	1	80	-	-	-	-
Spare Sparts	Value	-	-	46	-	-	-	-
Domestic Electric Refrigerators	No.	-	1	50	-	-	-	-
Cars	No.	-	2	850	-	-	-	-
Leather Shoes	Pairs	-	22	21	123	120	-	-
Photographic Cameras	No.	-	-	1,444	-	-	-	-
Printed Matters	Value	-	-	12	-	-	-	-
Onions	Kilo	-	-	-	131,638	3,872	-	-
Snake Skins, salted	Kilo	-	-	-	50	825	-	-
Cotton Fibres	Tons	-	-	-	74	15,314	-	-
Cotton	Tons	-	-	-	9	530	-	-
Salt	Tons	-	-	-	35	513	-	-
Cooking Oils	Kilo	-	-	-	3,549	604	-	-
Cotton Fabrics	Kilo	-	-	-	4,206	22,058	-	-
Cement	Tons	-	-	-	2	21	-	-
Building Materials	Tons	-	-	-	-	31	-	-
Insecticides	Kilo	-	-	-	-	-	16,450	6,342
Engines	Value	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,405
Air Craft Baloons	Value	-	-	-	-	-	30	87
<b>TOTAL TRADE (Value)</b>		<b>1,003</b>		<b>348,554</b>		<b>45,938</b>		<b>9,024</b>

Source: Foreign Trade Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Sudan, 21.1.1970.

N.B. Note that the Sudan-Ethiopia trade as shown at the import, export and re-export columns is not equal to the sum of the values of commodities under these columns. Such figures were subject to correction for delays through queries, etc.



TABLE 15      TREND OF INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE SUDAN  
AND ETHIOPIA FOR THE YEAR 1965-1966

TYPE OF INDUSTRY	SUDAN	NO.OF FACTORIES	ETHIOPIA	NO.OF FACTORIES
FOOD INDUSTRY				69@
Meat	-	∕	*	
Sugar	*	4	*	
Salt	*	12	*	
Fruit	*	10	*	
Edible Oils	*	24+	*	
Flour	*	2+	*	
Macaroni	*	6+	*	
BEVERAGES AND TOBACCO				43@
Beer	*	1	*	
Alcohol & Wines	*	2+	*	
Soft Drinks	*	12	*	
Cigarettes	*	2	*	
TEXTILE INDUSTRY				27@
Cotton Fabrics	*	3+	*	
Cotton Spinning & Weaving	*	10	*	
Knitwear	*	?	*	
LEATHER AND SHOE INDUSTRY				20@
Leather Shoes & Boots	*	9	*	
Tanning	*	2	*	
WOOD INDUSTRY	*	13	*	29
BUILDING INDUSTRY	*	8	*	25
PRINTING AND PUBLISHING	*	17	*	24
CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES				22
Matches	*	4	*	
Glass Products	*	3	*	
Soap	*	6	*	
ALUMINIUM, IRON & STEEL	*	11@	*	14@
TOTAL		161		273

@ Small factories included  
+ Small factories excluded  
∕ Proposed

Source: The Ministry of Industry, Sudan.  
Ethiopia Statistical Abstract 1966.

demands of local markets, partly in response to the need for the processing of local raw materials and agricultural products and partly to solve the problems of regional unemployment. The overlap of industrial projects and the duplication of the same products in the two adjacent countries will not be solved soon because of the difficulties of the physical barriers discussed above. However, a limited interchange of manufactured materials between frontier peoples on both sides of the boundary is possible mainly in light products which could be easily transported.

The establishment of national industry protected by high tariffs is always based on economic nationalism and other political and social factors rather than purely economic grounds. Markets in both countries, as well as in many 'under-developed' countries, are not large enough, and often with very limited purchasing power, to support a large variety of manufactured products. In the past years there has been very little move towards any form of a common market or a joint co-ordination between the two states to overcome the mentioned difficulties. In this respect the recent attempts by the Sudan to join an Arab Common Market for the economic integration between U.A.R., Libya and Syria, if achieved, will weaken or rather even put an end to the little trade and commerce existing between Ethiopia and Sudan.

When one examines the development of modern transport and communication in both Sudan and Ethiopia (see Fig. 48), whether rail, road or aviation, one cannot fail to see that the principal routes are from the centres of production in each country to the sea ports. Others connect the areas of production to the main towns in each state which are also the principal areas of consumption inside the country. The pattern of these routes highlights the orientation of the colonial and 'Condominium' period, they served to move the flow of people and goods to and from

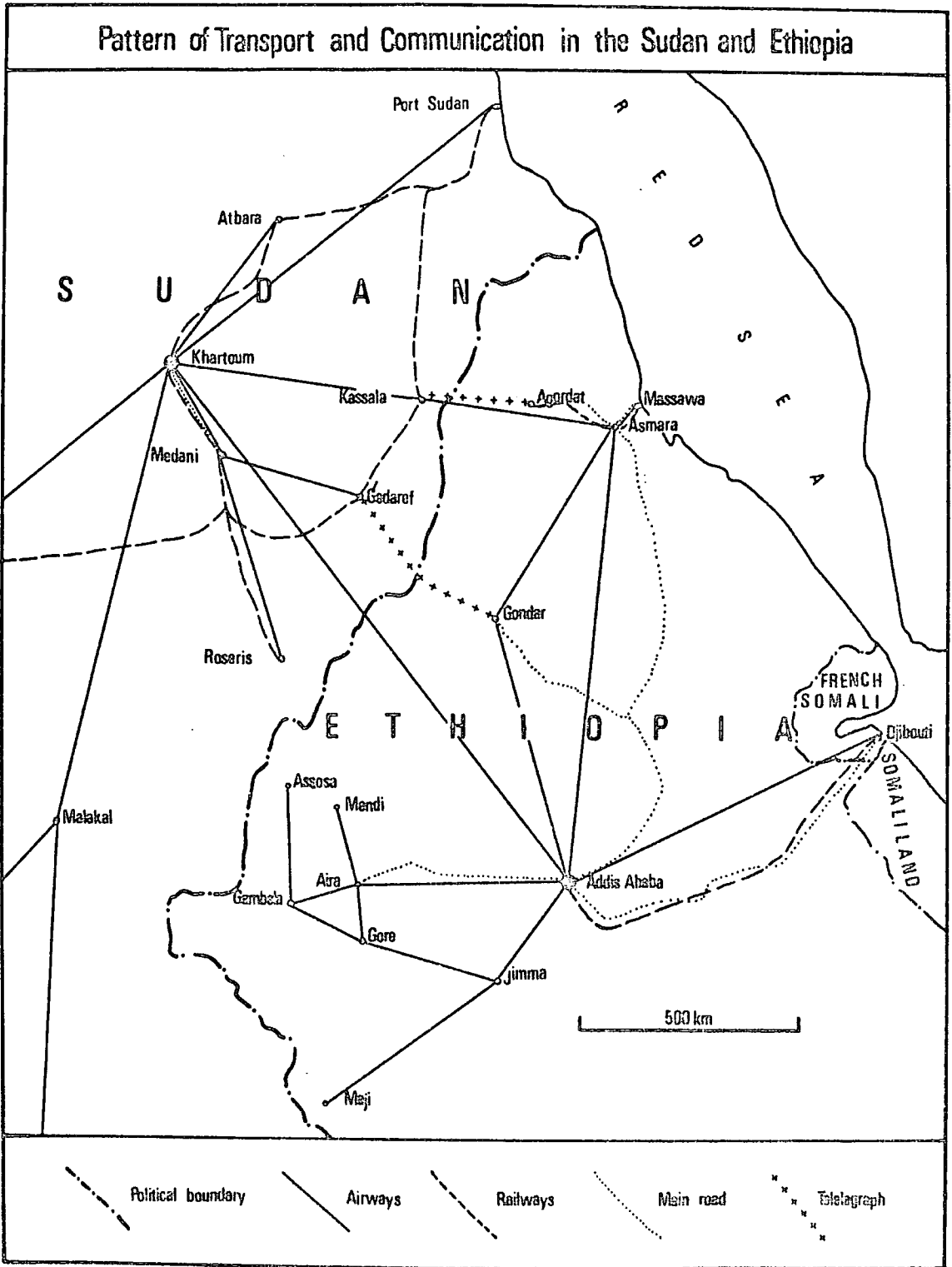


FIG. 48

Europe and the other outside world. Even at the present time, except for an air connection between Addis Ababa and Khartoum and another through Asmara and Kassala to Khartoum, together with a minor road between Asmara and Kassala, the main routeways in both countries are orientated to the coast.

Second, and related to the first, the persistence of the pattern of communications brought about by physical, historical and political factors has been considerably related to the uneven development within the two countries and the location of the core areas<sup>12</sup> in each of them (see Fig. 49). In the Sudan the core area is around the region of the Gezera with a growing tendency of expansion eastwards to the Gedaref rainlands, Kashim el Girba, the upper Blue Nile region of the Kenana and the Rahad river schemes. In spite of the expansion of Sudan's core areas towards the political boundary under study, however, any positive effects of Sudan's areas of production on the trade with Ethiopia are very limited and will continue to be marginal for a long time because of the difficulties of communications between the two countries. In Ethiopia the major producing areas are away from the political boundary under consideration, mainly on the Woyna Dega with a growing tendency to move even more to the east towards the coast. This may be emphasized by the importance recently given to the development of the Awash valley as well as the increasing plans to turn the economic face of Ethiopia to the sea rather than to the interior.

Neither the Sudan nor Ethiopia has as yet developed an economy substantially concerned with mineral production and whatever the small production of Mica in Sudan and Manganese in Ethiopia, are exported to the non-African markets at present. Their production does not in any

# Location of Core Areas in the Sudan and Ethiopia

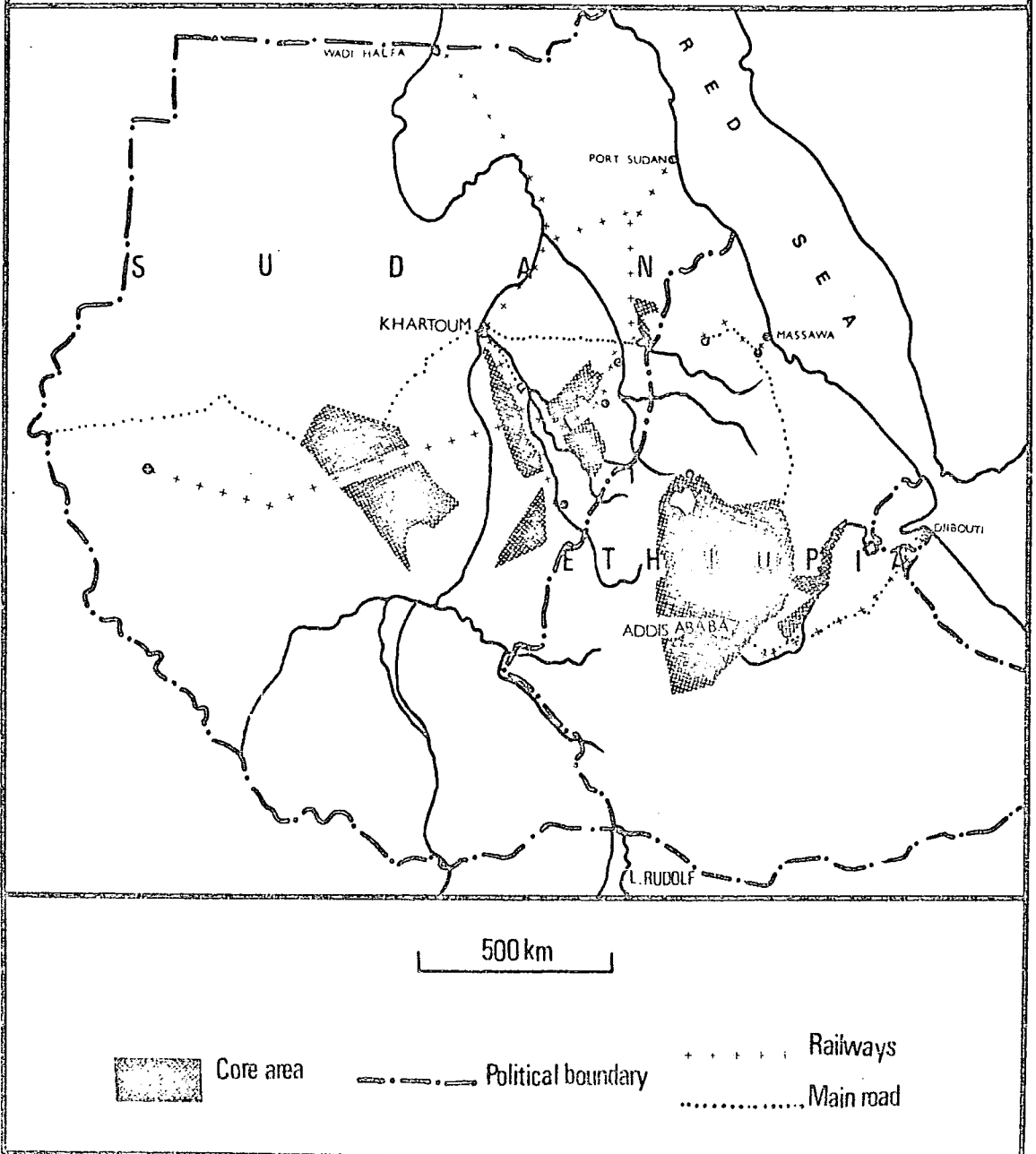


FIG.49

way affect the location of the core areas, nor have they been a basis of any trading link with one another.

Apart from the above mentioned factors acting as barriers of trade and commerce between Ethiopia and Sudan, one important obstacle to the flow of trade (even in the case of the existing limited scale) is the actual process of getting goods from one side of the political boundary to the other. In this respect the political boundary provides a considerable amount of difficulties which involve much expense and time in filling forms, acquiring licences and travelling documents. As in several African countries, the problem is more complicated with corruption and low levels of efficiency at the customs and other frontier control posts. Also the political boundary itself makes a division between two different languages, Amharic versus Arabic, and the boundary officials on both sides of the political line have to depend on interpreters or rely on English as a means of communication.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ILLEGAL TRADE (SMUGGLING)

Even long before the establishment of any political boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia, there was a considerable amount of smuggling across the undefined frontiers. This was at its climax at the end of the last century, the main commodities being slaves and firearms. It was a two way traffic, the former commodity being smuggled from the Sudan and the latter from Ethiopia.

As regards to the slave trade, the Egyptian authorities in the Sudan had since the 1870's declared slavery and slave trade illegal, under the pressure of Britain, and the long established slave route through the Nile to Egypt and through Suakin to Arabia were abandoned. Once these routes were closed to the slave dealers, Ethiopian and Eritrean

ports (though loosely under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire) provided an alternative passage to the slave markets of Arabia. The Rashaida tribe in north eastern Sudan acted as transporters and mediators in the slave smuggling business, between slave dealers in the Sudan and their agents in Ethiopia and Eritrea. On their way back from Eritrea and Ethiopia, the Rashaida smuggled firearms and gunpowder into the Sudan. Although slave smuggling gradually came to an end soon after the establishment of the political boundaries, dealings in firearms continued for a long time after that. It only temporarily ceased in the period between the Second World War and 1955, partly because of the super measures of security imposed upon the Anglo-Italian borders, and partly because there was no demand for firearms in the Sudan. At present, the firearms smuggling across the political boundary under study is a very profitable business because of the continuous and ever increasing demands of the 'national liberation movements' existing on both sides of the political boundary.

Prior to the demarcation of the political boundary between Sudan and Ethiopia, apart from slaves and firearms which were contraband goods, there were no high import or export duties between the two countries. After the establishment of the political boundary, however, smuggling became an important retarding factor in the economic development of the two countries under question. Because both Ethiopia and Sudan largely depend on the revenues of customs duties, smuggling across the common boundary has always been regarded as extremely serious. Today, there is a highly organized smuggling of a considerable volume operating in a two-way movement between the two countries. Which way is more serious cannot possibly be given because there are no figures to examine the exact size of illegal trade, but certainly its effects on the economic

life of the Sudan is considerable, as it will be seen later in this chapter.

#### MAIN CAUSES OF SMUGGLING

There are a number of reasons that help the development of illegal trade across the political boundary under consideration:

- (i) the fact that both Sudan and Ethiopia largely depend on the revenues of customs dues has led to higher differential tariffs and values given to goods on either side of the boundary;
- (ii) some agricultural products produced in one country are highly demanded in the other while there is no legal trade of any considerable size in such products. For example, cotton and dürra are demanded in Ethiopia while the Ethiopian coffee is highly valued in the Sudan. No trade in these three commodities is allowed between the two countries through the common political boundary;
- (iii) the political boundary between the two states is so large (2,220 km) that any effective control of illegal trade can never be possible with the extremely limited customs and other frontier control posts, sometimes at 100 kilometres apart from each other (see Fig. 39), and often located in points away from the boundary. This is the more so if one considers the very difficult physical conditions in the frontier area under consideration and the lack of adequate means of communication to control the innumerable roads, tracks and footpaths leading to and from Ethiopia;
- (iv) a number of the frontier settlements on either side of the

political boundary such as Mattema, Um Hagar, Guessan, Tasseni and Gambela in Ethiopia, and Kurmuk, Akobo, Basunda and Gallabat in Sudan, traditionally depended on the inter-boundary trade whether legal or illegal. Such being the case, and in the absence of legal trade because of high tariffs and customs dues, officials on both sides of the boundary are generally lenient in dealing with illegal trade. According to a former Sudanese commander of police who served in Kassala and Blue Nile provinces (both adjacent to the political boundary under question) the Ethiopian petty traders usually avoid Ethiopian customs posts when they cross the boundary to the Sudan but generally report at the Sudanese frontier control posts. He attributed the reasons partly to the high tariffs imposed by Ethiopia on goods exported to Sudan and partly to the fact that the Sudanese frontier control officials are often flexible with the Ethiopian traders because of the dependence of the border people in the Sudan on the cross frontier local trade;

- (v) finally, a considerable amount of smuggling is undertaken through the customs posts in both countries because of the corruption and nepotism of customs officers. The customs posts being isolated from the centre of the states and being away from any supervision or check for long periods, the customs officers seem to know and keep friendships with lorry drivers, caravan leaders and petty traders who are also the main smugglers. Thus, according to a Sudanese frontier control officer, the smugglers are caught only when they either become very unco-operative with customs officers or when the customs officers are newcomers to the frontier posts.

SMUGGLED GOODS

The smuggled goods could be divided into three main categories:

- (1) cotton, durra and coffee
- (2) currency and jewellery
- (3) other goods

1. Cotton, coffee and durra

Although the price of cotton in the Sudan is four times greater than that paid by the Ethiopian traders, yet cotton is still smuggled from the Sudan into Ethiopia and few Sudanese smugglers attempt to buy the Ethiopian cotton because it is sold in such small quantities that it is not worth handling. Cotton smuggled from the Sudan is usually stolen from the Sudanese private cotton growing schemes, as well as the Government cotton development schemes in Khashm el Girba, Tokar Delta and Baraka. A number of peasants, workers and tribesmen in these areas take part in the cotton smuggling business. Therefore, because cotton is not initially bought from the Sudan markets the price of smuggled cotton is always lower in Ethiopian markets than in the Sudan. The effect of smuggled cotton on the Eritrean economy is so great that a number of small cotton manufacturing industries are established close to the international boundary even though there are no considerable cotton plantation schemes in these parts to feed the cotton industry. Such factories are themselves often owned by the chief promoters of organized cotton smuggling.

As for durra, the smugglers usually purchase the Sudanese currency in the black markets of Asmara to buy durra from the producing areas in Gedaref and Kassala. It is then carried to the Sudanese villages close to the political boundary and then eventually smuggled into Ethiopia. Durra is not profitable as cotton and its inflation often causes a sharp fall in the value of the Sudanese pound in Asmara

market either in times when durra production is high in Ethiopia or when the amount of smuggled Sudanese durra is greater than the demand of the markets. However, over the past five years (1966-1971) the effects of organized durra smuggling was so great that the Sudan had to import it from other durra producing countries.<sup>13</sup>

Coffee is the most important product smuggled from Ethiopia into Sudan. The principal cause being the prohibition of coffee importation through Kassala and the abandonment of Gallabat and Gambela frontier trading centres by Sudan. Prior to such measures on the part of the Sudan, Ethiopian coffee used to be imported to the Sudan through Gambela at a considerably low cost. Partly because of Ethiopian high tariffs on Sudan goods and partly because of the comparatively cheaper prices of coffee in the world market the Sudan decided to abandon its two trading posts at Gallabat in 1946 and Gambela in 1962 and banned the import of coffee from Ethiopia through the existing frontier post at Kassala. As a result, a profitable market for the Ethiopian coffee has been created in the Sudan and large amounts of Ethiopian coffee are annually smuggled across the political boundary (see Table 16).

## 2. Jewellery and Currency

Before self rule there were two currencies recognized in the Sudan, English and Egyptian. When the country became independent in 1956 a new Sudanese currency was circulated and the Egyptian bank notes already in circulation were to be changed to the new Sudanese ones. During this period began the smuggling of Egyptian bank notes which were purchased at 8/- (40 pt.) a pound in Aden and Asmara to be changed for the Sudanese pound at 20/- (100 pt.). At the end of the allotted time for the change of currency from Egyptian money to Sudanese, thousands of Sudanese pounds were again smuggled out of the country to the free

TABLE 16 ESTIMATE OF GOODS SMUGGLED ACROSS THE ETHIOPIA-SUDAN BOUNDARY FOR THE YEAR 1966-7

GOODS SMUGGLED FROM SUDAN TO ETHIOPIA				GOODS SMUGGLED FROM ETHIOPIA TO SUDAN					
Item	Quantity	Unit	Value of Unit	Total Value	Item	Quantity	Unit	Value of Unit	Total value
Cotton	1,200	Bales*	LS8	9,600	Coffee	5,000	Sacks	LS15	75,000
Durra	15,000	Sacks	LS1 15pt	22,500	Toilet Soap (Life Buoy)	25,000	Pieces	5pt	1,250
Kerosene	6,200	Gallons	11pt	715	Watches	5,000	Pieces	LS 4-10	2,000
Cooking Oils	6,200	Gallons	15pt	930	Nylon Clothes	10,000	Metres	10pt	1,000
Clothes (mainly cotton)	20,000	Metres	3pt	600	Cigarettes	300,000	Cigarettes	½pt	1,500
Other Items (mainly opium)	?	?	?	1,200	Sheep & Goats	1,200	Heads	LS 3	36,000
					Other items	?	?	?	1,200
TOTAL	-	-	-	35,545	TOTAL	-	-	-	117,950

Source: The Commander of Police, Kassala Province

\* 45.36 kilograms

∅ 17 kilograms

pt 1/100th of a Sudanese pound

markets in Asmara and Aden to be transferred into sterling and dollars. This business continued for a long time, until 1961, when new currency regulations were adopted by the Sudan and put an end to the illegal movement of currency across the political boundaries. At present the smuggling in currency does exist but on a limited scale. Two ways are worth mentioning, first through smuggling coffee into the Sudan and receiving its costs in Eritrea in Sudanese currency, and second, by smuggling Sudanese bank notes (mainly of L.S.5 and L.S.10 notes) and selling them in the black markets of Asmara and the free market in Aden.

