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Chapter 12
Colonial Homophobia: Externalising Queerness in Condominium Sudan

In their comprehensive survey of legislation criminalising homosexuality in the British Empire, Enze Han and Joseph O'Mahoney conclude that the British "managed to impose and institutionalise a set of laws in [their] colonies that criminalise homosexual conduct", which produced a lasting legacy in the ongoing criminalisation of homosexuality by the subsequent nationalist regimes that replaced the empire (Han & O'Mahoney 2018: 105). Yet scholars of sexuality and empire have often overlooked the extent to which "historic geographies of regulation and resistance were differentiated" (Phillips 2006: 112). Han and O'Mahoney themselves note one significant outlier – the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of Sudan, which was established in 1899 after British and Egyptian forces had defeated the Mahdist state of the Khalīfa ʿAbdullāhi. Although the Condominium arrangement was unique within the British Empire, the British, having already informally colonised Egypt, were the de facto dominant partners and modelled the territory's laws on those of their most prized colonial possession, India. Unlike the Indian Penal Code, however, the Sudan Penal Code introduced by the Condominium did not criminalise consensual same-sex intercourse. Instead, it only criminalised "carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any person without his consent" (Han & O'Mahoney 2018: 14). Instead, it was the legal codes that were introduced during Sudan's nationalist, and then Islamist, periods that criminalised consensual intercourse with a partner of the same sex (Han & O'Mahoney 2018: 14–15).

Given the atypical leniency of the Condominium era legal codes, one post-colonial scholar contends that the non-criminalisation of homosexuality under the Condominium regime represented a "moral injury" inflicted by the British on the Muslim public in Sudan (Ibrahim 2008: 183–189). Meanwhile, in a sympathetic analysis of the 1991 Penal Code, Islamist Sudan's Director of Public Prosecutions ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Khalīfa lamented that its colonial predecessor "condoned consumption of alcoholic drinks, illicit intercourse, and even homosexuality provided there was consent. This was not the case in England even then; homosexuality was not yet legalised in England. . ." (Elkhalifa 1997). However, much of the literature on colonialism, post-colonialism and sexual and gender identity in Africa rightly recognises that nationalist – and in this case Islamist – narratives claiming that the colonisers imported homosexual practice erase much of the reality of pre-colonial sexual and gender diversity (Epprecht 2008; M'Baye 2013; Gaudio 2014). In practice, as

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110719611-013

we will see in this text, the worldview of the majority of Sudan's British colonisers was deeply homophobic and transphobic, and their policing of the Condominium repeatedly marginalised and discriminated against sexual and gender minorities in Sudan. Meanwhile, although the rise of political Islam in late 20th century Sudan almost certainly contributed to the further marginalisation of these minorities, there is no particular evidence that the provisions of the Islamist penal codes criminalising *liwāṭ* (sodomy) were ever enforced (Tønnessen & el-Nagar: forthcoming). The question that logically ensues, therefore, is whether formal criminalisation of same-sex intercourse should be seen as the most important index by which to measure the degree of homophobia within a particular governing system or – especially in the context of an authoritarian system – society at large?

We might contend – and there is evidence for this in the following chapter – that unequal application of laws other than those specifically targeted at non-heterosexual activities might also represent an important index for measuring colonial homophobia and queerphobia. We also need to consider the extent of the colonisers' responsibility for the rise of racialised discourses about sexuality that maintained that same-sex relations were "un-African". Epprecht, for instance, has categorised the manifold ways in which the period of European colonial hegemony gave rise to the notion of a "heterosexual Africa" (Epprecht 2008). Meanwhile, as Nandy has shown us, British colonialism in the 19th and 20th centuries was characterised by a form of "hypermasculinity" that posited a binary divide between the feminine and the masculine and abhorred any signs of "femininity in men" (Nandy 1988: 8). British colonial officers in Sudan did not operate outside those broader imperial discursive frameworks. In this chapter, I will attempt a synthesis of the approaches that focus on legislative and discursive homophobia respectively, both demonstrating that the legal system was mobilised against marginalised sexualities and genders even prior to the formal criminalisation of same-sex intercourse in the post-colonial era, and exploring the political and ideological contexts that informed the manner in which it was.