As regards to jewellery, it is mainly smuggled from the Sudan to Ethiopia by Ethiopian females who cross the political boundary from time to time to gain money from prostitution in the Sudanese urban centres. Because such movement is illegal and the people concerned have no legal permits they cannot transfer their money, which they earn in the Sudan, to Ethiopia through legal means. So they often purchase large amounts of jewellery, mainly of gold, from the Sudan and take it to Ethiopia as personal belongings to be sold in Asmara, Addis Ababa and other Ethiopian towns. An Ethiopian female, for example, can stay in the Sudan for ten years during which she makes between 5-10 illegal crossings across the political boundary and smuggles between 100-300 Sudanese pounds worth of gold in each journey, depending on her period of stay in the Sudan and the amount of money she gains.

### 3. Other Smuggled Goods

Apart from (1) and (2) there is a small scale but intensive smuggling across the boundary under consideration in manufactured and imported goods. Cotton thread, cotton cloth and opium are smuggled from the Sudan to Ethiopia. From Ethiopia, toilet soap (mainly Lifebuoy),

American and Ethiopian cigarettes, British razor blades and American ready made clothes and various other goods are smuggled into the Sudan. Also small but valuable goods such as expensive watches, records, record players and tape recorders of Swiss, West German and Japanese make are smuggled into the Sudan.

Recently, there has been a two way movement of firearms, which are contraband in both countries, across the political boundary. From the Sudan, Russian, Chinese and East German firearms are smuggled to the 'Eritrean Liberation Front'. From Ethiopia, American, West German and Israeli firearms are smuggled to the 'Southern Sudan Liberation Front'. In this respect the shifita leaders who also take an active part in the cross-boundary smuggling play an intermediary role in handling firearms to the different sides involved in the business.

Moreover, since 1967 there have been reports that certain foods provided by the F.A.O. and the U.N.H.C.R. to the Eritrean refugees in Sudan are being largely smuggled to the Ethiopian markets. Such items as sultanas, dried fish, sardine and dried milk have been identified.

#### MAIN ZONES OF SMUGGLING AND THE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION OF SMUGGLED GOODS

Fig. 50 shows the main zones of smuggling in the area under consideration. In the Sudan there are three major smuggling zones:

- (i) an area extending to the south and north of Kassala town;
- (ii) the area lying between the two customs posts of Basunda and Kurmuk;
- (iii) the area extending along the Red Sea coast from Ras Kassar to the north of Suakin port.

# Smuggling Zones Along the Political Boundary and Destination of Smugglers in Sudan

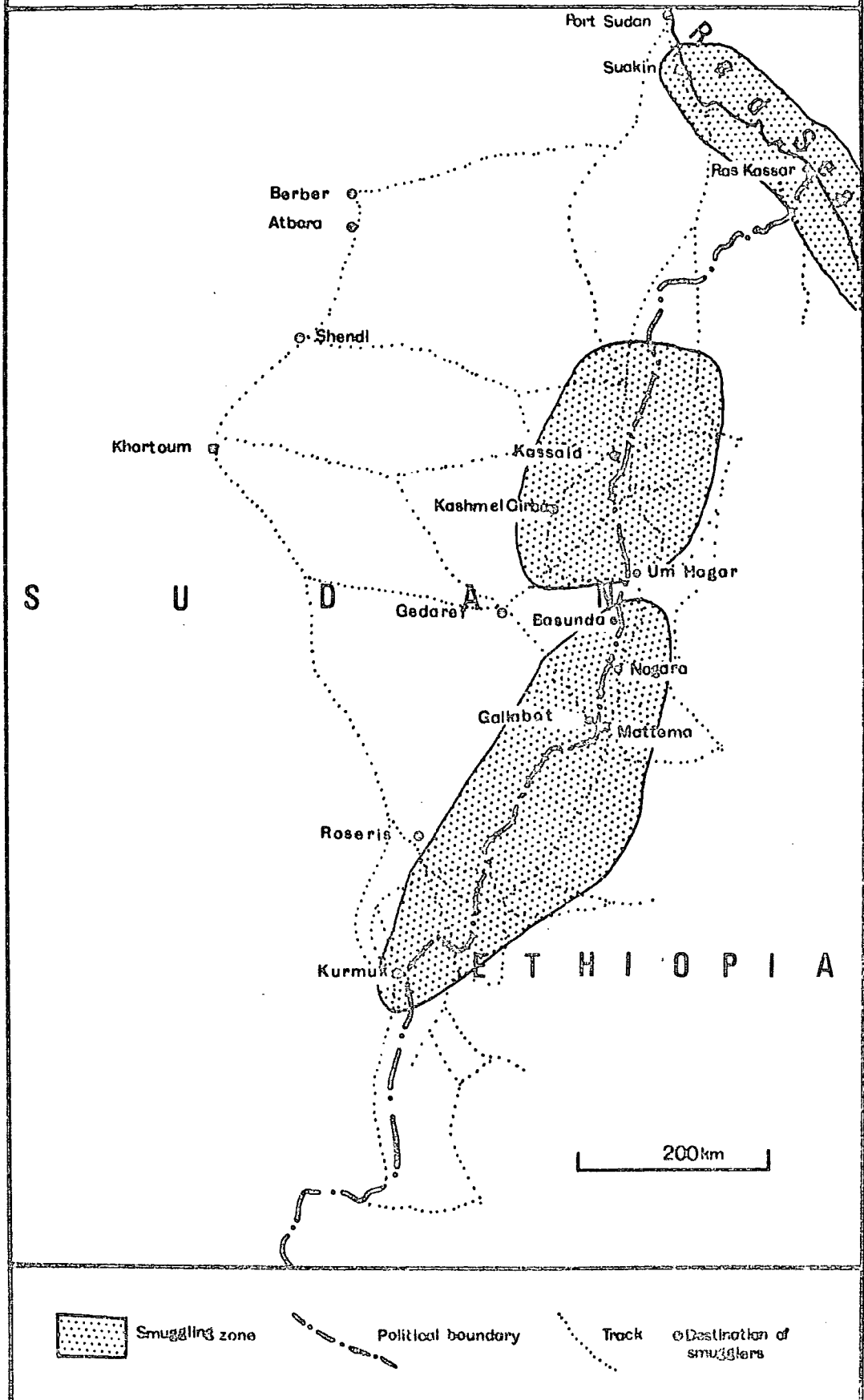


FIG. 50

It can be seen in these three zones that there is only one main road across the political boundary while there are innumerable tracks and footpaths mainly used by smugglers. Unlike the legal trade which follows the main routes from Eritrea to Kassala and from Gondar to Kurmuk, the pattern of smuggling has developed along pre-boundary trade routes and seasonal tracks.

In the case of cotton, durra, and coffee the means of transportation is either by lorries or animal backs such as camels, mules and donkeys. When lorries are used the smuggled goods are first transported to a number of frontier villages on either side of the political boundary and stored there until they are eventually transported to the final destination areas of consumption.

Cotton is usually smuggled from Kashm el Girba, Gash and Baraka schemes through the rough tracks of Shallalop, Girgir and other frontier villages, then on to Eritrea. Durra, clothes, cooking oils and Kerosene are usually smuggled by lorries from Kassala and Gedaref to the frontier villages of Awad, Gulsa, Abu Gamal, El Luga, Wad Sharifi, Doka and Basunda; or from Gedaref to the frontier villages of Haḵoma, Wad Koli and Mattema. In the same way, sugar, nylon, coffee and imported toilet soap are smuggled into the Sudan.

In the southern part of the political boundary along the Sobat, the Baro and the Akobo rivers there is a one way movement, mainly from Gambela to Sudan. It is a limited and a non-organized smuggling. The means of transportation are canoes and animal backs.

The smuggling in the far north along the Red Sea coast is mainly undertaken by regular fishermen and sailors who handle smuggled goods from Sudan to Ethiopia and vice versa. They often take refuge

in the small coastal islands along the Red Sea. A number of these fishermen also take part in transporting smuggled goods from Saudi Arabia to Sudan and from the former to Ethiopia. British made cigarettes, Swiss watches, currency and various other kinds of goods are among the smuggled items.

The effect of smuggling on the economic and social life of the frontier villages is considerable. For instance, in a number of border villages along the Sudan side of the boundary, it was found that the number of traders (those who own trading licences) constituted more than 20 per cent of the total population of the village. In 1967, for example, the population of Basunda village was some 200 persons, of whom 43 were reported to be traders. By possessing trade licences, people who can legally claim themselves to be traders or merchants, can store large amounts of coffee, durra and wax to be eventually smuggled to and fro across the political boundary. Most of them are a part of a highly organized smuggling body.

An extraordinary smuggling is undertaken from time to time by foot, animal backs, lorries or by a combination of all these means in a single way movement from Ethiopia into Sudan. This is the illegal movement of Ethiopian females to the various urban centres in Sudan. An Ethiopian female who wishes to cross the political boundary to Sudan usually begins her journey from Eritrea or Ethiopia by buses and lorries into the frontier towns and villages on the Ethiopian side of the international boundary. She then crosses the political boundary by animal back or on foot disguised as a Sudanese local woman. Once on the Sudan side of the boundary she can take several means of transportation to Kassala, Gedaref and Kashm el Girba towns where she concentrates upon learning as much Arabic as possible and then finds

her way to the larger towns in Wadi Medni, Khartoum, Umdorman and Port Sudan.

Another type of smuggling but in a small scale is undertaken by the frontier control officers on both sides of the boundary. Often goods ranging from expensive watches and tape recorders to jewellery and motor cars are exchanged between the Sudanese and Ethiopian officials without customs dues.

#### SIZE OF SMUGGLING AND DESTINATION OF SMUGGLED GOODS

By its very nature the smuggling is very little documented and its accurate size cannot be measured. However, because the smuggling across the boundary is so very well organized that it involves a number of Government officials, traders, tribal leaders and lorry drivers, very few smugglers are caught at the customs control posts. In a sample year 1966-1967 about 619 cases were reported in the province of Kassala. According to the commander of police in Kassala, the reported cases were only a very small part of the total volume of smuggling. In Table 16 a rough estimate is given.

Except for the Red Sea coastal zone, smuggling between the two countries is a seasonal occupation. In the rainy season many tracks cannot be used and in the central area nearly all the rivers flood large areas and any east-west movement is completely cut off. Such a situation applies to legal trade as well. Rains and floods are often a major factor in slowing down smuggling.

As regards to the destination of the smuggled goods, any precise knowledge is almost impossible with the present available information. However, Table 17 was constructed from a market survey from December 1967 to June 1968 with the help of a number of police officers in ten

TABLE 17 THE DESTINATION OF GOODS SMUGGLED FROM  
ETHIOPIA, AND THE DESTINATION OF ETHIOPIAN  
PROSTITUTES TO THE SUDAN

SELECTED TOWNS	LIFEBUOY SOAP	ETHIOPIAN CURRENCY	AMERICAN CIGARETTES	ISREALI SWEETS	ETHIOPIAN PROSTITUTES
Kassala	*	*	*	*	*
Port Sudan	*	*	*	*	*
Gedaref	*	*	*	*	*
Kashm El Girba	*	*	*	-	*
Shendi	*	-	-	-	*
Atbara	*	-	-	-	*
Khartoum	*	-	-	-	*
Berber	*	-	-	-	-
Obeid	-	-	-	-	-
Nyala	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Market Survey from Dec. 1967 to June 1968

(See Fig. 50 )

selected towns. The aim of the survey was to trace the availability of certain Ethiopian goods in the selected Sudanese towns. A xerox copy of Table 17 was sent to a police officer in each of the ten towns in early November with instructions to start observing the markets from early December 1967 up to the end of June 1968. They were asked to make a tick against each item specified in the table provided whenever the item was seen being sold or used. These items were Lifebuoy soap, Ethiopian currency, American cigarettes and Israeli sweets, all of which are not allowed to be imported to the Sudan. Ethiopia was the most probable country from or through which the selected items could be

smuggled into the Sudan. The police officers concerned were also asked to make a tick against the towns in which there were Ethiopian prostitutes.

From Table 17 it can be assumed that the destination of the selected goods (soap, sweets and cigarettes), as well as Ethiopian females is mainly in the urban centres near to the political boundary under consideration, for example, Kassala, Port Sudan, Kashm el Girba and Gedaref. Some smuggled goods were also found in towns lying on the main routes leading to the frontier, such as Shendi and Atbara (see Fig. 50).

Although Ethiopian coffee and honey are also smuggled into the Sudan in a considerable scale, there is no possible way of an adequate market survey to find out their size and destination. Coffee is legally imported by Sudan from Ethiopia through Port Sudan and there is no difference between honey locally produced in the Sudan and that smuggled from Ethiopia. However, it could be observed that, in the principal coffee markets in the Sudan, Ethiopian coffee prices are often in a state of variation while prices of coffee imported from other parts of the world keep fairly consistent prices.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

There are two main aspects of the contemporary Ethiopia-Sudan boundary problems. The first concerns the delimitation and demarcation of the boundary itself. The second brings in a number of other conflicts, generally of a political nature, which may in themselves be unrelated to the boundary and its demarcation, but contribute to the non-settlement of the boundary dispute. Therefore, for the purpose of this work, the problems under consideration are divided into three distinctive categories:

- (1) - a territorial dispute, that is a dispute over the ownership of a certain territory;
- (2) - a positional dispute, that is problems dealing with the actual location of the political boundary in regard to its allocation, delimitation and demarcation;
- (3) - a functional dispute, that is problems arising from the application of state functions at the political boundary.

#### 1. Territorial Disputes

Territorial and positional problems of the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary arise partly from bad relations between the two Governments, partly because the atmosphere has already been poisoned for a boundary dispute to flourish and partly because in Ethiopian foreign policy towards its neighbours, boundary problems are raised to improve its bargaining position with regard to other disputes. Indeed, as Professor Zartman pointed out in an address to a seminar on 'African Boundary Problems' held at Uppsala University in 1968,

"Any African state can have boundary problems if it wants

(for) boundary problems are policy problems. A Government decides whether it wants to claim the neighbouring territory, and then decides how to pursue its goals".<sup>1</sup>

The area under dispute is about 1,760 square kilometres lying astride the political boundary between the River Setit to the north and the River Atbara to the south (Fig. 51). It is divided into two sections by Bhir es Salam river: Fashaga El Kabir (big Fashaga) and Fashaga El Sagir (small Fashaga).

Although in 1931, 1938 and 1956 there had been several minor boundary problems reported in the area under consideration, yet there have not been territorial disputes or claims of such large areas. The first claim of this sort was first raised by Ethiopia in 1965 when the relations between the two countries became strained. Later in the same year, a large number of Ethiopian farmers and Ethiopian armed forces advanced into Fashaga El Kabir. They were assisted by large agricultural machinery provided by the Ethiopian Government. Far more serious, as they advanced into the disputed area they confiscated more Sudanese farms while the Ethiopian soldiers warned the Sudanese tribal chiefs that from then (1965) Ethiopia was determined to regain her 'ancient boundaries which extended to the Nile'. They indicated that no taxes should be paid to the Sudanese local authorities because an Ethiopian officer would be responsible for collecting taxes on behalf of the Ethiopian Emperor. But for reasons not yet disclosed, the Ethiopian soldiers did not remain very long in the occupied area and retreated behind the existing political boundary leaving the farmers to carry on in their newly occupied farms.

No immediate military counter action was taken by the Sudan

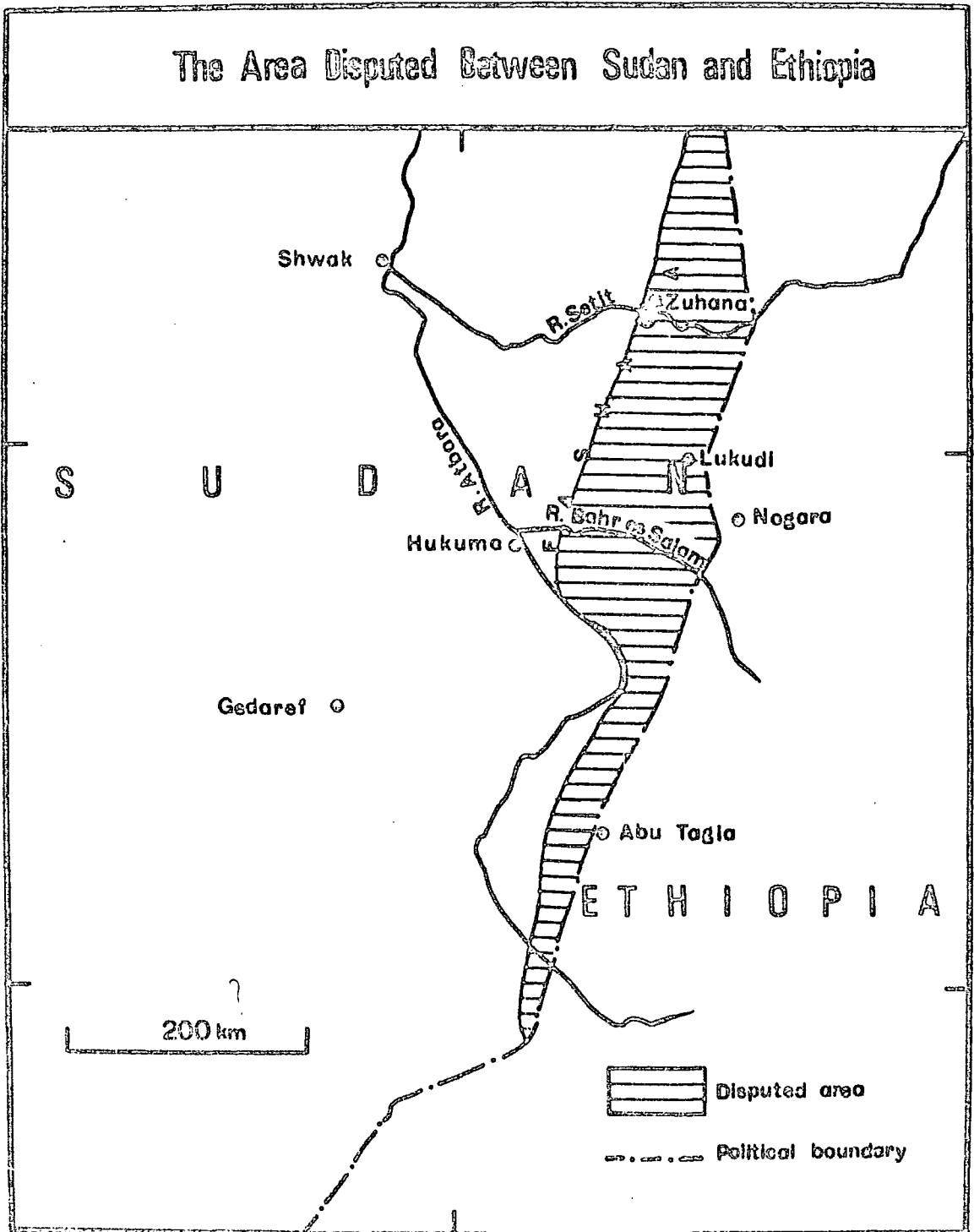


FIG.51

Government in spite of the popular demand in the Sudan for such a step, Instead, a strong protest was addressed to the Ethiopian Government to withdraw its nationals from the areas they had recently occupied. It appears that the Ethiopian Government's attitude was to leave its nationals to continue in the disputed area and work to negotiate a settlement. However, by the time the Ethiopian crops were harvested and ready to be transported into Ethiopia, the Sudanese authorities confiscated the harvest, all the agricultural machinery and a large number of lorries and large vehicles. Ethiopian farmers were arrested and convicted under the act of customs violations, illegal entry into the Sudan and work without permission. Subsequently, an Ethiopian high level delegation led by the Minister of National Defence was sent to Khartoum. As expected, the negotiations only resulted in a vague communique in which it was stated "the two parties reaffirmed their desire to respect and recognize the status quo along the common frontier without prejudice to the treaty and protocol rights of either party".<sup>2</sup> Farmers from both countries were allowed to farm in the disputed area as they used to do in pre-boundary periods until a final political boundary could be redemarcated or renovated as the case may be. Even this vague arrangement later became the subject of more serious disputes since the real cause behind the Ethiopian intrusion in the area under consideration was not a territorial hunger. This is not, of course, to claim that the farmers involved in the dispute were not interested in land. On the contrary they were very happy to acquire large farms and farm machinery, considerable subsidies and protection from their Government. It appears, however, that they were not very sure of the real intentions of their Government behind the evolution of events. There are apparently three relevant causes to explain the real Ethiopian

motives in raising territorial claims on this area. First, the Ethiopian Government deliberately attempted to create a sort of problem whereby it could exert enough pressure on the Sudan Government and extract concessions from it on other matters hardly related to the location of the boundary, i.e. the Sudan was to ban anti-Ethiopian propaganda in the country and deport the members of the E.L.F. from Kassala town. Second, and closely related to the first, to force the Sudan Government to take the initiative in opening negotiations on the boundary problems in which Ethiopia, having improved its bargaining position, was ready to make compromises and concessions if the Sudan was ready to suppress the E.L.F. and ban the anti-Ethiopian propaganda in the country. Finally a number of wealthy Ethiopian farmers in western Ethiopia rightly or wrongly believed that the Sudanese farmers in the disputed area had become rich. So, certain nationalized Ethiopians of Sudanese origin sponsored by the Ethiopian Government and some wealthy Ethiopians took the liberty to enter the Sudan and cultivate the territory under consideration.