Given that colonial discourses about sexuality intersected with highly racialised and gendered power structures, one might question the utility of the term "homophobia" to describe the prejudices that resulted. The term first emerged in the 1970s in the period of sexual liberalisation that followed the decolonisation of the European empires, and denoted less a structural form of prejudice and more an individual pathology borne out of irrational fear or "phobia" towards homosexuals (Wickberg 2000). Instead, Thoreson (2014) proposes "anti-queer animus," in recognition of both the broader ideological, religious and political structures that sustain anti-queer prejudice and the fact that these structures act upon individuals whose identities do not always fit within the Western sexual categories the term "homophobia" embraces.

While recognising the diverse character of sexual and gender identities within different cultures, "homophobia" might be valid for a colonial context insofar as it denotes a set of colonial mentalities informed by ideas about sexuality and gender that existed within the culture of the colonisers and went on to influence the nationalist elites (Rao 2020: 35). "Queerphobia" might also be employed to acknowledge the diversity of the forms of sexual and gender identity that triggered colonial anxieties. This piece will therefore make use of both "homophobia" and "queerphobia", as well as "anti-queer animus".[1] That said, my concern here is not to identify and categorise a specifically "Western", "Islamic" or "African" form of queerphobia in Sudan as much as it is to identify multiple and situational forms of anti-queer animus shaped by an evolving colonial and anti-colonial context (Rao 2020: 52). While the core focus of the chapter will be on the policies and ideology of the colonial state, attention will also be given to Sudanese narratives. It will be seen throughout that homophobic discourses have been characterised by what Rao terms a "shape-shifting versatility" (Rao 2020: 52), serving both colonial and anti-colonial narratives. There was not a single inherently "Sudanese" queerphobia, but there are numerous different forms of anti-queer animus, each shaped by their own individual contexts (Thoreson 2014: 24). In the case of Sudan, the "political economy" (Thoreson 2014:25) of homophobia was shaped by the Egyptian and British contestation within the Condominium, the racialisation of "Arab" and "African" identities and the socio-political exigencies of the colonial state's alliance with neo-traditional authorities and the riverain mercantile classes.

The existence of a ruling partnership between the British administrative cadres and the mercantile elites that had previously supported the Mahdist state (1885–1898) leads us to ask whether the presence of a revivalist Islamic regime in Sudan in the immediate pre-Condominium period explains the queerphobic outlook of the Condominium state. The question of whether classic Islamic scripture justifies queerphobia is contentious, with a generation of queer Muslim scholars now challenging the attitudes of both Islamist radicals and the orthodox Muslim establishment by maintaining that cis-heteronormative elites in the societies to which Islam spread have distorted elements of the original Islamic message regarding sexual and gender diversity (Kugle 2010; Zahed 2019). Historically, the position of Islamic jurisprudence on the criminalisation of same-sex intercourse has been far from univocal. The Hanafi *madhhab*, which was followed by the Ottoman legal authorities and thus also those of the Turco-Egyptian regime in Sudan (1820–1881), differed

1 As a rule, I have retained "homophobia" where I am discussing colonial concerns over specifically sexual behaviour rooted in contemporary understandings of what constituted a "homosexual", and used "queerphobia" and "anti-queer animus" when discussing a broader outlook that incorporates hostility towards transgressions of gender norms.

from other schools in maintaining that "sodomy" (*liwāṭ*) should not be considered a *ḥadd* crime under Sharia law and thus should be penalised via "discretionary" (*taʿzīr*) legislation applied by temporal authorities (Ozsoy 2021). From the 16th to the 19th centuries, the discretionary penalty for consensual same-sex intimacy under Ottoman law was a fine. This penalty was removed in the 1840 Penal Code before the French-influenced 1858 Penal Code recriminalised homosexual acts, although only in public (Ozsoy 2021). Ottoman law codes exercised considerable influence on their Egyptian equivalents in this period (Brown 1997: 25), although their precise influence on legislation regulating non-normative sexuality is unclear.[2] What can be said is that the Mahdist regime that brought an end to the Turkiyya is regarded by scholars as "fundamentalist" in character insofar as it moved the country away from the "openness" and "diversity" of the Sufi form of Islam (Voll 1979), which was prevalent in Sudan and was understood in the Ottoman context to be more permissive towards *liwāṭ* (Ze'evi 2006: 78–88). The original revolt of the Mahdī is sometimes attributed in popular accounts to the marriage of two men in El Obeid (Ibrahim 2008: 167), and once established, the Mahdist state ruthlessly targeted communities of *mukhannathīn* (male-assigned feminine individuals) in Omdurman (Jacob 2005).

The queerphobic discourses that are prevalent within Muslim societies today have been to some extent shaped by narratives established during the period of European colonial hegemony. In particular, the emergence of a specific sexological discourse about "being homosexual" or "being a transsexual/transvestite" as both a specific identity and a medical pathology was very much tied to a set of intellectual developments in the West that in turn affected Muslim societies in Africa and Asia (El-Rouayheb 2005: 158–160). This has sometimes led academics working within the Foucauldian tradition to deny the existence of individuals with an exclusively homosexual – as opposed to bisexual – orientation in the pre-modern Islamic world, although this contention is now challenged by a variety of scholars working on queer Muslim identity and history.[3] For the purposes of this chapter, the important point is that the prevailing cultural discourse focused on acts rather than identities (El-Rouayheb 2005: 153). The Arabic term *shudhūdh jinsī*, meaning "sexual deviancy", only emerged in the 20th century, and before then, Arab-Muslim discourse tended to focus on specific "acts" that would only later be categorised as "homosexual", such as *liwāṭ* (anal intercourse, or "sodomy") (El-Rouayheb 2005: 159). To the extent that sexual identities were ascribed, they tended to focus on individuals as either passive or active more than categorising individuals on the basis

2 For "non-normative sexuality", see Epprecht (2008: 82).

3 See in particular Habib 2010. For the claims about the non-existence of exclusively homosexual orientation, see Massad 2007.

of orientation. For the most part, historic Arab-Muslim discourses stigmatised the "passive" partner more than the "active" one (El-Rouayheb 2005: 153). There is an obvious parallel between this form of Islamic discourse and colonial European narratives that stigmatised "effeminate" homosexuality most violently (Nandy 1988: 7–8). Colonial discourses about Sudanese sexuality were not in and of themselves fully coherent, since the colonisers themselves were divided over whether to view African and Muslim societies through the prism of post-Enlightenment knowledge or render them fundamentally traditional, timeless and other (Moore-Gilbert 1997: 120); this is part of the reason why some colonisers would describe non-heterosexual Sudanese as "homosexuals", whereas others would refer to "sodomy" and "unnatural vice" (see below).

Sources on the history of sexual and gender diversity are notoriously hard to find, particularly in colonial contexts, where those narratives that do exist are often vague and allusive (Aldrich 2003: 4–5). This chapter is intended as an analysis of both Sudanese and colonial attitudes as well as legal and discursive structures, and not as an attempt to relate a suppressed history of sexual and gender minorities in Sudan. Even so, sources documenting colonial attitudes are available only sporadically, in part due to the discomfort of colonial officials with discussing the subject. The narratives assessed here have been drawn from a diverse array of private and official correspondence, memoirs, and legal documents.

Some of our best evidence for the colonial state's attitude towards non-normative forms of sexuality and gender expression in Sudan comes from a small collection of government documents available via the Civil Secretary collections in Sudan's National Records Office, under a file entitled "Sodomy".[4] Most of the files within date from 1925 and 1926, in the former of which years the government was redrafting the Sudan Penal Code and presumably reconsidering the criminalisation of homosexuality. The picture they reveal is not one of a permissive state with a laissez-faire attitude towards the spreading of "unnatural vices" among a morally outraged Muslim population, but rather of an ideologically queerphobic government apparatus determined to intervene to invent the tradition of an exclusively heterosexual Sudanese society.[5] These memoranda represent a private conversation between senior officials – at provincial governor level and above – rather than the official discourse of the state, but they nevertheless act as an important lens through which to study the treatment of non-normative forms of sexuality and gender expression by the state.