The timing of the Ethiopian territorial claims is also important. Between 1964-1967, just after the collapse of the military regime in the Sudan, the whole country was internally fragmented, partly because of the struggle for power and partly because of the situation in the southern Sudan. It is also important to remember that although Ethiopia has for a very long period enjoyed a stable rule under the present regime, there have been very great inconveniences and considerable dissatisfaction among its youth. Eritreans in the north, the Gala and the Somalis in the south as well as the numerous Muslim pockets all through the Empire have always been dissatisfied with the domination of the Amhara tribe. Therefore, to divert the attention of its own people

from the various domestic problems, the Ethiopian Government was perhaps willing to seek scapegoats in an external enemy, in this case the Sudan.

The Sudan Government, being uncertain of the real motives of Ethiopia, took the initiative to convene a Joint Consultative Committee of Ministers (hereafter J.C.C.M.) in an attempt to finalize the territorial dispute. In the first meeting, the Ethiopians refused to recognize the Sudan's title on the area under dispute and decided to stretch the meaning of the term status quo which was previously agreed to be preserved in the area. Also to prolong the discussions and perhaps to lead the meeting into deadlock, the Ethiopians introduced a new element into the existing question when they argued that the whole situation on the existing boundary was fluid and that the boundary was not fixed. In the meantime (1965-66) the Ethiopian plan was to smuggle into the disputed area as many Ethiopians as possible to make good their claim upon it. This was not acceptable to the Sudanese, who were determined to forestall the Ethiopian attempts to make any new settlements in the frontier area in general and around the Fashaga in particular. For instance, in 1967 an Ethiopian attempt to invade the disputed area was held back and a number of Ethiopian farmers in the Fashaga were arrested and convicted. They were later released on the understanding of the Ethiopian Government that nominal agricultural tax be paid to the Sudanese local authorities if any Ethiopians wished to cultivate land in the areas held by the Sudan since the day of independence. Later the Ethiopians argued that this last arrangement was, in their view, temporary and refused to accept the actions of the Sudanese authorities on the grounds that the agreed status quo was being violated by the Sudan. The main argument behind the preservation of the status quo, from the Ethiopian point of view, being that if and when the dispute is brought before international arbitration the term 'status quo' could be defined in their favour. That is to say

it could mean the existing conditions in the disputed area at the time of such arbitration during which Ethiopia hoped to build as many settlements as possible in the whole region.

The Sudanese admit that the status quo was not defined in the controversial agreement, but they argue that they were alive to the fact that both contracting parties were bound by the Charter of the O.A.U. which gives a precise meaning to the term Status quo as regards to the political boundaries of Africa. 'Status quo on the borders constitutes a tangible reality on the day of independence'.

## 2. Positional Disputes

In Chapter Five the boundary under consideration has been divided into three main parts, each part being in turn sub-divided into a number of sections according to the pattern of the boundary evolution in each of them. The present positional dispute is directly related to the evolution of the boundary and the complications that followed its delimitation and demarcation, therefore, the same divisions and sub-divisions are also adopted in this chapter.

SECTION A. From Ras Kassar to River Setit (see Fig. 52): In this section, the disputed area is that between Abu Gamal and River Setit. Originally, three countries, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea were involved and as a result four boundary agreements were concluded.<sup>3</sup> First, the Ethio-Italian Treaty of 10th July, 1900 in which it was agreed to recognize the line Tomat-Todluk-Maieteb-Muna as a boundary between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Second, a part of the same line was delimited as a boundary between Sudan and Eritrea by the Anglo-Italian frontier treaties of 16th April and 26th November, 1901. Thus it was arranged that a line should be drawn from Abu Gamal in a southerly direction up to the junction of

Khor Um Hagar with River Setit. Accordingly, it was provided that (a) the territory to the south of Abu Gamal Setit line (which has been recognized by Ethiopia as a Sudanese ground)<sup>4</sup> be transferred to Eritrea subject to the consent of the Ethiopian Emperor, (b) the parallelogram west of the same line and north of the Tomat-Todluk line be ceded by Eritrea to Sudan. Third, in an Annex treaty attached to the Anglo-Ethiopian boundary agreement of 15th May, 1902 it was agreed by the three countries that the Tomat-Todluk line should be modified to commence from the junction of Khor Um Hagar with the River Setit and follow the latter to its junction with Khor Maieteb.<sup>5</sup>

The crux of the problem is that the Ethiopians are not happy with the Anglo-Italian Treaty of 16th April, 1901. They believe that the delimitation of the Political boundary as shown on the treaty map does not coincide with the demarcated boundary. Also they argue that the treaty under question contradicts the Anglo-Italian Treaty of July, 1900 for it makes the same Tomat-Todluk line as the boundary between Sudan and Eritrea as well as the boundary between Ethiopia and Eritrea. So, the delimitation of boundary beyond Tomat (as provided by the Treaty of 16th April, 1901) must be disregarded, say the Ethiopians, for the disputed line has never been demarcated.

The Sudan admits that the boundary under dispute was not demarcated, but argues that the two terminals of the line under question were undoubtedly set up by a joint commission. Even if there is a discrepancy between the map and the text, according to the Sudanese point of view, the latter should rule as the former was not an integral part of the treaty.

According to the Ethiopian argument, the Abu Gamal-Setit line

(mentioned in the Treaty of 1901) is only a directional line and not a real boundary, so it must be terminated at its intersection with the Tomat-Todluk line (to which the Ethiopians give the name of 'Um Brega Intersection'). Thus from the so-called 'Um Brega Intersection' the Abu Gamal-Setit line ceases to be a boundary for there is no evidence to believe that the Annex Treaty of 1902 had abrogated the Treaty of November, 1901. Granting these arguments, the Ethiopians claim that the territory to the south of Tomat-Todluk line must be Ethiopian.

To the Sudanese argument, the whole point of the Annex Treaty of 1902 was to remove all the discrepancies that previously prevailed by the Treaty of November 1901 which was unworkable. As to the Ethiopian argument that the Treaty of November 1901 was not abrogated by the Annex Treaty of 1902, the Sudanese reply that "although the Annex Treaty did not clearly state that the former one was abrogated, yet the inconsistency of the earlier treaty with the latter is obvious".<sup>6</sup> By this argument the Sudanese hoped to bring the sanction of international law that "Termination is, however, most frequently implied simply from the fact that the Parties have entered into a later treaty, the terms of which are such that one can only assume upon comparing the two treaties that they intend to terminate the earlier one".<sup>7</sup> The Sudanese do not accept the Ethiopian argument that the Abu Gamal-Setit line ends at the intersection with the Tomat-Todluk line, for such an intersection was not mentioned in the treaty, was never called 'Um Brega Intersection' and does not exist in reality. The Um Brega mentioned in the boundary treaties is located on the River Setit and the Abu Gamal-Setit line could not have ended anywhere else except at River Setit. Therefore, the Ethiopian point of view that the Abu Gamal-Setit was only a directional line is, according to the Sudanese assessment, a contradiction since the two terminals of the line are defined in the treaty.

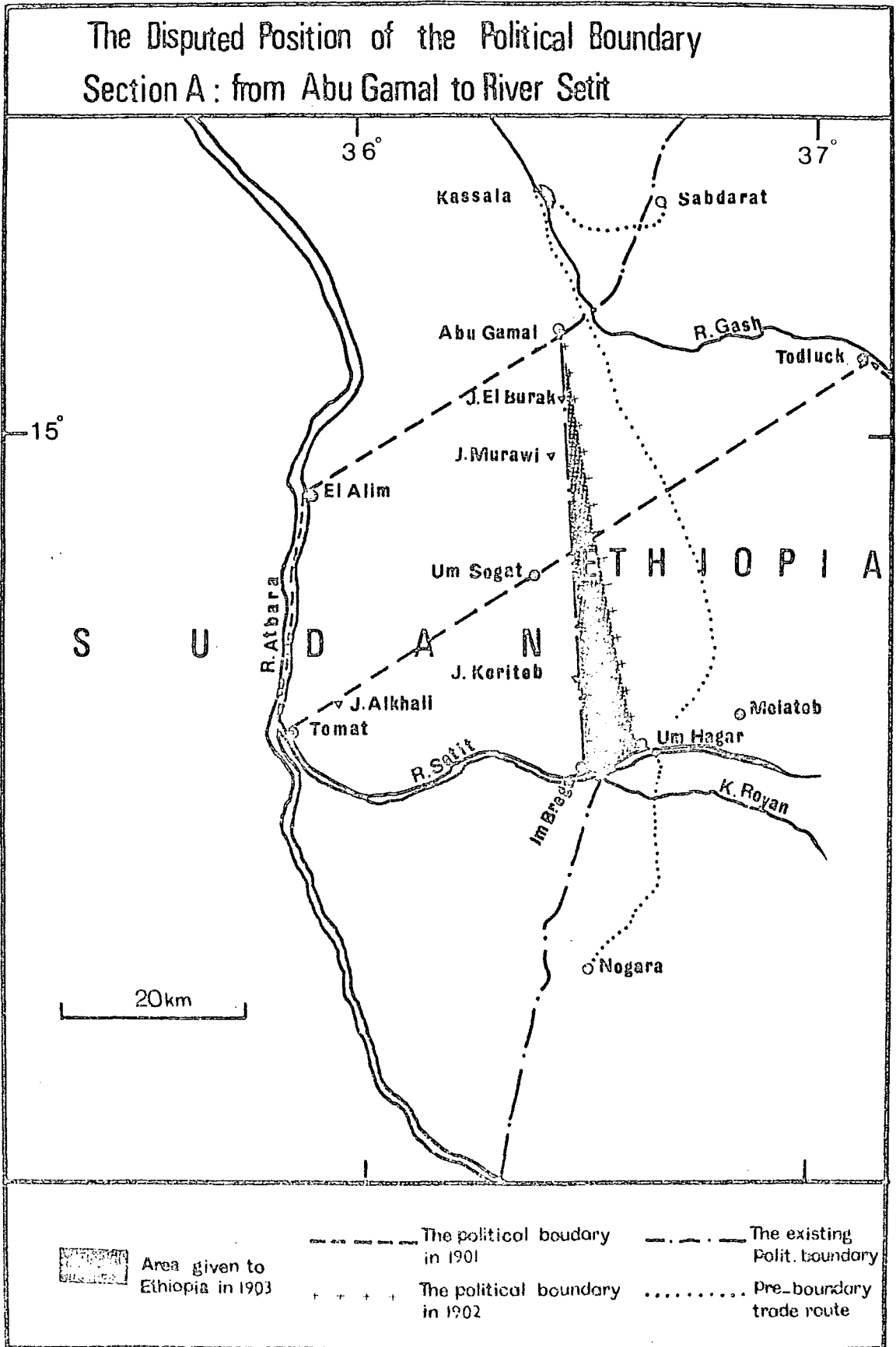


FIG. 52

The Ethiopians also claim that the area to the south of Tomat-Todluk line is an Ethiopian land because while Article 3 of the Treaty of November 1901 indicated the cession of the parallelogram to the north of the Tomat-Todluk line and west of the Abu Gamal-Setit line, to Sudan, the treaty did not mention the area to the south of the Tomat-Todluk line. Therefore, the logical inference is that it is an Ethiopian territory, says the Ethiopian Government. To the Sudanese mind, such a construction ignores the meaning of Article 2 of the same treaty which reads "the territory to the north of this line (Abu Gamal-Setit) which has been recognized as Sudanese territory by Emperor Menelek, shall be transferred, subject to his consent, to Eritrea".

The Sudanese continue to argue that if the so-called 'Um Brega Triangle' was an Ethiopian territory, then a unique and very complicated situation would arise for the Triangle is completely circumscribed by Sudanese territory. And if the boundary in the area has been demarcated in such a way claimed by Ethiopia, an arrangement must have been made for a corridor to connect the Triangle with the main land of Ethiopia. The Sudanese, furthermore, stress that whatever the merits or demerits of the Ethiopian arguments regarding the Treaty of 1901 the situation had been changed by the Annex Treaty of 1902 which was signed by Ethiopia.

These were the main claims and counter claims when the two Governments decided to meet in Khartoum on the 29th July 1966 for the purpose of settling the dispute. A Joint Boundary Commission of Experts, (hereafter J.B.C.E.) was established to demarcate and fix the boundary marks covering the whole political boundary between the two countries. However, in the first meeting of the J.B.C.E., the Sudanese delegates objected to the terms demarcate and fix used by politicians and instead

suggested redemarcate and refix for the boundary under question as far as the Sudanese point of view is concerned, has already been demarcated and fixed. Being unable to agree on this and various other points regarding an acceptable formula to begin the work, the meetings of the J.B.C.E. were called off until new terms of reference were received from the J.C.C.M. The latter did not meet until July, 1968 to give a hearing to proposed summit negotiations between the Emperor of Ethiopia and the President of the Sudanese Supreme Council. It appears that during those meetings the Ethiopians had modified their former claims when they agreed that "in accordance with existing treaties and protocols the boundary line between Ethiopia and Sudan is already delimited and that portion from Ras Kassar to Abu Gamal is actually demarcated".<sup>8</sup> Far more important, the Ethiopians further retorted that "as far as the boundary between what was known as Eritrea and Sudan (which includes the whole section under dispute) the demarcation was executed by Italian and British commissioners and ratified by the two Governments of the day, and, though we are not happy about it, we would accept it as final".<sup>9</sup>

SECTION B. From the River Setit to the Intersection of the 6<sup>o</sup> Latitude N. with 35<sup>o</sup> Longitude E (See Fig. 53): In this section the dispute is whether the Political boundary has been actually demarcated or not. By the terms of Article 8 of the Joint Communique, of 3rd July, 1967 the two Governments had agreed to respect the existing boundary agreement of May 1902 and the map annexed to it. However, the Ethiopians, while recognizing the validity of the delimitation of the political boundary to the south of River Setit, claim that it had not been demarcated. On the other hand, the Sudanese claim that the boundary was demarcated by a certain British Boundary Commissioner called Gwynn in 1903 and that Gwynn was acting on behalf of the Sudan Government as well as the Emperor Menelek who agreed to entrust him with the work.

The Disputed Position of the Political Boundary  
Section B, from River Setit to Malile

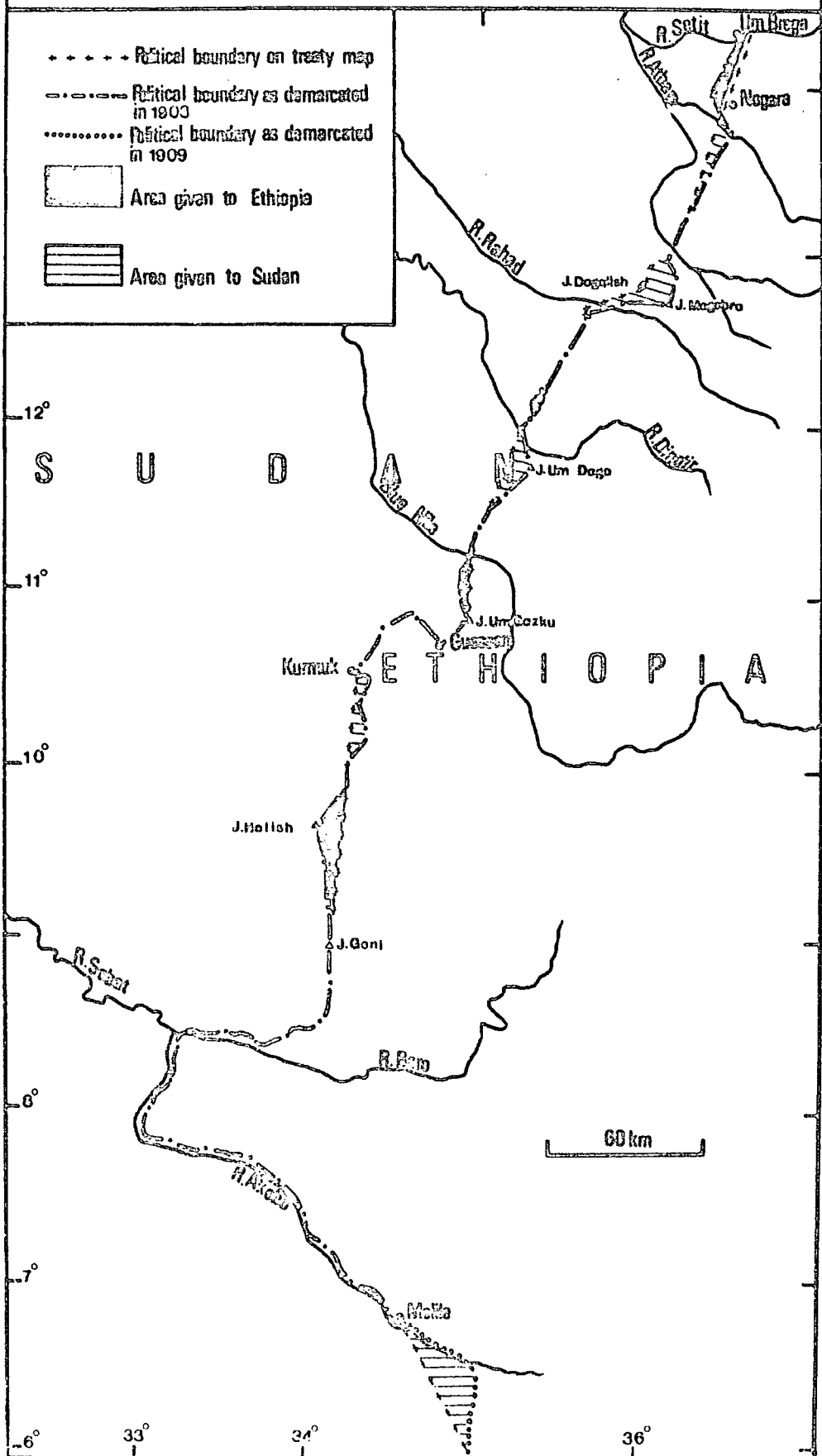


FIG. 53

At present the Ethiopians deny that Gwynn was ever authorized by their Emperor and, therefore, they are not able to recognize the Gwynn demarcation. They prefer instead a new demarcation carried out by the J.B.C.E., while the Sudan favours the maintenance of the existing demarcation. As far as the Sudan is concerned, therefore, the irritating question is how to prove that Gwynn was authorized by Menelek II, the Ethiopian Emperor, to act on his behalf. So far, the Sudanese admit that they do not possess any documents, recognized as valid by Ethiopia, to establish the nature and extent of Gwynn's authority. They refer, however, to a number of other official papers, of that time, which indicate that Gwynn was indeed, authorized by Ethiopia to carry out the demarcation of the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary. One of these documents indicated that the Emperor had instructed his frontier administrative officers to assist Gwynn during his work. Gwynn himself, in his final report, gave a list of Ethiopian officers and provincial Governors who witnessed the demarcation. Also, in the same report, Gwynn mentioned that he was given a document by the Emperor authorizing him to act on behalf of Ethiopia.<sup>10</sup> Further evidence comes from a telegram, dispatched by Lord Cromer to H.M. Representative at Rome on 17th November, 1902, which reads:

"Abyssinia delimitation,<sup>11</sup> Harrington reports that if Major Gwynn is employed, King Menelek does not want to send any delegate. He has thorough confidence in Major Gwynn and would give orders that the line marked out by him shall be respected ..."<sup>12</sup>

More documents of this category are also found in F.O. 1/47; 403/334 and F.O. Conf. Print No. 235, P. 38ff.

Later on, the Ethiopians stretched their former argument, that,

even if it is proved by the Sudan that Gwynn was actually authorized by Menelek, they would not recognize the existing boundary because the demarcation had not been ratified by them. In this argument they rely on Article 3 of the boundary treaty of 1902 which provides that "the boundary shall be delimited and marked by a joint boundary commission by the two high contracting parties who shall notify the same to their subjects".<sup>13</sup> To this the Sudanese reply was that the Ethiopian claim could not be relevant because the two parties had accepted the would be demarcation in anticipation as the same provision quoted by the Ethiopians spoke of notification rather than ratification. This is to say notification to their subjects, which would mean, in practice, that the two parties should know and act in conformity with the new boundary. Furthermore, the Sudanese claim that no matter whether Gwynn was authorized by Menelek or not, and whether his final demarcation was ratified by the two Governments or not, there is no doubt that the existing political boundary has remained a reality since the so-called Gwynn demarcation in 1903. The Sudanese authorities continue to carry out their official activities along the eastern frontiers which were never questioned by Ethiopia before 1965.

Since 1968 the Ethiopians modified their former claims to state that the so-called Gwynn demarcation does not coincide with the boundary appearing on the treaty maps. The Sudanese admit that there is a discrepancy between the delimited boundary and the demarcated one, but argue that a theoretical line drawn on paper is not always expected to coincide exactly with the line actually demarcated on ground where valleys, mountains and tribal lands are to be traversed. This argument is perhaps more valid when a large and extensive boundary, like the one under question, was considered at a time when correct maps and adequate

means of surveying and map making were lacking. In such circumstances a boundary commissioner would be expected to adjust the delimited boundary for accepted reasons, a fact which Gwynn had observed.