4 CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", National Records Office [hereafter NRO], Khartoum, Sudan.

5 For the notion of "invented traditions", see Ranger 1983.

Race, Politics and Pseudoscience in the Colonial Externalisation of Non-Heterosexual Identities

The homophobic agendas pursued by the official contributors to the "sodomy" file were shaped not just by colonial hypermasculinity but also by racial pseudoscience, in addition to colonial as well as anti-colonial politics. The most substantial reports in the "sodomy" file were prepared in the two years immediately after the British suppression of the White Flag movement, which sought union between Egypt and Sudan. The narratives produced in these files are profoundly shaped by colonial hostility to the White Flag movement and in particular to the Egyptian presence in Sudan.

The Egyptian role in the governance of Sudan dated back to 1820, when Egypt, as an autonomous province under Mehmet Ali, who was himself nominally a governor (*wālī*) representing the Ottoman Sultan, conquered the territory and established the regime that Sudanese came to remember as the Turkiyya. In 1885, shortly after Egypt had been occupied by Great Britain under the "Veiled Protectorate", the Mahdist movement put an end to the Turkiyya. In 1899, the British, as Egypt's veiled rulers, conquered her former province with the assistance of the Egyptian army, establishing a nominal arrangement of co-dominance that made the Egyptians, in Troutt-Powell's words, "colonized colonizers" (Troutt-Powell 2003: 6). Although ultimate sovereignty formally rested with the Egyptian Khediviate (later monarchy), the senior echelons of the government in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium were staffed exclusively by the British. Nevertheless, Egyptian army officers featured heavily in the middle rungs of the provincial administration, and Egyptians and individuals of shared Egyptian-Sudanese heritage played a substantial role in the economy at large.

Following the nationalist revolution in Egypt in 1919, British officials began to fear that the Egyptians in Sudan might become "decolonised colonisers"[6]. In turn, many within the Sudanese educated elite and the Sudanese battalions of the Egyptian Army saw in the Egyptian nationalist movement a model for anti-colonial struggle. In 1924, the White Flag League organised mass pro-Egyptian protests, which cumulated in a mutiny by the Sudanese battalions of the Egyptian Army. The British responded by violently crushing the mutiny, imprisoning the leaders of the White Flag League, expelling the Egyptian Army from Sudan and incorporating its former Sudanese units into the newly formed Sudan Defence Force.

It was the Governor of Berber Province, H.C. Jackson, who made the ideological link between the campaign to rid Sudan of corrupting Egyptian influences and the

6 This is a twist on Troutt-Powell's "colonized colonizers".

campaign to rid it of the scourge of homosexuality. Atbara in Berber province had witnessed some of the most serious protests during the White Flag movement, as members of the Egyptian Railway Battalion, which was headquartered there, went on strike and took to the streets. The Railway Battalion was a branch of the Egyptian Army that had been responsible for the expansion of Egypt's railway network towards Atbara and then the rest of Sudan during the Anglo-Egyptian reconquest of the 1890s. As nationalism grew in Egypt, the British-led administration had become increasingly hostile to its presence, and used its participation in the 1924 movement as a pretext to expel it from Sudan altogether, along with the rest of the Egyptian army.[7] Jackson, who after becoming governor of the province in August 1924[8] was instrumental in the suppression of the protests there, noted that "In 1924 in Atbara while searching houses of those suspected of political intrigue I found correspondence implicating several of the S.G.R. [Sudan Government Railways] officials and Inspector of schools in unnatural vice". Jackson followed this with the observation that "sodomy is a peculiarly Egyptian vice and should be stamped out in Sudan". He even linked "its spread in Atbara" to "the activities of Mohamed Pasha Fadil and his brother Bimbashi Zaki Bey", two senior members of the Egyptian Railway Battalion.[9]

Jackson's perspective indicated a tendency to treat perceived societal ills such as homosexuality as the colonial state treated perceived political ills – as "external" to Sudanese society. This paralleled the insistence of colonial intelligence agencies that unwanted political phenomena – radical anti-colonial nationalism akin to that seen in Egypt, or communism – were foreign imports that had no organic political base in Sudanese society (Berridge 2013: 851). His view was also almost certainly founded upon colonial tropes that maintained that same-sex sexuality was external to African society. The prevailing worldview was that homosexuality was a sin that had flourished in societies that had achieved a high degree of "civilisation", such as Ancient Greece, and that because Africa was "uncivilised" it was completely free of this vice (Epprecht 2008: 40). In this sense, the colonial state's homophobic agenda in Sudan, as elsewhere in Africa, was pursued in the context of attempting to construct the colonial subject as "tribal" and limit urbanisation (Mamdani 2010, 2018).

In the view of colonial officials, Arab, Ottoman and Egyptian civilisations were far more predisposed towards "deviant" sexuality than any African civilisation.

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7 For the history of the Railway Battalion in Atbara and its role in the White Flag Movement, see Vezzadini 2015: 77–79.

8 *Quarterly List Sudan Government Showing Appointments and Stations for the Quarter Beginning 1 July 1925*, p. 10, Sudan Archive [hereafter SAD], Durham, UK, https://iiif.durham.ac.uk/index.html?manifest=https://iiif.durham.ac.uk/manifests/trifle/32150/t1/mb/85/t1mb8515n44z/manifest

9 Note by Governor, Berber Province, 19 January 1925, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

Indeed, Jackson did not single out Egyptians for blame, but claimed that in Port Sudan and the old Ottoman era port of Sawakin, "many of the merchants, particularly those of Sawakinese or Arabian origin, keep boys instead of mistresses".[10] This passage, which was part of an overall discussion on "sodomy", itself bears witness to the colonisers' reluctance to distinguish between pederasty and adult same-sex relations when discussing Arab culture. Narratives postulating that "sodomy" and "pederasty" were endemic to certain "Oriental" cultures had been popularised by the prominent 19th century explorer Richard Francis Burton, who had travelled extensively in Asia and Africa, and maintained the existence of a "Sotadic Zone" stretching from the East of the Mediterranean to Japan, incorporating much of Arab civilisation (Burton 1934: 17–18; Phillips 2006: 163–189). At times when colonial Europeans were forced to recognise the existence of same-sex sexuality in Africa, they tended to claim that it was the result of contact with Arab civilisation (Epprecht 2008: 42). The claim that Arabs had brought "sodomy" to Africa circulated widely among colonial officials in Buganda, who attributed same-sex liaisons at the Kabaka's court to the arrival of Arab merchants (Rao 2015: 9).

Much has been written on the subject of the Condominium regime's efforts to racialise the differences between "Arabs" and "blacks" in Sudan (Idris 2005; Mamdani 2010). Indeed, there are parallels between Jackson's desire to exclude "Egyptian" sexual practises from Sudan and the colonial state's efforts to exclude "Arab" influences from regions such as the South and the Nuba Mountains. Yet while the colonial state's homophobic narratives did draw heavily on contemporary racial ideology, they did not always do so in a fully coherent fashion, and they did not always neatly align with the Condominium's "Arab versus African" racial discourse, which was itself never fully coherent. Burton himself placed the Arabian Peninsula outside the "Sotadic Zone", and maintained that it was only in its urban centres where "sodomy" was prevalent, whereas "badawi" (nomadic) Arabs were untouched (Burton 1934: 87). The image of the nomadic Arab as a hypermasculine and martially proficient "noble savage" shaped the British agenda of co-opting "traditional" Arab culture in a number of places (Cannadine 2002), including Sudan. The Egyptian Railways Battalion was itself escorted out of Sudan with the assistance of an "Arab" corps (Vezzadini 2015: 78), and the majority of the religious notables who supported *al-Ḥaḍāra*'s campaign against sexual non-conformity (see below) would likely have self-identified as "Arab". Meanwhile, not all colonial Britons saw same-sex relations as external to "African" cultures – the anthropologist Siegfried Nadel, for instance, claimed that