SECTION C. From the Intersection Mentioned Above to Lake Rudolf

(See Fig. 54): Like Section B, this section was also demarcated by Gwynn, but some six years later. As has been already mentioned elsewhere in this work, as far as this section is concerned, Gwynn was neither acting on behalf of the Sudan nor on behalf of Ethiopia. This section was not, at that time, part of the Sudan, and the Emperor of Ethiopia had rejected the demarcation of a boundary with British East Africa right from the beginning. Therefore, Gwynn was only commissioned by the Government of British East Africa. Today, the Ethiopians are not prepared to accept the Gwynn demarcation for, in their opinion "Gwynn was no more than a highway adventurer".<sup>14</sup> For the same reason they have reached an arrangement with Kenya to redemarcate the Kenya-Ethiopia section. So they see no reason why the Sudan should not come to a similar arrangement with them, as the same Gwynn had carried out the demarcation of the boundary under question.

The Sudanese admit that they are quite aware that Ethiopia objected to the existing political boundary right from the beginning, but argue that since the Ethiopians kept quiet for more than half a century, without raising any serious question, the boundary may be considered as final and accepted by Ethiopia and Kenya. They further argue that the Gwynn-line has since then been recognized by both countries as a de facto boundary. Police stations, frontier control posts and other administrative centres have been established and maintained in the frontier zone according to the existing boundary.

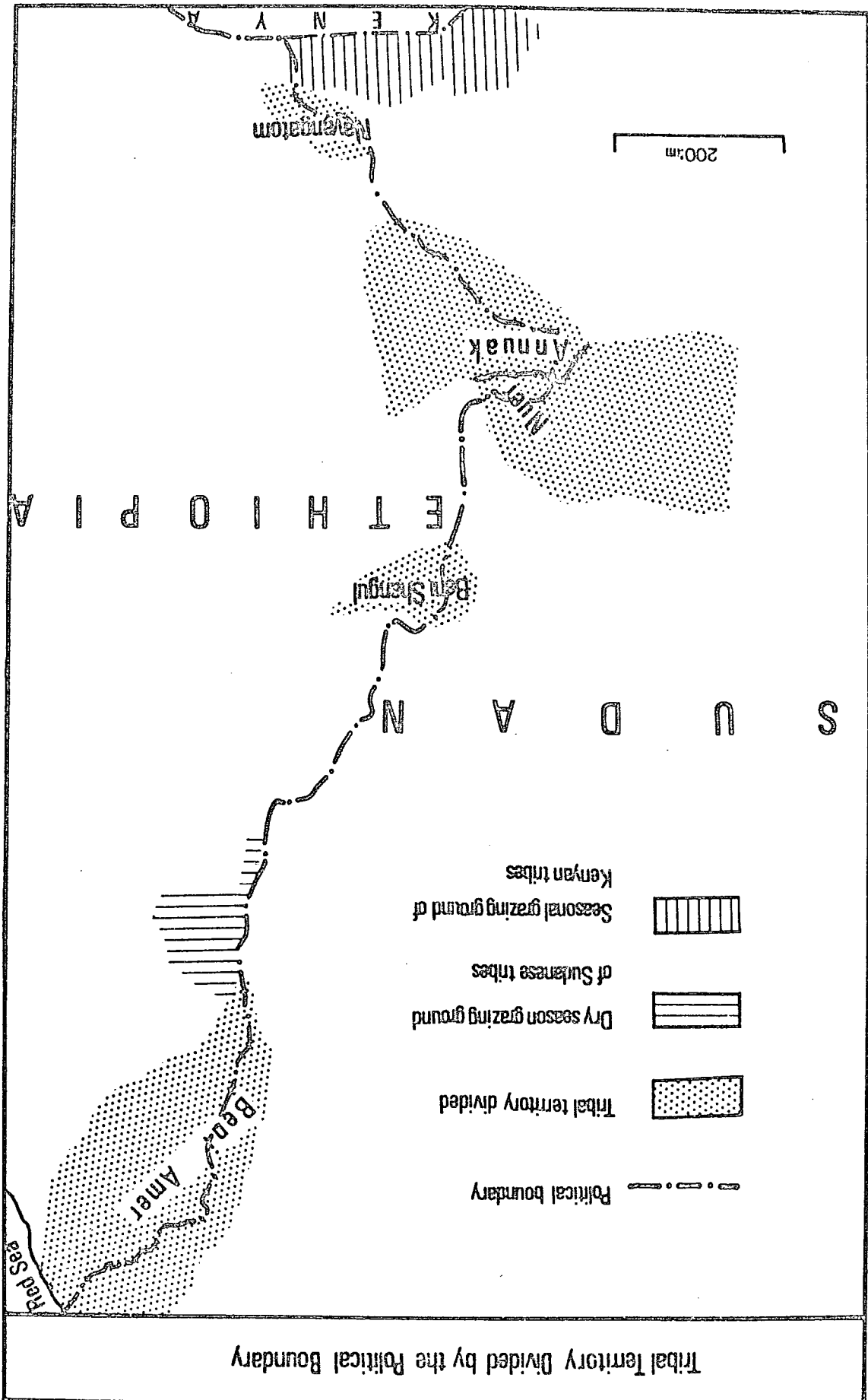


The chiefs of the border tribes know that the Akobo river is the political divide between the two Governments. Also general elections were held, four times since the independence in 1953, 1957, 1965 and 1968 in observance of the existing boundary and all the peoples inhabiting the areas now under dispute have participated in them. However, it seems that the Sudanese have no objection to redemarcate the boundary, as far as this section is concerned, on the basis of give and take, and without invading the protocol and the acquired rights of either country.

### 3. Functional Disputes

Security Problems: Since the establishment of the existing boundary between the two countries there have been two main problems associated with the whole Ethiopia-Sudan frontier relations. These are the inter-tribal disputes and the shifita activities. It seems that the border tribes do not yet understand very well that the international boundary was established to be a barrier between the peoples on either side of a political boundary (see Fig. 55). Thus, to them it has simply been a limit between the two adjacent Governments and nothing to do with their traditional ways of living. For instance, the north-eastern Sudanese tribes do not see that the boundary is a dividing line between the two sections of the same Beja tribe in Sudan and Eritrea. The only frontiers they cared for were those of their own tribal limits and the only boundaries they considered to be of any meaning were those existing between their traditional grazing grounds. Tribal inter-relations across the political boundary between the Sudanese Hadendoea and the Eritrean Beni Amer has often been one of continuous misunderstanding and mutual antagonism. Indeed, the establishment of the political boundary in the traditional tribal lands has even more intensified the existing tribal

FIG. 55



Tribal Territory Divided by the Political Boundary

feuds. Firstly, the Beni Amer became well armed, with the firearms and ammunition that the Italians issued to the native levies in preparation for the war of Adowa, those which were abandoned after the Italian defeat and those which were collected during the two World Wars, all of which were taken to the more inaccessible mountains and used in raids across the political boundary with considerable effect. Secondly, the Beni Amer shifta had little difficulty in clearing the frontiers, and the rival tribes (mainly the Hadendoea) away from their traditional dry seasonal grazing bases in the Tokar hills, Khor Baraka and Khor Langeb. Thirdly, the shifta phenomenon itself originally started as an outcome of the superimposition of the political boundary on the traditionally tribal lands. At first, it started as a tribal raid carried out by the Beni Amer armed bands against their neighbouring tribes, across the political boundary, to keep the latter away from certain disputed rich grazing grounds and water holes. Later on, by the time the Beni Amer were effectively controlled by the Eritrean authorities, the prominent shifta leaders refused to put down their arms, took refuge in the high mountains and shifta then became a sort of highway robber. At present this robbery is practised by indefinite and various groups of very well armed bands who harass all the frontier region, between the River Sobat the River Setit, which is virtually known as shifta land (see Fig. 55). Study of a number of shifta incidents, reported at the Sudanese frontier police stations, reveals that, in all the cases, the shifta were mainly Ethiopian outlaws of various frontier tribes. Generally they moved in groups of 50 to 80 men armed with firearms ranging from out-of-date Italian made rifles to modern Russian, American and West German machine-guns. Their activities were found to be mainly concentrated in places where transport and communications are very poor, or non-existent, and in areas frequented by local traders and smugglers. However, in a good number of cases it was found that the shifta leader was also a leading smuggler.

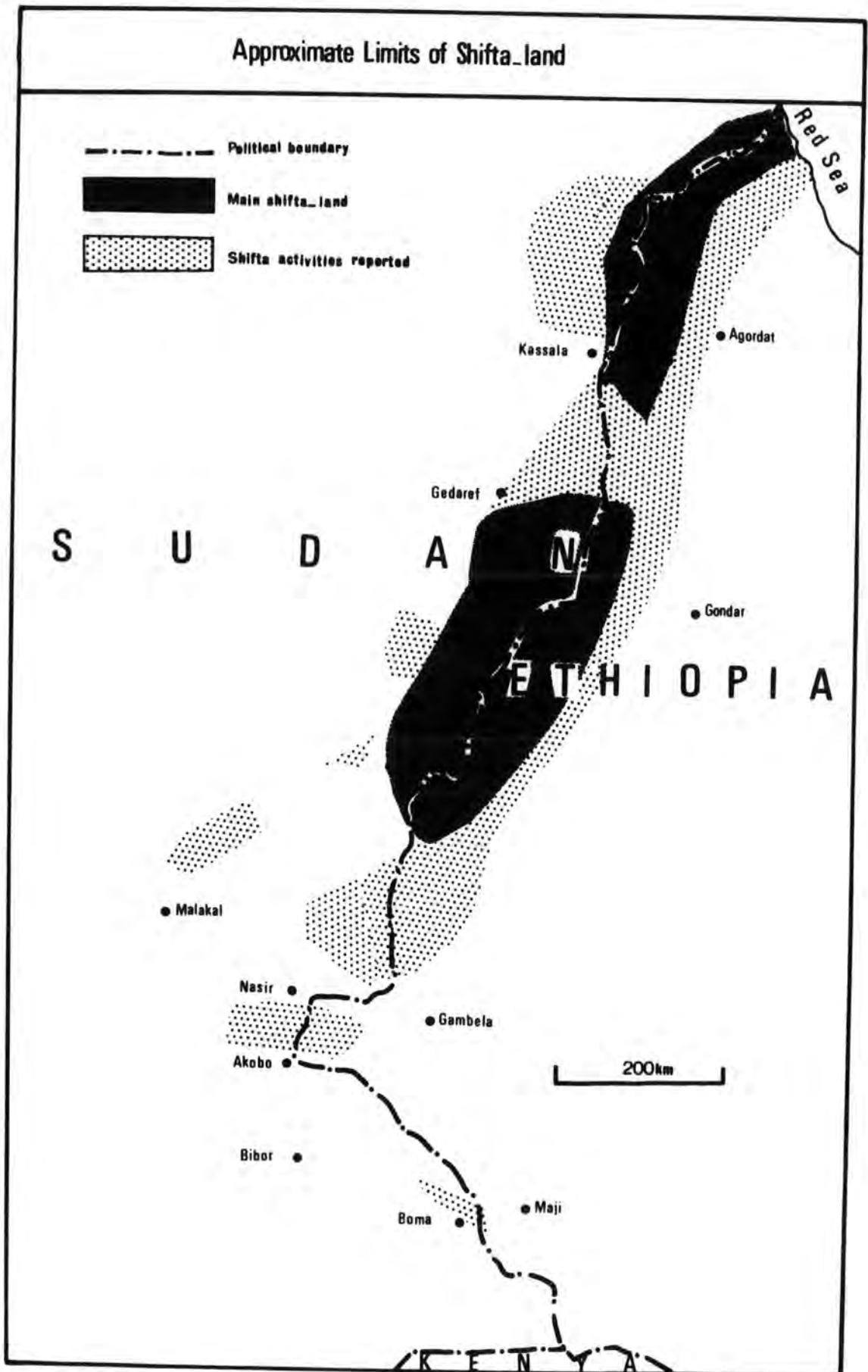


FIG. 56

It is important to stress that the shifta are only found along the Sudan eastern frontiers, mainly because of the availability of firearms which could easily be purchased in Ethiopia and then smuggled into the Shifta land. The main arms suppliers of the shifta are the elder Ethiopians who still keep large stocks of old rifles. The E.L.F. and the S.S.L.F., or at least some individuals from these organizations, exchange firearms with the shifta for food and other materials. The effect of the shifta activities, on the eastern border of the Sudan, are so great that it became one of the most policed and militarized zones in the whole country. In almost every house in the frontier region there is at least one unlicensed firearm. In 1967 the shifta activities in the Gedaref area made life so difficult that it was necessary to call for an urgent meeting of the Sudan National Assembly (the highest Governing body at that time) to discuss the matter as one of major concern. The frontier citizens in the Sudan, accordingly pressed the Government either to take effective security measures or supply them with firearms so that they could defend themselves. The Government then agreed to reinforce the existing frontier stations and to establish a number of military training grounds in the shifta land for the demonstration of force and show of effective control.

As far as the border tribes are concerned, the establishment of the boundary has been regarded by the border tribes as a great disadvantage in a sense that it hindered the free movement of their folk in the traditionally no man's land. Moreover, they had to be bound and restricted by new laws and regulations besides their own customary tribal codes. In fact they had to face three distinctive kinds of administrations: Sudanese regulations while in the Sudan, during their wet seasonal grazing, previous Italian laws now Ethiopian

laws, while in Eritrea and Ethiopia during their dry seasonal grazing as well as their own traditional rules of tribal organization. Far more annoying to them is the obligation to pay taxes and dues both to the Sudanese and Ethiopian Governments besides the customary dues to their tribal chiefs.

To the south of the Sobat river, the Nilotic and the Quasi-Masai tribes of the Nuer, the Annuak, the Beir and the Topotha are also faced with similar problems. Among the Nuer, the title to land has been recognized since old days, each division and sub-division having cultivation rights over certain areas. The tribal chiefs decide the boundaries of all newly occupied areas as between families, but their traditional lands were divided in the past and all of them know and recognize the family limits. Fishing rights go with land, and thus land and fishing along the international frontiers between Sudan and Ethiopia constitute the main source of trouble between the two countries whenever a new wave of refugees from the same tribe who live across one side of the boundary wishes to go to the other side.

Raids among the Nuer, the Annuak, the Gala and the Amhara are traditional and the Annuak have often been the victims of the Amhara and the Gala in the past, as the Annuak land was one of the main sources of Ethiopian slavery. Also Annuak country was at one time rich in elephants and thus attracted the elephant hunting parties of the Amhara and the Gala during the dry seasons. Even today, the Ethiopian Government is not able to effectively administer the tribes (Gala and Annuak) under their jurisdiction. Most of the Annuak are well armed and since colonial times there has been a continuous flow of firearms, from Ethiopia, to some sections of the Annuak. At present, one rather more irritating problem often caused by the Annuak is the periodical

movement of their throne and emblems to and fro across the political boundary. From time to time this results in mass migrations from one state to the other causing innumerable administrative and political difficulties to the local authorities in the frontier and to the two central Governments.

In the extreme south-east of the Sudan, the Topotha, the Nyangatom and the Turkana, who are bitter enemies, often raid one another inside or through the Sudan territory. This leads to a delicate situation between the Sudan and Kenya on the one hand and between the Sudan and Ethiopia on the other hand.

In such circumstances it is not surprising to find a lot of administrative problems between the countries concerned. Frontier violations for various reasons, mainly looting and robbery, have also seriously increased in the recent years. From January to September (1967), 159 political boundary violation cases were recorded in Kassala Province, 90 cases in Upper Nile Province and 68 cases in the Blue Nile Province. These figures are considerably below the actual number of cases committed because only major cases were reported to the police stations. According to the Assistant Commissioner of the Sudan Police, twice as many cases were not reported to the police stations, partly because the tribes in these regions usually keep to themselves and try to solve their problems through their own traditional ways, and partly because cases of theft and robbery are not regarded seriously among the majority of tribal groups in the frontier area.

#### PROBLEMS OF REFUGEES AND MINORITY GROUPS

In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that between 1964 and 1968 there were continuous waves of Eritrean refugees moving into

the Sudan. When in Sudan, the refugees were given shelter, food and medicine essential in such circumstances "for mere humanitarian reasons" the Sudan Government claims. Since the Ethiopian and the Sudanese Governments were not on very good terms, the host country preferred to seek advice from the U.N.H.C.R., who delegated one of his senior officials to handle the problem. F.A.O. was also requested to contribute in the feeding of the refugees.

Apparently, the Ethiopians were unhappy about the manner in which the Sudan handled the Eritrean refugee problem. They accused the Sudan Government that, by taking the problem to the international bodies such as U.N.H.C.R. office and F.A.O., it had undermined the Ethiopian Government and exposed her to the criticism of world opinion and helped the spread of the propaganda of the Muslim countries against Ethiopia. Also, the Ethiopians alleged that the whole problem of the Eritrean refugees had been previously arranged and carefully planned by certain Sudanese political leaders and Cabinet Ministers in order to establish a base for the E.L.F. in the Sudan close to Eritrea. They also fear that the E.L.F. are to be eventually trained and equipped to lever the Ethiopian Government out of Eritrea. The Ethiopians maintained that good neighbourly conduct on the part of the Sudan, in such circumstances, was to close the common political boundary to the refugees. Since such action was not taken by the Sudan, then, according to the Ethiopian point of view, the Sudan should be held responsible for the deterioration of the relations between the two Governments and for any steps Ethiopia might take to safeguard her interests.

The Sudan Government, on the other hand, claimed that the Eritrean refugee problem was taken to the international bodies in good faith and without any intention of undermining the Ethiopian Government

or helping the E.L.F. in any way. Moreover, the Sudan held that it had only acted according to the U.N. regulations of 1951 and 1957 as well as <sup>67</sup> the regulations of the O.A.U. which generally agree that:

- (a) - the host country must seek solution of refugee problems without indulging in conflict with the home country;
- (b) - refugees be given the choice of remaining in the host country or returning to their homeland;
- (c) - refugees who decide to stay in the host country to be settled a considerable distance away from the boundary; and
- (d) - be banned from undertaking any subversive actions against the home country and the possession of firearms.

By carefully examining the steps followed by the Sudan Government towards the Ethiopian refugees, the following facts emerge:

- (1) - the Sudan Government held an emergency Cabinet meeting on 6th July 1967 to discuss the problems of the Ethiopian refugees, and recommended "to take all possible ways and means to persuade and encourage the Eritrean refugees to return to their homeland, provided that the Ethiopian Government accepts the mediation of the Sudan on behalf of the refugees and agrees to grant their safety and compensation for their losses". As for the refugees who refuse to return to Ethiopia after the Sudan Government's decision has been explained to them, the above mentioned meeting recommended that "they (the refugees) should be settled in a suitable place at least 100 kilometres away from the political boundary". A Sudanese High Commissioner was appointed to study the problem and implement the resolutions.
- (2) - As the result of the Commissioner's investigations, the Ethiopian Government was informed in 1968 that the Eritrean refugees were

not willing to return to their homeland. Ethiopia was also requested to send a delegate of its own to the refugee camps to try and secure the return of refugees and see for himself the situation among the refugees. The U.N.H.C.R. was also invited to carry out an independent investigation. Both delegates confirmed that the refugees were not willing to return to Ethiopia. The same reasons which led them to leave their homeland, they claimed, were still there and had even deteriorated since their departure.<sup>15</sup>

- (3) The Sudan Government at first thought to settle the Ethiopian refugees in the newly developed settlement of Kashm el Girba; but this region was eventually ruled out for two main reasons. First, the medical condition among the refugees was found to be very poor, most of them being infected by tuberculosis and eye diseases. These diseases might easily be carried to the newly resettled Nubian population who were displaced from their original habitats in Wadi Halfa District as the result of the construction of the Aswan High Dam in southern Egypt. Second, as the great majority of refugees were from the Beni Amer tribe which has traditional hostilities with the Hadendoea, their peaceful co-existence was found to be almost impossible. Therefore, another place at Abu Sunta, in the rain-land of the central clay plain to the south of Gedaref town and north of Dindir Game Reserve, was chosen to be the most reasonable place for the resettlement of the Ethiopian refugees (see Fig. 47).

#### POLITICAL REFUGEES AND THE MINORITY MOVEMENTS

The E.L.F.: Although it is not the intention of this work to go in any detail into the history or the motives behind the E.L.F. movement, yet

it is both relevant and useful to follow in a very general way the appearance and the development of the movement inside the Sudan to understand its impacts on the Ethiopia-Sudan border problems. The so-called E.L.F. had had no activities of any sort in the Sudan until 1958 when a military regime was imposed on the country, probably because prior to 1958, the ruling Ummah party headed by the Mahdi family were on good relations with Ethiopia due to a mutual friendship between the Mahdis and the Emperor of Ethiopia.

In June 1958 it was first reported that a group of young Eritreans resident in the Sudan and others having Ethiopian nationality, together with a number of dissatisfied Ethiopians of Amhara ruling tribe, had held a secret meeting in Khartoum under the name of 'First Eritrean Conference'. The objective of the meeting was to encourage and persuade all the Eritreans and dissatisfied Ethiopians (non-Eritreans) to join an underground movement to overthrow the ruling regime in Ethiopia. Their ultimate aim was to promote what they called a democratic Government in Ethiopia and having established that, to negotiate with the prospective Government for the complete separation of Eritrea as an independent country. Apparently, the 'First Eritrean Conference' did not achieve very significant consequences either in the Sudan or in Ethiopia. So, another conference which was better organized and well attended by Eritreans from Sudan, Somali Republic, Egypt and dissatisfied elements from Ethiopia, held its meetings in Khartoum. Its most important outcome, as far as this study is concerned, was a resolution to spread intensive propaganda all over the world against the Ethiopian regime from Sudan and Somali Republic, and more seriously, to engage in Guerrilla activities against the Ethiopian security forces and other Ethiopian organizations in Eritrea from the Sudan territory at Kassala Province which borders Ethiopia.

It has been shown in Chapters Two and Six how the majority of the Eritrean peoples are strongly connected, not only through Islamic belief, but also through ethnic relations with the eastern Sudan tribes. Being well aware and conscious of this fact, the leaders of the E.L.F. apparently based their strategy on gaining the sympathy of the Sudanese people in general and the eastern Sudan tribes in particular. This was not difficult to achieve as we shall see later in this chapter. However, the Sudan Government's attitude is different from the popular attitude in the country towards the Eritrean problem. When the first activities of the E.L.F. were reported in 1961, the Sudan Government banned all its activities, whether political or military, in or from the Sudan. For example, in the same year, a number of Eritreans were arrested in Khartoum and Kassala and handed over to the Ethiopian authorities as a gesture of goodwill towards the Ethiopian Government. This was also for reasons of political expediency as the Sudan Government had its own worries in the activities of the S.S.L.F. along the Sudan's south-eastern frontiers with Ethiopia.

Perhaps most unwisely and shortsightedly, the Ethiopian authorities hanged the Eritreans, who were handed over to them by Sudan, without trial. The hangings occurred at Tasseni frontier town inhabited by Eritreans of Sudanese origin, and their bodies were also exhibited at other frontier villages as a deterrent to other Eritreans from joining the E.L.F. Although this act might have achieved the positive results for which it was intended, yet it was an obvious shortsighted step because it resulted in far more serious negative consequences. Firstly, it aroused the anger of the Sudanese Muslim population on a scale reminiscent of the religious wars of King John of Ethiopia and the Khaliifa of the Sudan in the last century. Secondly, by hanging the Eritrean Muslims, the Ethiopian

Government gave a golden chance to the E.L.F., not only to gain the sympathy of the moderate Muslims in the Sudan (who were not yet aware of the whole problem), but also to draw the attention of the whole Muslim world. Syria, Kuwait and Pakistan readily offered material and military assistance to the Eritrean cause just after that incident. Thirdly, the Sudan Government was openly criticised by its own people for handing over the Eritreans to Ethiopia no matter what the complications of foreign policy or the expediency of the Sudan's interests might have been. Not surprisingly, the Sudan Government was led into a position from which it could not give any real assistance to help the Ethiopians solve the Eritrean problem or put an end to the E.L.F. without losing the confidence of its own people. However, the Sudan continued to pursue the policy of banning the activities of the E.L.F. in and from its territories in spite of the growing hostility and opposition inside the country towards the Government's policy with Ethiopia. By 1964 the Sudan Government was suddenly brought down by a civil strike for several domestic and external reasons, including the Eritrean problem, and a transitional Government was formed from all the political parties hitherto banned, major trade unions, as well as some religious and regional organizations. Naturally, such circumstances were most favourable to the E.L.F. to induce a number of Muslim party leaders, student union leaders and other trade union leaders to advocate its cause and influence the Government's policy towards Ethiopia and the Eritrean problem. Indeed, a number of Cabinet Ministers declared their sympathy with the Eritrean cause, and offered their private help in passing arms and ammunition from Syria and medical equipment from Kuwait to Eritrea through the Sudan. But the official attitude was still different. The Ministers accused of taking part in arms smuggling to Eritrea were interrogated and condemned; the arms and ammunition found in the country were confiscated, and Ethiopia was assured

that it was not the Sudan's policy to encourage the E.L.F. or any separatist movement in Africa. All possible measures to assist the Ethiopian Government to settle the Eritrean problem were also promised.

In spite of the repeated assurances from Sudan, frontier relations between the two countries came under continuous strain on account of factors which in reality had little to do with the location of the political boundary. On 4th July 1965, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister announced that he was concerned about the news that the Government of the Sudan was determined to help the so-called Eritrean Freedom Movement. He regretted that the relation between the two Governments was not as good as it previously had been.<sup>16</sup> In the meantime the Ethiopian Government addressed an official protest to the Government of the Sudan that some political party leaders, student unions and the press in Sudan were actively engaged in spreading anti-Ethiopian propaganda and in doing so promoting the cause of the subversive activities of the E.L.F. On 29th February of the same year, the Sudanese Prime Minister admitted that there were a number of Eritrean political refugees in the Sudan who were allowed freedom of movement and contact with various organizations, but he categorically denied that there were any contacts between the E.L.F. and the Government.<sup>17</sup> As to an Ethiopian request to ban anti-Ethiopian propaganda by some Sudanese institutions and organizations, the Sudan Government announced that since such activities were secured in the Provisional Constitution of the country, the Government could do nothing even if it wished to meet the Ethiopian demands. But such an argument of constitutional rights was not acceptable to the Ethiopians who could never imagine (perhaps genuinely) how a Government could not ban the activities of student unions and a couple of papers. Ethiopia has for more than two centuries been ruled by very powerful Emperors whose word was, and still is, not only law but also divine.

The S.S.L.F.: From 1963 the Sudan Government had suspicions that Ethiopia was sympathetic towards, and perhaps actively supporting, the so-called Southern Sudan 'Liberation Front' which was leading a separatist movement against the Sudan Government. The suspicions began when Ethiopia gave refuge to a number of foreign Christian Missionaries expelled from the Sudan after being accused of taking part in Southern Sudan incidents. The Sudan Government claimed that those Missionaries were settled in the south-western frontiers of Ethiopia and that they were behind the activities of the S.S.L.F. in the region of River Sobat. Also they alleged that there were a number of training camps for the Sudanese rebels inside Ethiopia close to the common boundary. According to the Sudanese estimates in October, 1968 there were about 5,000 Southern Sudanese 'national rebels' being trained in five camps in various parts of Ethiopia (see Fig. 47). In 1967 the Sudan Government even accused the Ethiopian police of taking part, with the S.S.L.F., in an attack on the Sudanese frontier control posts along the River Sobat. At least one Ethiopian serving soldier was reported to be killed by the Sudanese army while taking part in an attack on Akobo Post with the S.S.L.F.

#### DEPORTATION OF CERTAIN ETHIOPIAN NATIONALS FROM SUDAN

For many years a number of Ethiopian female nationals each year cross the common boundary from Ethiopia into different Sudanese towns to gain money by prostitution. During their illegal stay in the country which may last several years they smuggle considerable amounts of money and gold through various means explained in Chapter Eight.

To solve the problems of prostitution and smuggling in the country the Sudan Government passed a resolution in July 1966 to the

effect that all non-Sudanese prostitutes be deported from the country. Accordingly, from July 1966 to January 1967 about 575 Ethiopians were asked to leave the country. The Ethiopian Government was unhappy about this and declared it an unfriendly act of discrimination on the part of the Sudan Government against the Ethiopians. The incident had, therefore, even more complicated the already existing atmosphere of misunderstanding and distrust between the two neighbouring countries. The deportation of non-Sudanese prostitutes was probably not a discrimination against all Ethiopian nationals, but part of an internal policy having very little, if anything at all, to do with the Sudan's policy towards foreign countries. This is more so because among those who were asked to leave the country were a number of Eritrean Muslims who were not loyal to the Ethiopian Government. Moreover, only 575 Ethiopians (all of them females) from the total of more than 5,000 resident in the Sudan, were asked to leave the country for specific reasons explained to every individual in writing. Prostitutes of other nationalities including West Africans, Egyptians, and Greeks were also asked to leave the country. Ethiopia was not mentioned by name, nor were its nationals particularly underlined in the resolution.

#### THE RESULTS OF THE CONTEMPORARY DISPUTES ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND THE SUDAN

Three main results emerge from the contemporary border disputes between the Sudan and Ethiopia. First, the Sudan Government, feeling in Ethiopia a major threat to its interests in the whole region of north-east Africa, has apparently ruled out any possibility of effective co-operation with the existing Government in Ethiopia. This is in contrast to the idea of an Ethio-Sudanese collaboration which had lingered, since the independence, in the minds of some leading Sudanese politicians and policy makers, that perhaps it could be more expedient

to make a sort of Ethio-Sudanese dual pact against any possible threat from Egypt. Indeed, Ethiopian threats against the Sudan may have encouraged the Sudan Government to seek close relations with Egypt, culminating in a federation. Second, in such circumstances one cannot rule out the possibility of the presence of an East-West conflict behind the scene; U.S.A. has a substantial military communication base at Asmara and various other towns in Ethiopia not far away from the Ethiopia-Sudan boundary. On the other hand the recent shipments of arms from the U.S.S.R. and East Germany to the Sudan and the latter's welcome to the Soviet and East German experts and advisors has, indeed, brought the whole area into the orbit of East-West conflict. Finally, one important result, as far as the disputed areas are concerned, is that the Sudan Government's planners are giving considerable importance to the frontier areas in general and those which are disputed in particular. For instance, more than six million Sudanese pounds were planned to be invested in the disputed areas along the eastern frontiers in the years 1967, 1968 and 1969. By promoting agricultural development and extending social services to the disputed areas, it was hoped to persuade more population movements towards the frontier zone and impose more effective control on the previously neglected regions.

From the study of the present Ethiopia-Sudan boundary problems, it is possible to draw two main conclusions. After independence, the boundary disputes, whether Functional, Positional or Territorial, have cropped up in various parts of Africa (see Table 18). The boundary under consideration is thus no exception. The new African states, therefore, being apprehensive that such disputes might, in the words of Kenyatta "become a conflict, friction and misunderstanding between the states", have adopted the principle of respect of the sovereignty

TABLE 18

INTER-AFRICAN BOUNDARY DISPUTES

States	Area	Miles (approx.)	Dates
1. Morocco-Algeria	The "confins" between Columb Bechar and the western Tarfya boundary	350,000 sq.m.	1956-
2. Morocco-Mauritania	Spanish Sahara	102,703 sq.m.	1956-
3. Morocco-Mauritania	State of Mauritania	419,000 sq.m.	1956-
4. Morocco-Mali	Northeastern Mali	150,000 sq.m.	1956-61
5. Tunisia-Algeria	Triangle of the Great Eastern Erg, south of Tunisia	15,000 sq.m.	1956-64 1966
6. Ghana-Togo	Former German Togo	28,000 sq.m.	1956-66
7. Ghana-Ivory Coast	"Sanwi State" in south-eastern corner of Ivory Coast	250 sq.m.	1959-66
8. Ghana-Upper Volta	Parts of border between them	50-mile strip	1964-66
9. Mali-Upper Volta	Marshy border strip south of Gao	90-mile border	1963
10. Niger-Upper Volta	Entire border from Mali to Dahomey border	216 mile border	1963-64
11. Dahomey-Niger	Island of Lete in Niger River	5-mile border	1963-65
12. Mali-Mauritania	(a) Hodh desert border between the two countries (b) Savannah region from Djel Mael to Queneibe	650 miles long 3,125 sq.m.	1958-63 1958-63
13. Liberia-Guinea	Mount Nimba Region	300 sq.m.	1958
14. Liberia-Ivory Coast	Area between Cess and Cavally Rivers	950 sq.m.	1960
15. United Arab Republic-Sudan	Wadi Halfa salient; the Jabel Bartazuga-Korosko rectangle; and the Sarra triangle	7,500 sq.m.	1958
16. Somali-Rep.-Ethiopia	Haud and Ogaden Regions	60,000 sq.m.	1955-
17. Somali Rep.-Ethiopia	All of French Somaliland	8,494 sq.m.	1960-

Table 18 contd.

States	Area	Miles (approx.)	Dates
18. Somali Rep.-Kenya	Northern Frontier District of Kenya	50,000 sq.m.	1960-
19. Kenya-Ethiopia	Arid border region of Gadaduma wells	50-mile strip	1963
20. Kenya-Zanzibar	From Tanganyika line to Kidini, including Lamu Islands and Mombassa	2,000 mile strip	1963
21. Kenya-Uganda	Border between them	560-mile border	1962
22. Mozambique-Malawi	Marshy eastern shore of Lake Shirwa	90 sq.m.	1962
23. Congo (Brazzaville)-Gabon	Gold mine region south of Franceville	100 sq.m.	1964-
24. Cameroun-Gabon	Rio Muni	10,045 sq.m.	1960
25. Cameroun-Nigeria	Former British North Cameroon		1960-61
26. Cameroun-Nigeria	Island of Fernando Po	785 sq.m.	1960-61
27. Lesotho-South Africa			1967-
28. Sudan-Chad		845-mile border region	
29. Sudan-Central African Republic		725-mile border region	
30. Sudan-Ethiopia		Parts of 1,460-m. border	
31. Nigeria-Dahomey	Yoruba area of Dahomey		1960
32. Tanzania-Malawi	The Lake Nyasa (Malawi) border		1962 discussed 1967 officially raised

from "African Boundary Problems" (ed.) Windstrand, C.G., Uppsala, 1969, pp. 183-84.

and the territorial integrity of each state, as indicated in Article 3 of the Charter of the O.A.U., and repeated by the various summit meetings of the African heads of states that "the members pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence". Thus it would appear that, in the present Ethiopia-Sudan border disputes, the latter finds support both in the customary rules of the international law and in what is termed as the principle of the O.A.U. Nevertheless, an international arbitration or an O.A.U. mediation has not yet been called upon to determine the boundary of the two countries concerned.

Second, the boundary under consideration is delimited in principle (as recognized by both sides), and demarcated in reality (a de facto), except for certain parts which are clearly unworkable, such as the Baro Salient and the Ellemi Triangle.<sup>18</sup> However, a more workable demarcation would not be very difficult if and when the two Governments in the Sudan and Ethiopia are genuinely willing to redemarcate the boundary for the welfare of the local population. Practically, any final agreement upon the whole border problem is unlikely to be achieved until fuller accord is reached between the two countries on a number of problems, mostly centring upon the status, or perhaps the success of the E.L.F. in the Sudan, whose official policy strongly denies any active support, but for whom there is undoubtedly considerable popular sympathy, especially among the Sudanese youth.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

## CHAPTER TEN

### CONCLUSION

In the first place the concept of modern international boundaries, which now prevails in the whole continent of Africa, is of a recent origin. In this respect the boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia, the subject of the present study, is not an exception. As late as the end of the last century the areas now under the rule of the present day states of Sudan and Ethiopia, were separated one from the other by large zones either completely unsettled or at least less intensely developed than in the areas in the centres of the two states. In other places along the frontier zone the two countries were separated from one another by independent or semi-independent tribal groups paying very little respect to the political units on either side of the frontier. Since the political boundary was established at the beginning of the present century, it has created no more than an artificial line of separation between villages, farms, water holes and tribal grounds within the border zone. The problems it raises, unlike those of many international boundaries, are often concerned with the legal fact of the boundary in relation to the time-honoured practices of the local inhabitants. This is especially the case in the northern part of the boundary between Kassala Province and Eritrea and in the southern part between the Upper Nile Province of the Sudan and south-western Ethiopia. In these two regions, although the population is very mixed especially from the ethnic point of view, one finds the same people divided by the political boundary. Thus, for example, the Beni Amer Muslim tribes who are now divided between Kassala Province and Eritrea were, before the establishment of the political boundary across their traditional



PLATE 9 : Gebel Gule, a village divided by the political boundary. (the arrow indicates the boundary).

tribal lands, part of the much larger cultural group Beja who live in the Sudan. The same case applies to the sections of the Nuer and the Annuak who now occupy certain parts of the Illabour Province of southwest Ethiopia. Both the Nuer and the Annuak are part of the much larger cultural group known as Nilotes who inhabit the Sobat and the White Nile valleys to the south of Malakal town.

Elsewhere, the border zones, on both sides of the political boundary under consideration, are inhabited by more than a dozen primitive tribes. They are a people of heterogeneous tribal groups who share no common language, no common religion, no common past and, so far, no common aspiration. Such tribal communities are not only at odds with each other but also with the rest of the state's population in both countries. It is true that the chiefs of these tribes are sometimes consulted by the Governments from both sides of the political boundary, or asked to pay some taxes, but it seems unlikely that the tribesmen are aware as to whether they are under the sovereignty of the Sudan or that of Ethiopia. It is even doubtful that they are aware whether they are on the Sudan side of the boundary or that of Ethiopia. In these parts, individual loyalties are to the tribe and not to the state. Thus, in such circumstances, the existence of an imaginary political line of demarcation passing through a tribal homeland is not expected to be better known by the tribesmen, than the existence of lines of longitude and latitude within the same area.

The entire political boundary under study was demarcated to follow physical features. The two features favoured by the boundary delineators were the water divides and rivers. Mountains and hills were also used as boundary marks. Despite the fact that along most of



PLATE 10 : Eastern Frontier Patrol in 1938.

its length the boundary was based on physical features and may, therefore, be regarded as a physical boundary, the existing line of demarcation can in reality hardly be described as a natural boundary. It is by no means an efficient or unmistakable line of separation. Although the boundary was originally demarcated by comparatively closely spaced signs, such marks have now disappeared and the political boundary is frequently crossed by people unaware of its exact position. At present, the boundary is very difficult to guard because of its enormous length; and not surprisingly, most of its length is the now dangerous dwelling place of the shifta and a refuge for national rebels and all kinds of outlaws. Even the establishment of a considerable number of frontier security posts and military training grounds, as well as periodical frontier patrolling parties, does not make the boundary an effective barrier.

An important characteristic of the boundary under consideration is that it was so delimited as to give Egypt full control of the headwaters of the Blue Nile and its main tributaries. Although Lake Tana, the main source of the Blue Nile, was completely included in the Ethiopian territory, the undisputed rights of Egypt and Sudan were provided in Article 3 of the Anglo-Ethiopian Boundary Treaty of May 1902. In Chapters Four and Five of this work, it is explained how the delineators of the boundary insisted in placing the line in such a position that it would give Egypt full control of the major sources of the Nile. Also it is shown how, as a matter of fact, the existing boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia was more or less delimited as the eastern boundary of Egypt rather than that of the Sudan. In the boundary negotiations, the Sudan, as a political entity, was always subordinate to Egypt and often referred to as an 'Egyptian property'. This leads to a very important fact relevant to the existing problems of the boundary. It is clear that, while the boundary negotiators took great pains to

establish the Egyptians' rights on the upper waters of the Nile, they paid very little respect to the other factors relevant to boundary-making. Such factors as the interests of the border tribes and the future administrative and political problems, which might arise from the position of the boundary, were only considered as problems of secondary importance.

The creation of this boundary brought about the decline of a number of former important border settlements, such as Gallabat, Mattema, Fazughli and Nogara. Up to the beginning of the present century these villages served as market places not only for handling local trade but also for handling international trade between Egypt and Ethiopia through the Sudan. However, with the establishment of the political boundary, each state has developed its own trade routes and the ancient routes have lost their significance; since trade was easily diverted away or stopped along these routes.

In Chapters Seven and Eight it was seen how the boundary under consideration has but little effect on the every day life of the local population. Along the entire boundary the border tribes still cross the political dividing line to visit each other, farm their fields on either side of the boundary and attend their traditional social occasions without having any permits or going through the formalities usually followed in cross-boundary movements. Similarly, the boundary has no significant effect on local trade between the local peoples on both sides of the boundary, but its effect on international trade between the two adjacent states is very considerable. Unfortunately, such an effect is a negative one. Today, international trade between the Sudan and Ethiopia across the political boundary, is negligible and movements of people and goods, except as regards local inhabitants,

could be disregarded.

Smuggling across this boundary is practised on a considerable scale and must be taken more seriously. The shifta is another serious problem which faces the administrators of both Sudan and Ethiopia. Both shifta and smuggling often lead to unnecessary hostilities between the two countries.

Perhaps one of the most positive effects, of the boundary under study, on the border landscape is the establishment of a string of frontier control posts consisting of customs offices, police stations and health checking points. These activities have resulted in the build up of new types of settlements which are considerably different from the local surroundings. Also the creation of these frontier posts in the border zone promoted the extension of modern social services to certain parts of the boundary region. Although initially established as frontier control posts, such towns as Kassala, Roseris and Kurmuk became not only customs checking posts but also local trading centres and headquarters of several administrative departments.

In Chapter Nine it was seen how the present boundary problems between the Sudan and Ethiopia result primarily from matters of political concern rather than questions related to the actual position of the boundary. Other administrative problems emerge from pressures exerted from two different centres of population, one Ethiopian and one Sudanese, separated from each other by a frontier zone of considerable fertility with promising agricultural potential and rich in plant life. Also the nomadic tribes in both countries move from one side of the political boundary to the other causing a considerable number of troubles in the border zone. There is little doubt that both the Sudanese and the



PLATE II : Gallabat Frontier Post (the arrow indicates  
the boundary)



PLATE **12**: Gallabat Customs Post (the arrow indicates the boundary).

Ethiopians would benefit much from the solution of the contemporary boundary problems which could be based, in the first place, on the appreciation of the geographical considerations of topography, tribal distribution and distribution of population. On the other hand, the elimination of political differences between the two ruling regimes on either side of the boundary, might well deprive the political boundary of its present character. In other words, it would turn the political boundary from an ineffective barrier and a line of unnecessary separation into a zone of contact which would reduce its ill-effects. In the present circumstances this could be approached in two ways:

- (i) In the first place, both Sudan and Ethiopia should put into practice the provisions of the Charter of the O.A.U. which both countries have pledged to respect. As far as the present problems are concerned, Article 3 of the above-mentioned Charter provides two useful starting points to cool down the passions in both states:
- (a) - that all members of the O.A.U. should "respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence"; and
  - (b) - that they should "respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and its inalienable right to independent existence".<sup>1</sup>

Experience from other boundary conflicts in different parts of Africa, for example the boundary disputes between Algeria and Morocco in 1963 and between Kenya and Somali Republic in 1964, has shown that such a starting point was the only practical and convenient way out in the circumstances. Once the conflicting parties have agreed to recognize the political boundary under dispute as it was originally demarcated, then other ways for a negotiated bilateral agreement could be easily found on the wider basis of give and take.

(ii) In the second stage, some arrangement for a sort of loose federation, or even a mere co-ordination, between the Sudan and Ethiopia would give more chances of lessening tension on the existing boundary and create more favourable conditions to reach a quick solution for the good of the people on both sides of the political boundary. For example, the reopening of the Gambela-Khartoum steamer services, which were suspended in 1962, and the reconnection of the railway line between Tasseni and Kassala, could lend themselves to a good start for such a co-ordination. Reasonable customs tariffs on the Ethiopian goods entering the Sudan and the same treatment to the Sudanese products exported to Ethiopia could promote a reasonable flow of goods and people across the political boundary. Another possible field of mutual co-operation between the two countries could be sought in the exploitation of the vast fertile lands along the valleys of the Setit, the Blue Nile and the Atbara on either side of the boundary. Also there is a place for a joint project between the two countries to exploit the hydro-electric potentialities of Lake Tana for the possible benefit of the border peoples and the development of the two states at large.

In Chapters Four and Five, and elsewhere in this chapter, we have seen how such factors of Egypt's right to the headwaters of the Blue Nile, the need for a safe passage to the Cape-Cairo Railway line and other factors of strategic considerations in the course of the European competition to partition this part of Africa, have had a decisive influence in the determination of the position of the boundary under question. This was over half a century ago, when the boundary was first made. Since then conditions have undergone considerable

changes and many of the formerly essential physical features, trade routes and some trade centres at that time which one party or the other in the boundary negotiations insisted on having on its side, have lost much, if not all, of their value. The Cape-Cairo Railway project did not come into being and, today, there is no fear of a hostile power stationed at the headwaters of the Blue Nile which would cut off its waters to starve Egypt. These developments must strengthen the argument for minor local changes, in the position of the political boundary, so as to adapt the line to the geographical conditions of the area through which it passes and to reduce the great hardships which the present position of the political boundary brought to many nomadic border tribes.

How could these rather theoretical suggestions, put forward above, be put into practice? The answer to this question can be approached in two ways. Firstly, there should be a fundamental and a far reaching solution to the two most important problems of minority groups (the southern Sudan problem and the Eritrean question) in both countries. To the writer's mind this could only be sought on the basis of establishing a new form of relationship between the two minority groups and the ruling regimes in both countries. On the one hand, the ruling regimes in the Sudan and Ethiopia must recognize the vast cultural and ethnic differences between their respective minority groups and the rest of the state's population. On the other hand, the two minority groups must in turn recognize that it would neither be possible nor wise to break away from the two established states. Above all they (the minority groups) must appreciate that the days when state territorial boundaries were based primarily on the issues of race, religion or language are over. Today, even the already established countries

all over the world are grouping themselves into some wider federations, whether in the form of a 'European Common Market', an 'African Unity' or an 'Arab League', with the common objective of reducing the barrier effect of the existing political boundaries.

The only sound alternative to the present state of mistrust between the mother states in Ethiopia and the Sudan and their respective minority groups is, therefore, one of compromise. The two conflicting sides (mother states versus ~~the two mother states~~ <sup>minority groups</sup>) should agree in establishing a new relationship in the form of a sort of federation within the existing political boundaries. As far as the Sudan is concerned, it has been reported that the present regime in Khartoum has recently declared that it would pursue a system based on a federal relationship between the South and the North. The new policy is hoped to provide autonomy to the southern Sudan which could eventually lead to a regional Government in the south. Although further details are still wanted, as to the nature and extent of the proposed system, there are signs that the idea, in principle, is gaining considerable support both in the Sudan and in the African countries neighbouring the Sudan. Conversely, the recent reports, in the Ethiopian-Eritrean relations, indicate that there is hardly any hope that such a miracle may happen. For example, in November 1962 Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia, stated that "federation was alien to the tradition and experience of Eritreans but the Ethiopians in good faith allowed the system foreign to our country to function without let or hindrance".<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, the existing political boundary between the Sudan and Ethiopia could be improved by comparatively minor local changes, in the Ellemi Triangle, the Baro Salient and the Boma plateau, by which the line would be adapted to the geographical conditions of the area through which it runs. This change would be based primarily on physical

features: the foothills of the Ethiopian plateau. If such minor changes are agreed, they would certainly reduce, or, in some cases eliminate, the division which the present political boundary has caused to a considerable number of the border inhabitants. This would naturally involve some exchanges of territory and some further movements of population but, in this case, no injustices would be made because the minor changes required would only be made with the full consent of all the parties involved.

The natural features, which could lend themselves to make the boundary under consideration more effective and beneficial, and where slight shifts are needed have been considered in Chapter Six. In the Ellemi Triangle, the Baro Salient and the Boma plateau region, by shifting the political boundary to the foothills of the Ethiopian plateau, neither the Sudan nor Ethiopia would gain any significant territory, at any rate no arable land or mineral bearing zone. Even if future discoveries in the areas transferred from one country to the other proved to have more significant economic potentialities, some arrangement which would enable both countries to get reasonable use of such economic discoveries could be made in anticipation.

Elsewhere the main issues of the present boundary problems, between the Sudan and Ethiopia, are not so much concerned with the exact position of the boundary as the manner in which the political systems in both states behave towards the activities of one's political refugees in the other's territory. This obviously results from the position and the functions of the political boundary between the two countries as it was shown in Chapter Nine. It also results from certain ideological differences between the political systems in the Sudan and Ethiopia. The former is rather sympathetic to the Eastern

bloc, while the latter is more inclined to the West. However, if and when the two problems of political refugees and minority groups in the two neighbouring countries are solved, or rather a sort of arrangement regarding such issues is reached between the two Governments, then the other problems of the boundary under consideration will be easily solved.

Lastly, any objective student of political geography in search of a fundamental solution to the problems of the boundary under study would not fail to conclude that such solution must be sought in changes in the functions of the political boundary, rather than in wide shifts in its position. The main problems facing the Sudan and Ethiopia are economic ones, therefore, by concentrating on the issues of promoting the functions of the political boundary, and not wasting time and money in unfruitful disputes as regards to its position, both countries could make a significant step towards developing their resources and balancing their economies in mutual co-ordination.

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INTRODUCTION

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2. See Kristof, L.D.K., 'The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries', A.A.A.G., 49, 1959, pp. 241-255; and Prescott, op. cit., p. 30.
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15. For more details on this agreement see Chapter Five.
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17. Allard, M., 'Le Traite Anglo-Abyssin du 15 Mai 1902: Ses Causes et ses Effects Actuels', La Revue de Géographie, 25, 1903, p. 10.

18. Marcus, H.G., 'Ethio-British Negotiations Concerning the Western Border with the Sudan', J.A.H., iv, 1, 1963, pp.82-88
19. See Nicholson, N.L., The Boundaries of Canada, its Provinces and Territories, Department of Mines and Surveys, Ottawa, 1954.

#### CHAPTER ONE: THE PHYSTOGRAPHY OF THE BORDER ZONE

1. The term 'Sudan' is a part of the Arabic phrase Belad es Sudan meaning the country of the black people. This phrase was originally used by the mediaeval Arab geographers to describe the whole belt that stretches across Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea between north latitudes 10° and 15°. In this work the Sudan is used to describe the country known today as the Democratic Republic of the Sudan.
2. The strata are on the corroded surface of the Basement Complex and consist of marine-stones interbedded with occasional shells and mudstones; the total thickness of the beds is more than 150 metres.
3. As the whole frontier region lies in a tropical zone, 'winter' is used in this work in default of an exact term to describe the relatively mild weather between October and April when 63° F is generally recorded in the region.
4. See 'The Annual Report', The Sudan Meteorological Department, 1962.

#### CHAPTER TWO: THE HUMAN, CULTURAL AND TRIBAL FRONTIERS OF THE BORDER ZONE

1. Seligman, C.G., Races of Africa, London, 1966, pp. 61-80. However, the local traditions of the Beja tribe claim that they have originally migrated from somewhere in central Asia.
2. This phrase appears in a number of official reports including the First Sudan Population Census Report, 1955/56
3. Paul, A., The Beja Country and its Peoples, London, 1954, p.14
4. Cook, B.K., 'The Red Sea Coast in 1540', S.N.R., xvi, 2, 1933, p. 159

5. Comming, D.C., 'The History of Kassala and the Province of Taka', S.N.R., xxi, 1937, p. 19
6. Junker, K., Travels in Africa 1875-78, London, 1895, p. 95; Paul, op. cit., p. 102.
7. In contemporary Sudan politics 'North' and 'South' mean a political and a cultural division between the 'Arabized' northern part of the country roughly north of latitude 9°N, and the 'African' Sudan to the south of the same latitude.
8. The smaller Arab tribes co-existing with the Beja are relative newcomers. From their pattern of distribution in the Beja land it is clear that they only occupy the borders of the Beja tribal land, i.e., the Halanga on the Atbara and the Kwahla on the Setit.
9. See Trimmingham, T.S., Islam in the Sudan, London, 1952, p.10
10. Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia, originally it was only spoken by the Amhara tribe.
11. Sennar on the Blue Nile was the capital city for the Funj Kingdom 1504-1821, and Khartoum the present capital of the Sudan is situated at the northern part of the Central Clay Plain.
12. A mangil was a title of the Funj Kingdom territorial princes.
13. Evans-Pritchard, E.E., 'Ethnological Observations in Dar Funj', S.N.R., xvi, 1932.
14. S.G. 57/G/7, 1931
15. For tribal movements in the Sudan, see Oliver, T., 'Problems of Arid Lands: the Example of the Sudan', I.B.G., 1968, pp. 219-235
16. Ibid, pp. 234-235
17. James, W.R., 'A Cultural Frontier: Hills of Southern Funj' (unpublished paper, S.R.U., 1968
18. Shankala is not a name of a tribal group but is an Ethiopian word which is used by the Ethiopians to describe all the black tribes of Beni Shangul, Gumz and Fadasi.
19. Arab merchants in the southern, western and south-eastern Sudan are known as Gellaba.
20. As recent as 1844, the Dinka tribes raided from their original habitats on the White Nile as far as Dindir region; see S.G. 57/G/7, 1931.
21. Seligman, C.G., op. cit., p. 113
22. Jackson, H.C., 'The Nuer of the Upper Nile Province', S.N.R., No. 1, Vol. 6, 1923, p. 59.
23. Leinhardt, G., 'Annuak Village Headman', Africa, xxviii, 1958, p. 341

24. This name was officially announced by the Sudan Government in what was called 'A revised list of tribes to be used', see S.G. 94/B/13, 1934.
25. S.G. Tribal UP/66/G/2, 1934
26. There is a tribe called the Jiye of exactly similar appearance which lives as far south as north latitude 3<sup>0</sup> and east longitude 39<sup>0</sup> in Uganda, which may be related to or even be regarded as the parent stock from which the Sudan Jiye sprang.

CHAPTER THREE: PRE-BOUNDARY FRONTIERS AND INDIGENOUS POLITICAL UNITS

1. The date cited for the beginning of the colonial period is still a matter of controversy, 1878 when the partition of Africa began in earnest, or 1885 when the Congress of Berlin took place.
2. William Balfour is reported to have said that "we have to abandon all hopes of our remaining observations and of so fixing a geographical position". From Perham, M., African Discovery, London, 1957, p. 178.
3. Speak was challenged by Burton on his theory of the discovery of the Nile; Ibid., p. 213
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8. Ibid, p. 156
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10. Gillan, Sir A., 'The Sudan', African Affairs, 43, No. 172, 1944, p. 123, Here it is worth noting that this part of the Sudan was given to Libya in 1935.
11. Hertslet, Sir E., op. cit., No. 163, p. 578
12. F.O. Conf. Print, No. 9263

13. Ibid, No. 9692
14. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 163, p. 578
15. U.K.T.S., No. 23, 1933
16. B.F.O.S.P., Vol. 116, p. 828
17. Ibid, Vol. 132, p. 241
18. Ibid, Vol. 47, p. 379
19. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 216, p. 703
20. U.K.T.S., No. 29, (1926)
21. 'Thalweg' is a German word meaning 'valley line' or 'valley way'. It is usually regarded as synonymous with the longitudinal profile of a river. Several other definitions are given, for example, the 'deepest navigable channel' (Verdross Volkerrcht, 1964, p. 271); or 'the rowable route followed by the boatmen on their way down the river' (De Lapradelle, La Frontiere, 1928, p. 202).
22. For treaties and agreements where thalweg is frequently used in African boundaries, see Hertslet, op. cit., No. 279, p. 925; No. 288, p. 448; and U.K.T.S., No. 16, and No. 13, 1913.
23. For African boundaries where the watershed is used as a boundary mark, see Hertslet, op. cit., No. 163, p. 578; and U.K.T.S., No. 28, 1924.
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26. Whittlessey, D., 'Reshaping the Map of West Africa', in Geographical Aspects of the International Relations, (ed.) Colby, C.C., Chicago, 1938, pp. 141-142; Alexander, L.M., World Political Patterns, Chicago, 1963, pp. 325-328; East, W.G., and Moodie, E.A., The Changing World: Studies in Political Geography, London, 1956, p. 748; and Boggs, S.W., International Boundaries: a Study of Boundary Functions and Problems, New York, 1940, p. 156
27. B.F.O.S.P., Vol. 100, p. 459
28. Ibid, Vol. 101, p. 1,000
29. Boggs, S.W., International Boundaries: a Study of Boundary Functions and Problems, New York, 1940, p. 156
30. Anene, J.C.O., The International Boundaries of Nigeria 1885-1960, London, 1970, p. 288

31. Translated from Amharic, F.O. Conf. Papers, No. 6943, 1897, p. 16; For further claims of this kind which are raised to illustrate the past of evidence from historical facts in contemporary times, see Petrides, S.P., 'The Empire of Ethiopia in the 15th and 16th Centuries: its Former Grandeur and Extent', The Ethiopian Journal, 2, No. 2, 1967, pp. 15-27.
32. It must be noted that the Ethiopian Empire even today is by no means the homogeneous whole. A distinction must be made between Ethiopia proper and the country which, for want of a better name, may be called greater Ethiopia. The former consists of four main divisions: Amhara, Shoa, Tigre and Gojam, each of which formed at one time a separate Kingdom. Ethiopia proper is the home of the true Ethiopian, and it is from here that the ruling class of the Empire is almost entirely derived. Greater Ethiopia includes the remainder of the Ethiopian Empire and its absorption into the Empire as it appears today was only placed on a permanent basis after Menelek's accession in the late 19th Century.
33. Budge, E.A., A History of Ethiopia, London, 1928, p. 128, however, the same author later on, p. 256 of the same work, admits that the Atbara was the western limit of the Axumite Empire.
34. Ezana's most famous inscription is about a campaign he claimed to have led to the junction of the Atbara with the Nile where a broken inscription was found. See Budge, E.A. op. cit., p.242
35. Ibid, p. 255
36. Ibid, p. 256
37. Ibid.
38. Crawford, O.G.S., The Fung Kingdom of Sennar, London, 1951
39. Wolde Aregay, M., and Selassie, S.H., 'Sudanese-Ethiopian Relations Before the 19th Century', (unpublished paper, S.R.U., 1968).
40. Crawford, op. cit., p. 82
41. Wolde Aregay and Selassie, op. cit., p. 2
42. It is true that the Ottoman Empire had lasted another 118 years after 1805, but the mere fact that Mohamed Ali Pasha was able to take control of Egypt, Sudan and parts of Syria was a sign of decline in the Ottoman Empire.
43. Busali, S., An Outline of the History of the Nile Valley Sudan, Cairo, 1955, p. 137.
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45. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 178, p. 615; F.O., 93/32

46. F.O. 1/30 No. 177
47. The Mahdist doctrine defines the true Islam as that which existed in the time of the prophet Mohamed or the sole rule of Koran
48. At present it is easy to be misled by a number of cultural maps which attempted to show well defined tribal boundaries in the area under study; such maps are either inaccurate or not intended to show the extent of tribal boundaries as they existed in pre-colonial times. They mostly represent the modern administrative boundaries of the local tribes which came into existence as an outcome of the establishment of the international boundary.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE PARTITION OF NORTH-EAST AFRICA AND THE ALLOCATION OF PRIMARY TERRITORIAL LIMITS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. Though some of the writers on international politics defined 'Power politics' as the relation between two independent powers (see The Institute of the International Affairs, No. 8 1949, p.7) it would seem that 'power' is a much comprehensive term and operates in forms: military, economic, cultural, ideological, moral and even in the form of propaganda. In this work 'power politics' is used to describe the struggle between different power groups in the 19th Century to gain control over various territories and political units in north-east Africa.
2. Though Germany and Russia did not take any active part in the occupation and partition of the hinterland of the Red Sea and the upper Nile valley, the former backed England and Italy against France, while Russia assisted France against England in the whole question of Egypt and north-east Africa.
3. F.O. 1/11, 4th April, 1860
4. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 178, p. 615
5. Ibid.
6. This was done against the wishes of both the Sultan of Turkey and the Khedive of Egypt.
7. From Langer, W.L., The Diplomacy of Imperialism, New York, 1951, pp. 105-106.
8. F.O. A memorandum from Riad Pasha, 15th January, 1899
9. For a summary of this agreement, see Hertslet, op. cit., pp. 454-9

10. F.O., 78/4242, Baring to Salisbury, 15th December, 1899
11. F.O., Salisbury to Baring, 28th March, 1890.
12. Crispi, F., La Prima Guerra d'Africa, 1939, p. 229
13. The full text of these documents are given in the collection of Treaties, Conventions and etc. Relating to Africa, Government of Italy, Rome, 1906.
14. See 'The List of Treaties Concluded by the Italian Government With the Native Chiefs Respecting to Protection 1884-1906', Hertslet, op. cit., No. 330, p. 1,086
15. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 331, p. 1,086
16. Ibid, No. 181
17. From 1883 to 1887 France was engaged in the occupation of Indo-China and England was alarmed at this Asiatic French activity because of its proximity to Burma whose native chief was pro-French.
18. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 184
19. Ibid, No. 205
20. Ibid, No. 207
21. F.O., 403/255, 13th March, 1897
22. Underhill, G.E., 'Abyssinia Under Menelek and After', Quarterly Review, 236, 1921, pp. 37-39
23. Sanderson, G.N., 'The Foreign Policy of the Negus Menelek 1869-1898', J.A.H., 1, 1964, pp. 87-97. Sanderson even believes that the western expansion of Menelek was arranged by an entente between Sudan and Ethiopia.
24. Ibid, p. 90
25. It is interesting to note that Menelek was aware of the Agreement of Berlin in 1885 in which the principle of effective occupation of the African coast was approved by the members of the Berlin Conference. From this principle, Menelek felt that the same case might be true also to the interior of Africa and thus instructed his agents to sign protection agreements with all the chiefs of tribes whose lands were raided and occupied. See F.O., 6943, September, 1897
26. D.D.F., 1st Series, 3, No. 49, 29th April, 1890
27. Ibid., No. 1676, 14th May, 1890
28. F.O., 84/2030, 14 June, 1890

29. Robinson, R., and Gallagher, J., with Denny, A., Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism, London, 1967, pp. 294-300
30. Ibid, p. 295
31. From Robinson, R., and Gallagher, J., op. cit., p. 303
32. Private Papers of Marquess of Salisbury, 13th August, 1890, p.55
33. Hertslet, op. cit., No. 288
34. Ibid, No. 289
35. F.O., 403/255, Menelek to Rodd, 13th May, 1897
36. Ibid, Rodd to Menelek, 14th March, 1897
37. Ibid., although Menelek agreed not to cede any of the areas mentioned above, he did not concede any recognition to the Anglo-German agreement of 1890. Moreover he protested "Myself I have never heard of it until you told me."
38. Ibid., 'Memorandum of Wingate', 9th May, 1897
39. Ibid., Rodd to Salisbury, 18th May, 1897
40. Ibid., Cromer to Salisbury, 5th March, 1898

#### CHAPTER FIVE: THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

1. Ras Kassar was fixed by notes exchanged between the two Governments in May, 1887; see Hertslet, op. cit., No. 286
2. See 'Notes Exchanged Between the United Kingdom and Italy Approving the Agreement for the Rectification of a Section of the Eritrea-Sudan Frontier', U.K.T.S., No. 29, 1924.
3. This section does not exist now.
4. See Hertslet, op. cit., No. 179
5. F.O., 1/44, 'Northern Frontiers of Abyssinia', translated from the Italian Tribuna, 31st December, 1900
6. Ibid., 'Report by Talbot on His Visit to Asmara in Connection with the Negotiations Regarding the Frontiers Between the Sudan and the Italian Colony of Eritrea', 6th May, 1900.
7. Ibid

8. Ibid., Rodd to Salisbury, 24th August, 1900
9. Ibid., Salisbury to Currie, 21st September, 1900
10. F.O. 1/45, 'Protocols Between the Governments of Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of Italy, for the Demarcation of their Respective Spheres of Influence in East Africa'.
11. F.O., 1/46, 'Confidential Agreement Respecting the Sudan-Ethiopia Frontier', November, 1901.
12. F.O., 1/36, Harrington to Cromer, 19th May, 1899.
13. F.O. 1/44, Same to Same, 26th May, 1899
14. Ibid., Harrington to Salisbury, 5th May, 1900
15. Ibid., Salisbury to Harrington, 29th September, 1900
16. For the full text see Appendix 6.
17. F.O., 1/47, Talbot to Governor-General Sudan. It is important to note that the present Government of Ethiopia denies that Gwynn was authorized by Menelek and so it demands the redemarcation of the boundary.
18. See Hertslet, op. cit., No. 103
19. Uganda Official Gazette, order No. 291, Vol. 10, 30th May, 1914.

#### CHAPTER SIX: THE GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

1. See Barbour, K.M. and Prothero, R.M.P. op. cit., p. 403
2. Jones, S.B., 'Boundary Concepts in the Setting of Place and Time', A.A.A.G., 49, No. 3, 1959, pp. 24-255.
3. For example, Fawcett, C.B., op. cit.; Boggs, S.W., International Boundaries: a Study of Boundary Functions and Problems; Barbour, K.M., and Prothero, R.M.P., op. cit., and Prescott, J.R.V., op. cit.
4. Fawcett, op. cit., pp. 34-43
5. Boggs, S.W., International Boundaries: a Study of its Functions and Problems, New York, 1940, pp. 25-29

6. Barbour and Prothero, op. cit., pp. 304-305. The main reason behind this new classification according to Barbour is that the previous classifications were not wholly applicable to tropical Africa, "where the balance of types employed is rather different from other continents".
7. Hartshorne, R., op. cit., p. 56
8. See Barbour and Prothero, op. cit., pp. 305-318
9. The Sudan Government Memoranda, New Administrative Series, No. 4, 1936, p. 34.
10. Longrigg, S.H., A History of Eritrea, London, 1944, p. 172
11. It is a fact that several thousands of Eritrean Beni Amer are now accommodated in the Sudan, but this should not be taken as a sign of peaceful co-existence between the Sudan tribes and those of Eritrea. This apparent co-existence is due mainly to humanitarian reasons in the first place, and also due to the fact that the Eritrean tribes at this stage are not powerful enough to cause grazing difficulties to the Sudan tribes.
12. For more details see the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON THE BORDER LANDSCAPE

1. Barbour, K.M., The Republic of the Sudan: a Regional Geography, London, 1961, p. 222
2. From Crawford, O.G.S., op. cit., p. 96
3. Gleichen, C., The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, London, 1905, p. 89
4. F.P.C.S.
5. Population and Housing Survey 1964/65: Kassala; Department of Statistics, Khartoum, 1968
6. See Chapter Four
7. Ethiopia, Statistical Abstract, Addis Ababa, 1966
8. This point is further elaborated in the following chapter.
9. See Chapter Four
10. Baker, S., The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia, London, 1876, p. 556

11. From a personal communication with the Commander-General of Police in Kassala Province, 1970.
12. Statistics from the High Commissioner's Office, Ministry of the Interior, Khartoum.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE EFFECTS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY ON TRADE AND TRADE PATTERNS

1. See Holt, P.M., The Modern History of the Sudan, London, 1961, p. 3
2. Wolde Aregay and Selassie, op. cit., p. 8
3. Foster, W., The Red Sea at the Close of the 18th Century, London, 1949, p. 107
4. Ibid
5. Bruce, J., Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile in the Years 1768-1773, Vol. 3, London, 1804, p. 198
6. Ibid
7. Perham, M., The Government of Ethiopia, London, 1958, p. 27
8. For example, when in 1927 Cheeseman accompanied a group of Ethiopian highlanders and Sudanese from the plains to explore the source of the Blue Nile, two members of his group died in a short time and the rest refused to remain in the low country. See Cheeseman, R.E., Lake Tana and the Blue Nile, London, 1936, p. 400
9. Simons, F.J., North-West Ethiopia: Peoples and Economy, Wisconsin, 1962, p. 8
10. Wright, Q., The Study of International Relations, New York, 1955, p. 251
11. Ginsburg, N., Atlas of Economic Development, Chicago, 1961
12. Throughout this thesis 'core area' is used to describe areas of intensive production.
13. The Sudan imported durra, for the first time in 1966 from U.S.A. and in 1970 from China. In both years the production of durra in the country was normal but the effects of its smuggling to Ethiopia and the other neighbouring countries was great.

CHAPTER NINE: THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF THE POLITICAL BOUNDARY

1. Zartman, W., 'The Foreign and Military Politics of African Boundary Problems', in African Boundary Problems, (ed.) Windstrand, C.G., Uppsala, 1969, p. 79.
2. Joint Communique of the Ethio-Sudanese Consultive Committee, Addis Ababa, January, 1967.
3. See Chapter Five
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. A Memorandum on Ethiopia-Sudan Boundary, M.I.S.G., 1968
7. McNair, A., The Law of Treaties, London, 1968, p. 508
8. See Article 5, of the Ethiopia-Sudan Joint Communique, Addis Ababa, January, 1967
9. Ibid
10. F.O., 'Major Gwynn's Report on the Demarcation of the Abyssinia-Sudan Boundary', 1903.
11. The word 'delimitation' here means demarcation as the delimitation on paper has been completed in November, 1902 when this telegram was dispatched.
12. F.O. 1/47
13. See Chapter Five
14. Memorandum on the Sudan-Ethiopia Boundary, M.I.S.G., 1968
15. S.G. MI/Conf/28, 11th April, 1968
16. See Africa Research Bulletin, February 1-29, 1968, p.976
17. Ibid
18. See Chapter Five

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

1. See Boutros, G., 'The Addis Ababa Charter', International Conciliation, No. 546, 1964, pp. 29-30
2. 'The Emperor's Speech on the Reunion of Eritrea, November 15, 1962', The Ethiopian Observer, No. 4, Vol. 6, 1963

A P P E N D I C E S

A P P E N D I X O N E

SCHEDULE SHOWING THE BOUNDARY MARKS ERECTED ON  
THE SUDAN-ERITREA BOUNDARY BETWEEN RAS KASSAR  
AND KHASHM AMBACTA

No.	Position	Description
1	Ras Kassar	A pillar built of stone and cement
2	<u>Jebel Halibai</u>	A pillar built of stone and cement
3	<u>Jebel Gabei-Kelli</u>	A pillar built of stone and cement
4 & 5	Karora	A pillar built of stone and cement. These pillars are erected on either bank of <u>Khor Karora</u> (Gagat) some 545 metres west of the principal wells (Ginger). <u>Khor Karora</u> west (up-stream) of these pillars is in Eritrean territory.
6 & 7	<u>Jebel Dob</u>	Two pillars of stones erected on the watershed between <u>Khor Aiet</u> and <u>Khor Tabbeh</u> . This watershed is clearly defined by <u>Jebel Dob</u> (a conical peak). The pillar is erected close to the track taken by native tribes crossing from one valley to the other.
8	Skinkoolat pass	A pillar of stones erected some 182 metres south of the pass. This pass crosses the watershed between the Ararib (Mashail) and <u>Khor Adobaha</u> .
9 & 10	<u>Khor Afta</u>	Two pillars of stones erected on prominent peaks on either side of the gorge through which <u>Khor Afta</u> passes.
11 & 12	Kashm Derehib	Two pillars of stones erected on either side of the junction of <u>Khor Derehib</u> with <u>Khor Afta</u> . This junction is from 8 to 10 kilometres from pillars Numbers 9 & 10.
13	West of <u>Jebel Robobo</u>	A pillar of stones erected on the watershed between <u>Khor Afta</u> (lori) and <u>Khor Ambacta</u> . The <u>Khors</u> rising from this watershed and falling respectively into these streams are both called Derehib.
14	<u>Jebel Afar</u>	A pillar of stones erected on the southernmost peak of the range called <u>Jebel Afar</u> .

Appendix One contd.

No.	Position	Description
15	Between <u>Khor</u> Baraka and <u>Jebel</u> Afar	A pillar of stones erected on the low range of hills forming the watershed between <u>Khor</u> Baraka and <u>Jebel</u> Afar.
16 & 17	Kashm Ambacta	Two stone pillars erected just north of and on either bank of Khor Baraka, at its junction with <u>Khor</u> Ambacta.

A P P E N D I X T W O

SCHEDULE SHOWING THE BOUNDARY MARKS ERECTED ON  
THE SUDAN-ERITREA BOUNDARY BETWEEN KHOR BARAKA AND SABDARAT

No.	Position	Description
18	Kashm Dada	A pillar of stones erected on the north bank of <u>Khor</u> Dada at its junction with the Baraka.
19	<u>Jebel</u> Koreb	A pillar of stones erected on the rock joining a conical peak (Rabusson) to the southernmost group of <u>Jebel</u> Koreb. Here the boundary passes west of <u>Jebel</u> Koreb till it joins it by this depression.
20	Near <u>Jebel</u> Measat	A pillar of stones erected on the southern extremity of the range of hills called Ya-et (Tay-eit).
21	Tadelai-e	A pillar of stones erected on the low hill of this name.
22	Glemabia	A pillar of stones erected on the hills of this name.
23	Dobadob	A pillar of stones erected on the conspicuous hill of this name.
24 & 25	Guasana	A pillar of stones on the north side of the <u>Khor</u> running between the two groups of hills called Sabdarat (Tam-rat). The other pillar is erected half way up the hill side.
26 & 27	Guasana	Two pillars of stones erected on the southern side of the above-mentioned <u>Khor</u> , one above the other.

A P P E N D I X T H R E E

SCHEDULE SHOWING THE ADDITIONAL BOUNDARY MARKS  
ERECTED ON THE SUDAN-ERITREA BOUNDARY BETWEEN  
JEBEL DOBADOB AND JEBEL BENIFER IN DECEMBER 1922

No.	Position	Description
1*	<u>Jebel Dobadob</u>	A masonry beacon erected at the foot of <u>Jebel Dobadob</u> on the first high ground on the left bank of <u>Khor Shellalob Berey</u> .
2*	<u>Khor Shellalob Berey</u>	A masonry with iron pipe about 500 metres from the <u>Khor</u>
3*	<u>Khor Allamaiyey</u>	A pillar of stones erected about 200 metres from the left bank of the <u>Khor</u> .
4*	Between <u>Khor Shellalob Berey</u> and <u>Khor Shinkeen</u>	A stone pillar on a slight elevation a few metres from the right bank of <u>Khor Shellalob Berey</u> .
5*	<u>Jebel Tekarai ai</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected on the eastern shoulder of this hill.
6*	Allaikaleb Hills	A pillar of stones erected on the eastern side of the little hill which is the most westerly of the group of these hills.
7*	<u>Jebel Glemabia</u>	A stone pillar erected on the highest point of this <u>Jebel</u> as already mentioned. From this point the boundary runs in a straight line to the highest point of <u>Jebel Afadgombib</u> .
8*	<u>Khor Muswed</u>	A stone pillar erected near the right bank of the <u>Khor</u> .
9*	<u>Jebel Tagwalal Muswed</u>	A masonry beacon erected on the eastern shoulder of a small hill which lies opposite to and west of the <u>Jebel</u> .
10*	Between <u>Khor Mendid</u> and <u>Khor Wad-Maiey</u> (Adam-minni)	A masonry beacon.
11*	<u>Khor Ankolieb</u>	A masonry beacon near the left bank of the <u>Khor</u> .
12*	<u>Khor Fadada</u>	A stone pillar erected between the right bank of <u>Khor Fadada</u> and the most southerly stream of <u>Khor Falasaiey Aret</u> .
13*	Between the two branches of <u>Khor Falasaiey Aret</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected 25 metres from the most westerly of the rocks called Wauout.

Appendix Three contd.

No.	Position	Description
14*	<u>Jebel Afadgombib</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected at the foot of the <u>Jebel</u> on an outcrop of rock near the Kassala-Lakoeb caravan route. From this <u>Jebel</u> the boundary runs in a straight line to the beacon No. 23* on <u>Jebel</u> Tedilaiey passing over the following beacons.
15*	Between <u>Jebel Afadgombib</u> and <u>Khor Korbaieb</u>	A masonry beacon.
16*	<u>Shabai Hill</u>	A masonry pillar erected on the eastern shoulder of the hill.
17*	<u>Khor Girgir</u>	A masonry beacon erected slightly south of the <u>wadi</u> formed by the upper part of this <u>khor</u> .
18*	To the north of the above mentioned <u>Khor</u> .	A masonry beacon.
19*	Between <u>Khor Girgir</u> and <u>Khor Temiki</u>	A masonry beacon erected on the high open ground between the two <u>Khors</u> .
20*	<u>Jebel Erikitanob</u>	A pillar built of stones erected on the left of the southern branch of <u>Khor Temiki</u> opposite <u>Jebel Erikitanob</u> and about 100 metres east of the Sudan telegraph line.
21*	<u>Khor Temiki</u>	A masonry beacon erected on the right bank of the southern branch of <u>Khor Temiki</u> and about 100 metres from the above mentioned telegraph line and about 2 kilometres from the beacon No. 20.
22*	Near <u>Jebel Tedilaiey</u>	A masonry pillar erected south of the northern branch of <u>Khor Temiki</u> on high ground between two of the hills called <u>Tedilaiey</u> which lie to the west of that hill of the group on which there is a conspicuous <u>Tebaldo</u> mountain. This beacon contains an iron pipe.
23*	<u>Jebel Tedilaiey</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected on the summit of the <u>Jebel</u> at the position of the boundary mark which was recognized and re-built. From this point, the boundary runs in a straight line to the central rock of <u>Jebel Temhai</u> and from that point in a straight line to the highest point of <u>Jebel Benifer</u> .
24*	Between <u>Jebel Tedilaiey</u> and <u>Khor Telkuk</u> .	A masonry beacon.

Appendix Three contd.

No.	Position	Description
25*	On the central rock of Temhai Hill	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe.
26*	About 3 kilometres north-north-east of Temhai Hill	A masonry beacon.
27*	<u>Khor Tawai</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe.
28*	<u>Khor Shagaloba</u>	A pillar built by stones with an iron pipe erected on the left bank of this <u>Khor</u> about 100 metres from the junction of <u>Khors</u> Balastafe and Shagaloba and north of <u>Khor</u> Tawaimiki and <u>Khor</u> Balastafe.
29*	<u>Khor Balastafe</u>	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected on the left bank of this <u>Khor</u> and between it and <u>Khor</u> Babanoosaiey.
30*	About one kilometre from the left bank of <u>Khor</u> Tawi.	A masonry beacon.
31*	On high ground about two kilometres from beacon No. 30	
32*	Between <u>Jebel</u> Tililaw and <u>Khor</u> Keramikiligh	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected on high ground between the <u>Jebel</u> and the <u>Khor</u>
33*	<u>Jebel</u> Tira Hoiyet	A masonry beacon with an iron pipe erected on the elevation called by this name and to the north of <u>Khor</u> KeraBeit Kinai.
34*	<u>Jebel</u> Bakoieb Rakote	A masonry pillar with an iron pipe erected on the elevation of this <u>Jebel</u> close to and west of the rocks about one kilometre south of <u>Khor</u> Kera Kilai.
35*	On the high ground about one kilometre on the north of <u>Khor</u> Kera Kilai	A masonry pillar with an iron pipe.
36*	At the foot of <u>Jebel</u> Benifer	A pillar built of stones

\* Additional boundary marks having the same numbers 1, 2, 3 etc. were found in the same area.

A P P E N D I X F O U R

SCHEDULE TO SHOW THE BOUNDARY MARKS ERECTED BETWEEN  
SABDARAT AND RIVER SETIT IN 1916

1. On the line crossing Kassala-Sabdarat road, one iron post has been placed in the valley between the two ridges.
2. On the line from the post on the southern side of the road, one iron post has been placed between the ridge and Jebel Abu Nu, one on the top of the Jebel and twelve others between it and Jebel Anderiab.
3. Two iron posts have been placed at intervals between Jebel Anderiab and the post on the Gash.
4. Between the post on the Gash and the Abu Gamal, five posts have been erected.
5. On the line Abu Gamal to Jebel Burak, seven posts have been placed at intervals, five of them are adjacent to some cultivable land near Jebel Abu Gamal.
6. Between Jebel Burak and Koraitieb the following posts have been erected: No. 1 at about 1,100 metres; Nos. 2, 3, and 4 on an open grass ridge at about 11 kilometres; Nos. 5 and 6 on an open grass ridge known as Jingir at  $35\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres; No. 7 on an open grass country at 37 kilometres; No. 8 on the crest of a ridge at  $44\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres; No. 11 in an open space south of a strip of bush at  $45\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres, this post is about 600 metres north of Khor Gergif; No. 12 is on rising ground to the south of Khor Gergif at 47 kilometres. No. 14 is near a cultivable area at 50 kilometres, it is to the south of a small patch of bush; Nos. 15 and 16 are on a ridge amongst scattered thorn bush at 63 kilometres and  $63\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres. No. 17 is on a line cleared through tall bush at  $59\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres; No. 18 is on the same line at  $59\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres; No. 19 is on a group of rocks situated about one kilometre north of Koraitieb.
7. On the line of Koraitieb to Jebel Nuar four posts have been placed on the rocks about 60 metres south of the boundary mark at Koraitieb, one on a group of rocks about 2 kilometres from Koraitieb and two more at intervals between this and Jebel Nuar.
8. Between Jebel Nuar and post No. 1, on the ridge about 40 metres from the post No. 2, is on high ground in a fairly open space at about 2,000 metres, No. 3 is on the Um Brega road to Hafera at 5,430 metres and No. 5 at 7,200 metres.
9. One post has been erected at 20 metres and one at 1,400 metres from the Setit river.

A P P E N D I X F I V E

DESCRIPTION OF THE BOUNDARY SELECTED BY  
MAJOR GWYNN IN SEPTEMBER, 1901

(A)

In the neighbourhood of Gallabat the frontier will follow the thalweg of the Khor Abnakeir (Abu Akara) from its junction with the River Atbara to its junction with the Khor El Sufi or Shangul.

From the latter point it will run in a direct line into the summit of Jebel Shigeik, thence to the summit of Jebel Dagalish, thence towards the summit of Jebel Amidla. Each of the three last named points will remain in Sudan territory, and in their immediate neighbourhood the boundary will follow the arc of a circle struck from the point, and having a radius of three kilometres.

From Jebel Amidla the boundary will run to the summit of Jebel Magnun, then to the summit of Jebel Wahwith, thence to the summit of Jebel Gabez, thence to the summit of Jebel Habgwanga, thence to the summit of Jebel Safos, thence to the summit of Jebel Shola or Medig, thence to a rock on the east bank of the Khor Bombode, about five kilometres from its mouth, in the neighbourhood of Shangul. From this rock the boundary will follow the thalweg of that Khor to its junction with the River Abai or Blue Nile.

From the mouth of Khor Bombode the boundary will be the River Abai as far as the mouth of the Khor Amila. From the junction of Khor Amila with the River Abai the boundary will run direct to the summit of Jebel Kako, thence to the summit of Jebel Fadokha, thence to the summit of Jebel Azoku, thence to the summit of Jebel Belesagado, thence to the summit of Jebel Awonzokhun, thence to the summit of Jebel Nyats, thence to the summit of Jebel Belair, then to the west of the thalweg of the

Khor Tomat, to a point due east of the summit of Jebel Ghezan, thence to the summit of Jebel Ghezan, thence to the summit of Jebel Farbau, which lies on the west side of the Khor Tomat, thence to the summit of Jebel Kashangaro, thence to the southern summit of Jebel Gambela, thence to a stone beacon constructed where the path from Keili to Kurmuk crosses a small khor about one kilometre north-east of Kurmuk village.

From this beacon the boundary will follow the thalweg of the khor, beside the path leading from Jebel Kurmuk to Jebel Jerok. Between Jebel Magnun and Jebel Kurmuk this boundary has been communicated to the local chiefs, native and Abyssinian, with the exception between Jebel Awonzokhun and Jebel Farbau.

(B)

ALTERNATIVE BOUNDARY PROPOSED,  
IF THE GUESSAN IS NOT INSISTED ON

In the neighbourhood of Gallabat the frontier will follow the thalweg of the Khor Abnaheir from its junction with the River Atbara to its junction with the Khor El Sufi or Shangu1. From the latter point it will run to the summit of Jebel Umzenigir, thence to the summit of Jebel Madbara, then due south to the thalweg of that river to a point due north of Jebel Halawa, thence towards the summit of Jebel Awonzokhun, thence to the summit of Jebel Meseifer, thence to the summit of Jebel Dulu, thence to the summit of Jebel Farbau which lies on the west side of the Khor Tomat thence as described in (A).

A P P E N D I X    S I X

TREATIES between Great Britain and Ethiopia, and between Great Britain, Italy and Ethiopia, relative to the Frontiers between the Soudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. Signed at Adis Ababa, 15th May, 1902.

(Signed also in the Amharic text.)

(Ratification delivered at Adis Ababa, 28th October, 1902.)

His Majesty Edward VII by the Grace of God, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty Menelek II, by the Grace of God, King of Kings of Ethiopia, being animated with the desire to confirm the friendly relations between the two Powers, and to settle the frontier between the Soudan and Ethiopia, and His Majesty King Edward, having appointed as his Plenipotentiary Lieutenant-Colonel John Lane Harrington, a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, His Majesty's Agent at the Court of His Majesty Menelek II, King of Kings of Ethiopia, whose full powers have been found in due and proper form, and His Majesty the Emperor Menelek, negotiating in his own name as King of Kings of Ethiopia, they have agreed upon and do conclude the following Articles, which shall be binding on themselves, their heirs, and successors:-

Frontier between Soudan and Ethiopia.

Art.I - The frontier between the Soudan and Ethiopia agreed on between the two Governments shall be: the line which is marked in red on the map annexed\* to this Treaty in duplicate, and traced from Khor Um Hagar to Gallabat, to the Blue Nile, Baro, Pibor, and Akobo Rivers to Melile, thence to the intersection of the 6th degree of north latitude with the 35th degree longitude east of Greenwich.

Boundary to be Delimited and Marked on the Ground

Art.II - The boundary, as defined in Art. I, shall be delimited

and marked on the ground by a Joint Boundary Commission, which shall be nominated by the two High Contracting Parties, who shall notify the same to their subjects after delimitation.

Construction of Works on Blue Nile, Lake Tsana, and Sobat

Art.III - His Majesty the Emperor Menelek II, King of Kings of Ethiopia, engages himself towards the Government of His Britannic Majesty not to construct, or allow to be constructed, any work across the Blue Nile, Lake Tsana, or the Sobat which would arrest the flow of their waters into the Nile except in agreement with His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Soudan.

Lease to Soudan of Territory on Baro River as Commercial Station

Art.IV - His Majesty the Emperor Menelek, King of Kings of Ethiopia, engages himself to allow His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Soudan to select in the neighbourhood of Itang,\* on the Baro River, a block of territory having a river frontage of not more than 2,000 metres, in area not exceeding 40 hectares, which shall be leased to the Government of the Soudan, to be administered and occupied as a commercial station, so long as the Soudan is under the Anglo-Egyptian Government. It is agreed between the two High Contracting Parties that the territory so leased shall not be used for any political or military purpose.

Railway to connect Soudan with Uganda

Art.V - His Majesty the Emperor Menelek, King of Kings of Ethiopia, grants His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Soudan the right to construct a railway through Abyssinian territory to connect the Soudan with Uganda.

A route for the railway will be settled by mutual agreement between the two High Contracting Parties.

The present Treaty shall come into force as soon as its ratification by His Britannic Majesty shall have been notified to the Emperor of Ethiopia.

In faith of which His Majesty Menelek II, King of Kings of Ethiopia, in his own name, and Lieutenant-Colonel John Lane Harrington, on behalf of His Majesty King Edward VII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Sea, Emperor of India, have signed the present Treaty, in duplicate, written in the English and Amharic languages, identically, both texts being official, and have thereto affixed their seals.

Done at Adis Ababa, the 15th day of May, 1902.

Note

Annex to the Treaty of 10th July, 1900 (No. 125), regarding the frontier between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Treaty of 15th May, 1902, regarding the frontier between the Soudan and Ethiopia.

His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia, Menelek II, Major Ciccodicola, Italian Minister in Ethiopia, and Lieutenant-Colonel Harrington, His Britannic Majesty's Agent in Ethiopia, have mutually agreed that:-

Frontier between Ethiopia and Eritrea

Art. I - The frontier Treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea, previously determined by the line Tomat-Todluc, is mutually modified in the following manner:-

Commencing from the junction of the Khor Um Hagar with the Setit, the new frontier follows this river to its junction with the Maieteb, following the latter's course so as to leave Mount Ala Tacura to Eritrea, and joins the Mareb at its junction with the Mai Ambessa.

The line from the junction of the Setit and Maieteb to the junction of the Mareb and Mai Ambessa shall be delimited by Italian and Ethiopian delegates, so that the Canama tribe belong to Eritrea.

Frontier between Soudan and Eritrea

Art.II - The frontier between the Soudan and Eritrea, instead of that delimited by the English and Italian delegates by the Convention of the 16th April, 1901 (No. 343), shall be the line which, from Sabderat, is traced via Abu Jamal to the junction of the Khor Um Hagar with the Setit.

The present Agreement shall come into force as soon as its ratification by the British and Italian Governments shall have been notified to the Emperor of Ethiopia.

In faith of which His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia, Menelek II, in his own name and that of his successors; Major Ciccodicola, in the name of His Majesty Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy, and his successors; and Lieutenant-Colonel Harrington, in the name of His Majesty Edward VII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and his successors, have signed the present Note in triplicate, written in the Italian, English and Amharic languages identically, all texts being official, and have thereto affixed their seals.

Done at Adis Ababa, this 15th day of May, 1902.

A P P E N D I X   S E V E N

DESCRIPTION OF SUDAN-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY  
AND A SCHEDULE SHOWING THE BOUNDARY MARKS  
AS DEMARCATED BY MAJOR GWYNN IN 1903

GENERAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
<p>The boundary between Ethiopia and the Sudan commences at the junction of the <u>Khor</u> Royan with the River Setit, and thence runs in a straight line to beacon No. 1, at Galaat el Zaref. Thence to No. 2 at the point where the road from Nogara to Abu Gulud reaches the <u>Khor</u> Seraf Hamad.</p>	<p>All the beacons, unless otherwise stated, are cairns of stones.</p>
<p>Thence along the above road to beacon No. 3, on the right bank of the Bhr el Salam (Angareb), the road to belong equally to both countries.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 1, is on the north side of the road from Nogara to Geif-Hamman, just south of the western hill of Galaat el Zaraf.</p>
<p>From No. 3 to No. 4 on the left bank of the above river,</p>	<p>Beacon No. 2, is on the right of the <u>khor</u>.</p>
<p>Thence to No. 5 on the east end of <u>Jebel</u> Luban.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 3, is beside the Nogara road on the high bank overlooking the river, about 200 metres above the road.</p>
<p>Thence to No. 6 on the road from Abu Siteib to Gadabi, close to the north-east foot of <u>Jebel</u> Hembirt.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 4 is close to the water's edge, opposite the mouth of Seraf Hammad.</p>
<p>Thence along the above road to beacon No. 7 at the <u>Khor</u> El-dom.</p>	<p>No. 5 is on the east end of the most easterly of the higher spurs of <u>Jebel</u> Luban, which is a long flat ridge.</p>
<p>Thence across that <u>Khor</u> and along the Gadabi road to beacon No. 8 on the <u>Khor</u> Shein. Between beacon No. 6 and beacon No. 8 the road and all the <u>Khor</u> down stream of No. 7 shall belong entirely to the Sudan.</p>	<p>No. 6 is on the east side of the road.</p>
<p>From beacon No. 8 in a straight line to the summit of <u>Jebel</u> Nahut.</p>	<p>No. 7 is on the right bank of the <u>Khor</u> El dom up-stream of the main water pools.</p>
	<p>Beacon No. 8 is on the right bank of the <u>Khor</u> Shein, and lies nearly on the straight line joining the summits of <u>Jebel</u> Nahut and <u>Jebel</u> Hembirt.</p>
	<p>The summit of <u>Jebel</u> Nahut and Abu Takia are well marked, and did not require beaconing.</p>

GENERAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
<p>Thence to the summit of <u>Jebel Abu Takia</u>. Thence to beacon No. 9 on the River Atbara opposite the mouth of <u>Khor Abnkheir</u>. Thence up the thalweg of that stream to beacon No. 10</p>	<p>No. 10 is constructed near the head of a branch of the <u>Khor Abankheir</u>, which rises near the main road from Gallabat to Serakwo. the beacon is close to the west side of this road, which is left entirely in Ethiopian territory.</p>
<p>Thence to No. 11 on <u>Jebel Magbara</u>.</p>	<p>No. 11 is at the southern end of ridge forming the summit of <u>Jebel Magbara</u>.</p>
<p>Thence to No. 12 on <u>Jebel Wad E1 Mek</u>. Thence to <u>Jebel Shelkeit</u>.</p>	<p>No. 12 is about 300 metres west of the road leading through the village of Shukria to Kwara from Gallabat.</p>
<p>From the Summit of <u>Jebel Jaafira</u>, <u>Jebel Wad Khamis</u>, and <u>Jebel Wad Soghar</u>, which from the watershed between the <u>Khor Taia</u> and <u>Khor Andeioga</u>, to beacon No. 14 on the summit of <u>Jebel Dagalish</u>.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 13 is close to the track on the southern slope of <u>Jebel Jaafira</u>. The watershed is fairly well marked, and has not been beaconed.</p>
<p>From <u>Jebel Dagalish</u> the boundary runs in a straight line towards <u>Jebel Halawa</u> and the point where it reaches the Rahad is marked by beacon No. 15</p>	<p>The road from Dunkur to Gallabat enters the Sudan at the eastern foot of <u>Jebel Dagalish</u>. Beacon No. 15 is on the right bank of the Rahad, between the sites of El Hag and Askanit.</p>
<p>From beacon No. 15, the boundary follows the thalweg of the Rahad as far as beacon No. 16, thence it runs in a straight line towards the summit of <u>Jebel Halawa</u> till it meets a circle drawn from the latter point with a radius of three kilometres. It then follows the eastern arc of this circle, leaving <u>Jebel Halawa</u> to the Sudan, till it meets a straight line drawn from the summit of <u>Jebel Halawa</u> to the summit of <u>Jebel Umdoga</u>. Then it follows this line till it meets a circle of three kilometres radius drawn from the summit of the latter. Then it follows the eastern arc of this circle, leaving <u>Jebel Umdoga</u> to the Sudan, till it meets a straight line drawn from the summit of <u>Jebel Umdoga</u> to the summit of the north-easternmost of the El Mutan hills. It then follows this line till it meets a circle of three kilometres drawn from the latter summit.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 16 is on the left bank of the Rahad, at the upstream end of a low rocky gorge near the site of the old village of Zair.</p> <p>These arcs have not been demarcated. No materials could be found of a permanent nature for making beacons on the <u>Khors Gelegu</u> and <u>Atesh</u>, but both <u>Jebel Umdoga</u> and <u>Jebel Halawa</u> can be seen from tops of trees near either.</p>

GENERAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
<p>It then follows the eastern arc of the circle, leaving the El Mutan hills to the Sudan, till it meets a straight line drawn from <u>Jebel El Mutan</u> to beacon No. 17 on the summit of <u>Jebel Umidla</u>. It then follows this line to beacon No. 18.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 17 is on the summit of the low hill of Umidla, on the right bank of the Dindir about one mile away from the bank.</p>
<p>From the summit of <u>Jebel Umidla</u> it runs to beacon No. 19, on the summit of <u>Jebel Magnun</u>. Beacon No. 18 marks where it crosses the Dindir.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 18 is on the left bank of the Dindir, about 182 metres away from the string of islands.</p>
<p>From beacon No. 19, the boundary runs to beacon No. 20 on <u>Jebel Wiz Wiz</u>. Thence it runs in a straight line to the summit of the Abu Nubia rocks, but, where the <u>Khor Abu Nubia</u> passes to the south of this line, forms the boundary.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 19 is on the summit of the small limestone hill of Magnun.</p>
<p>From the Abu Nubia rocks, the boundary runs to the summit of <u>Jebel Safos</u>, thence to the summit of <u>Jebel Menchenlung</u>, thence to the summit of <u>Jebel Shola</u>, thence along the thalweg of that <u>khore</u> to its junction with the Blue Nile at beacon No. 22.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 20 is on the east side of the top of <u>Jebel Wiz Wiz</u>. The natives of the Abu Ramla are thus given access to the <u>Khor Abu Nubia</u>.</p>
<p>From the mouth of the <u>Khor Bombode</u> the thalweg of the Blue Nile is the boundary to the <u>Khor Amilir</u>, which is marked by beacon No. 23.</p>	<p>These hills are all known to the natives of Menze, and are easily identified on the map. Beacon No. 21 is on the left bank of the <u>Khor Bombode</u>, a beacon of stones erected under a large <u>Gemeza</u> tree (a large branching tree), growing on a rock. The beacon is nearly on the line joining the top of <u>Jebel Bamesa</u> to the south end of <u>Jebel Bingari</u>.</p>
	<p>Beacon No. 23 is on the right bank of the <u>Khor Amilir</u>, about 150 metres above the mouth. The bed of the <u>Khor Amilir</u> is entirely in Sudan territory.</p>

GENERAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
<p>Thence it runs in a straight line to the summit of <u>Jebel Kako</u>, and thence in a straight line to beacon No. 24 on the <u>Jebel Fardokha</u> ridge.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 24 is on the southern ridge of <u>Jebel Fardokha</u>, overlooking the Sumba valley. <u>Jebel Kako</u> is visible from it.</p>
<p>Thence it runs due east to the watershed bounding the <u>Khor Sumba</u> valley, and follows this watershed to the summit of <u>Jebel Belsagdo</u>. Thence it turns to beacon No. 25 on the summit of <u>Jebel Belangashe</u>.</p>	<p><u>Jebel Belasagda</u> is unmistakable from the Sumba valley. <u>Jebel Belangashe</u> is one of the highest points in the confused hills lying south of the <u>Jebel Faronge</u>. <u>Jebel Belesagoda</u> is visible from it.</p>
<p>Thence to the summit of <u>Jebel Nyants</u>. Thence along the watershed on the south side of the <u>Khor Abamesa</u> valley and along the ridge formed by the Dursheish hills till it reaches <u>Khor Tomat</u> at beacon No. 26, just opposite the mouth of the <u>Khor Durin</u>.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 26 is on the right bank of <u>Khor Tomat</u>.</p>
<p>Thence it follows the thalweg of <u>Khor Tomat</u> to beacon No. 27.</p>	<p>Beacon No. 27 is on the left bank of <u>Khor Tomat</u>, nearly due west of <u>Jebel Ghezan</u> and about 400 metres down-stream of the mouth of <u>Khor Abamesa</u>.</p>
<p>Thence it runs direct to beacon No. 28 on the top of <u>Jebel Ghezan</u>.</p>	<p>The natives have equal rights of drawing water and washing gold in the bed of the <u>Khor</u>.</p>
<p>Thence direct to beacon No. 29 on the Summit of <u>Jebel Farbau</u> (west).</p>	<p>There are two hills by the same name Farbau, one on each side of <u>Khor Tomat</u>.</p>
<p>Thence direct to the summit of <u>Jebel Kashangaru</u>. Thence to the southern summit of <u>Jebel Gambela</u>. Thence to beacon No. 30, on the hill of Gamendu. Thence to beacon No. 31 where the Kurmuk-Keili road crosses a <u>chor</u>. Thence along the thalweg of this <u>chor</u> (the <u>Khor Kashagaru</u>) to beacon No. 32 which is erected where the road from Kurmuk to Jerok crosses it. Thence the boundary runs towards the summit of <u>Jebel Jerok</u> till it meets the arc of a circle with a radius of three kilometres from that summit. Thence it follows this arc leaving <u>Jebel Jerok</u> in the Sudan territory. From the northern summit of <u>Jebel Widil</u> the boundary runs to the eastern summit</p>	

GENERAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
of <u>Jebel Holish</u> and thence to beacon No. 33 where the Dulkirin road crosses the <u>Khor Zalan</u> .	
Thence it follows this road to beacon No. 34 at the <u>Khor Gaza</u> (Arhad).	The road to be neutral.
Thence in a straight line to the highest point of <u>Jebel Uss</u> , thence to beacon No. 35 on the summit of <u>Jebel Gogat</u> .	
Thence to beacon No. 36 at the junction of <u>Khor Sirokoli</u> and <u>Khor Yabus</u> (Yaa).	
Thence to the summit of <u>Jebel Kusha</u> , thence to beacon No. 37 on the summit of <u>Jebel Manga</u> .	
Thence to the highest point of the Gemi (Gewe) mountain. Thence due south of the <u>Khor Garre</u> .	
The boundary then follows the thalweg of the <u>Khor Garre</u> to its junction with the River Baro.	Posts of iron rail have been placed at the following:
Thence down the talweg of the River Baro to its junction with the River Bibor, and thence up the thalweg of the Bibor to its junction with the River Akobo and thence up the thalweg of that river to a point to be fixed in the neighbourhood of Melile.	(a) - at the junction of the Garre and Baro, on the left bank of the Garre; (b) - at the junction of the Bibor and Baro rivers on the left bank of the Bibor; (c) - at the junction of the Akobo and the Bibor, on the left bank of the Akobo.
	<u>NOTE:</u> At the time of the demarcation, the thalweg of the River Baro followed the northern channel round the island near Barawik.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

The material has been classified as follows:

A - Unpublished Document Sources (includes material printed for restricted circulation).

I - Department of International Boundaries, the Ministry of the Interior, Sudan Government

(a) - Files:

1. UNP/13/C/2 Gambela Customs Arrangements (1928)
2. G/9/5 Establishment of Frontier Posts (1929)
3. G/1-4/31 Roads from Gallabat to River Bhr es Salam (1931)
4. 93/A/2 Addis Ababa Intelligence Reports (1934)
5. 93/J/6 Nuer Grazing (1934)
6. UNP/SCR/93/N Gambela (1938)
7. SCR/92/B/1 Sudan-Ethiopia Relations (1938)
8. SCR/94/B/3 Ellemi Triangle (1945)
9. SCR/93/10/6 Baro Salient
10. SCR/94/B/6 Tribal, Ellemi Triangle (1958)
11. KP/66 }  
12. KP/4/1/A } Frontier Incidents (1958)
13. GE/SCR/60/A Shifta (1959)
14. C/B/11 Customs, Kassala Province (1960)
15. KP/P/52/B/4 Ethiopian Intrusions into Sudanese Territories (1965)
16. General/6/7 Frontier Violations (1965)
17. MI/SCR/8/A/1 Smuggling (1966)
18. UNP/8/A/1 Ethiopia-Sudan Relations (1966)
19. Survey/91/A/10 Ethiopian Frontiers with Sudan (1966)
20. MI/SCR/28 Eritrean Refugee Problems (1968)

Abbreviations

C/	Customs
G/	Gedaref
GE/	Gedaref East
KP/	Kassala Province
MI/	Ministry of the Interior
SCR/	Secret or Confidential
UNP/	Upper Nile Province

(b) - Memoranda

1. A memorandum on the Baro Salient 1938
2. A memorandum on all weather routes through Ethiopia linking the Sudan with Kenya and Uganda (1944)
3. A memorandum on the Ethiopian Intrusion into the Sudanese territories for a distance of 37 kilometres (1965)
4. A memorandum on the International boundaries of the Sudan (1966)
5. A memorandum on the Sudan-Kenya boundary (1966)
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7. The proceedings of the Sudan International Boundary Committee for eight meetings from 1965-1967.
8. A Note on the Sudan-Ethiopia boundary problem, with special reference to Fashaga, 1967
9. A Memorandum in "Answer to Ethiopian Complaints Against the Sudan", (1968)
10. A Memorandum on the meetings of the 'Joint Administrative Committees' Between Sudan and Ethiopia after Independence (1968)
11. A Memorandum on the Sudan-Ethiopia Relations (1968)
12. A Memorandum on the Eritrean Refugees in the Sudan (1968)

(c) - Joint Communiques

1. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Sudanese Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, 28th July, 1965
2. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Ethiopian Prime Minister and the Sudanese Prime Minister, Khartoum, 27th June, 1966
3. Joint Communique of the Meeting of Ethio-Sudanese Boundary Commission, Addis Ababa, 1st December, 1966
4. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Ethio-Sudanese Consultive Committee, Addis Ababa, 3rd January, 1967
5. Administrative Agreement between the Governor of Kassala Province and the Governor of Eritrea, Kassala, 11th March, 1967
6. Administrative Agreement between the Governor of Upper Nile Province and the Governor of Illabour Province, Gambela, 12th March, 1967
7. Administrative Agreement between the Governor of Eritrea and the Governor of Kassala Province, Asmara, 30th April, 1967

8. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Governor of Kassala Province and the Governor of Begemadir Province, Asmara, 21st May, 1967
9. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Sudanese Foreign Minister and the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Khartoum, 30th July 1967.
10. Agreement between the Governor of Upper Nile Province and the Governor of Illabour Province, Malakal, 2nd March, 1968
11. Joint Communique of the Meeting of the Sudanese Minister of Interior and the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Addis Ababa, 15th August, 1968

II - Central Archives, Sudan Government

(a) - Egyptian and Army Intelligence Reports:

1. Intelligence Reports, Egypt, Nos. 1-59, (April, 1892 - May, 1898)

(b) - Archives of the Mahdist State

1. Mahdia 1/5
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(c) - Papers of the Intelligence Division, Egyptian Army

1. Carient 1/61/323
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(d) - Sudan Intelligence Reports

1. No. 60 p. 20, 21, 115-118, 125-126, 128, 134-138 (1899)
2. No. 61 p. 4, 6 (1899)
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8. No. 77 p. 4, 5 (1901)
9. No. 78 p. 4 (1901)
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11. No. 82 p. 2 (1901)
12. No. 83 p. 3, 11, 13 (1901)
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16. No. 87 p. 9, 10 (1902)

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| 17. | No. 102 | p. 5    | (1902) |
| 18. | No. 106 | p. 5-8  | (1903) |
| 19. | No. 107 | p. 3, 6 | (1903) |

III - Foreign Office Papers in the Public Record Office, London

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|----|---------|--|
| 1. | F.O.1   | Abyssinia, 1897-1905                           |
| 2. | F.O.2   | Africa, 1890-1905                              |
| 3. | F.O.45  | Italy, 1890-1896                               |
| 4. | F.O.84  | Slave Trade, 1886-1892                         |
| 5. | F.O.97  | Protocols of Treaties, 1883-1898               |
| 6. | F.O.371 | General Correspondence, political<br>1906-1939 |

B - Published Documentary Sources

This class excludes works appearing under "Narrative and Analytical Works"

(a) - Sudanese Sources

1. "Annual Official Reports by the Governor General", 1921-1955
2. Ministry of Social Affairs; 1,001 Facts About the Sudan, 1955
- 3.\* The First Population Census of the Sudan, 1955-56
- 4.\* Southern Disturbances: Report of the Commission of the Inquiry, 1956
- 5.\* Annual Foreign Trade Report, 1956
- 6.\* Economic Survey, 1957-1963
- 7.\* Population and Housing Survey, 1964-66: Kassala, 1966
- 8.\* Population and Housing Survey 1964/65: Gedaref, 1967
- 9.\* Internal Statistics, 1968
- 10.\* Kassala Province: Urban Areas, 1968
- 11.\* Blue Nile Province: Urban Areas, 1968

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Statistics Department

- 12.\* Foreign Trade Summary, 1969-1970
- 13.\* Foreign Trade Statistics, 1969
14. Regional Autonomy for the South, Ministry of State for Southern Affairs, 1970

(b) - Ethiopian Sources

1. Economic Progress in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, 1955
2. Ethiopia Customs Administration, Addis Ababa, 1957
3. Ethiopia Statistical Abstract, Addis Ababa, 1966-67
4. Ethiopia in Review, Addis Ababa, 1965-1969

IV - Publications by the Department of State, U.S.A.

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1. Lybia-Niger Boundary, No. 2, May, 4, 1961
2. Morocco-Spanish Sahara Boundary, No. 9, Sept. 14, 1961
3. Libya-Sudan Boundary, No. 10, Oct. 16, 1961
4. Central African Republic-Sudan Boundary, No. 16, June 22, 1962
5. Sudan-United Arab Republic Boundary, No. 18, July 27, 1962
6. Iraq-Turkey Boundary, No. 27, Jan. 30, 1964
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8. Jordan-Saudi Arabia Boundary, No. 60, Decémbér 30, 1965
9. Libya-United Arab Republic Boundary, No. 61, January 15, 1966
10. China-U.S.S.R. Boundary, No. 64, Feb. 14, 1966
11. Israel-Lebanon Armistice Line, No. 75, February 15, 1967
12. India-Pakistan Boundary, No. 86m December 2, 1968
13. French Territory of Afars and Issas-Somali Boundary, No. 87, December 30, 1968
14. Algeria-Mauritania Boundary, No. 88 (Revised), July 15, 1970
15. Jordan-Syria Boundary, No. 94, December 30, 1969

16. Iraq-Jordan Boundary, No. 98, April 15, 1970
  17. Iraq-Syria Boundary, No. 100, May 15, 1970
  18. Kuwait-Saudi Arabia Boundary, No. 103, September, 1970
  19. Sudan-Uganda Boundary, No. 104, October 1, 1970
  20. Congo-Sudan Boundary, No. 106, October 20, 1970
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- Africa: Civil Divisions, No. 15, October 27, 1969
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- Commonwealth of Nations, No. 8, May, 1968

V. - Publications by the United Nations and its Agencies

1. Instability of Markets in Under-developed Countries, 1962
2. Foreign Trade Newsletter, 1962
3. Agriculture in Ethiopia, 1962
4. Commodity Review, 1963
5. Economic Bulletin for Africa, 1963
6. Trade Manufactures and Semi-Manufactures, 1963
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