10 Note by Governor, Berber Province, 19 January 1925, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

homosexuality and transvestitism among the Nuba were products of Africa's matrilineal cultures, maintaining that living in "a society in which the fruits of procreation are not the man's" deterred them from heterosexual sex (Nadel 1947: 300). Another anthropologist, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, also argued in a piece published after the Condominium period that pederasty had once been common within Zande society and that "there is no reason to suppose that it was introduced by Arabs as some have thought" (Evans-Pritchard 1970: 1429).

Apart from muddled racial pseudoscience, the colonisers' efforts to rid Sudan of homosexuality were justified with reference to contemporary medical pseudoscience. Let us take the views of Reginald Davies, Assistant Director of the Intelligence Department and another contributor to the "sodomy" file:

> Those who protest that it would be more worthy to screen such debasement for fear of scandal, are like them who find a man suffering from a deadly disease which is rotting the bones of the man's body and will sooner or late cause his death and withhold their treatment to him for the shame of letting people know that he is suffering from such a disease.[11]

Both the contemporary medicalisation of homosexuality and the perception that it was "external" to Sudan shaped fears about where and how it might spread. For colonial officials, homosexuality was in many ways analogous to many of the other "septic germs of modernity"[12] that they feared would have a negative impact upon Sudan, notably including modern education and modern forms of administration. One colonial official recalled that many in the SPS "felt, from an innate if twisted feeling that education saps a man's virility and virtue, these damned fellows who would wield a pen must at best be "pansy" and sea lawyers and at worst crooks."[13] The rumours of homosexuality that circulated in colonial society often targeted those with a prominent role in colonial schools (Deng and Daly 1989: 58–59).

Viewing homosexuality as one of the "septic germs of modernity", British colonial officials fixated on preventing its perceived spread as a matter of quasi-epidemiological importance. This is visible in their concern with the isolation of prisoners whom they perceived as sexually deviant. In a court ruling from 1942, through a typical instance of the colonial state's tendency to conflate perpetration of male-on-male sexual violence and homosexual orientation, C.J. Creed warned against committing two juveniles who had raped another boy to prison on the grounds that

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11 Memorandum by Reginald Davies, 19 June 1926, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

12 This phrase was first used by Geoffrey Archer's replacement as Governor-General, John Maffey, so as to rationalise the neo-traditional character of "Native Administration" legislation in Sudan. See Vaughan 2015.

13 Owen Memoirs, SAD 769/11/43, Durham, UK, cited in Berridge (2011: 52).

they would be "likely to pervert the other inmates".[14] In 1949, the senior prison official McInnes warned against sending prisoners under the age of 25 to one of the Central Prisons on the grounds that it "tends to increase the practise of sodomy which is disturbingly on the increase as Central Prisons are receiving more habituals, without sufficient cellular accommodation for segregation of perverts".[15]

On account of the specific fixation on male homosexuality in the colonial psyche, accounts of female same-sex relationships are rarer. Those accounts that do acknowledge female same-sex sexuality usually describe it as "situational", or else pathologise it. Jackson maintained that in Zandeland the Avungura chiefs' practise of seizing and segregating women as their royal wives led the women affected into "unnatural vice" (Jackson 1954: 195). Evans-Pritchard (1970: 1429) also argued that "female homosexuality. . .was practised in polygamous homes."

One ambiguous account is provided by Elliot Balfour, who served as an SPS administrator during the Condominium period:

> I remember two cases of child abuse, neither capable of being proved, and one extraordinary case when a whole quarter of the town accused a woman of debauching their daughters. Once again there was not an atom of concrete proof but I discovered that she had some sort of husband and made him guarantee her to be of good behaviour. I also told the lady herself that she was a naughty girl and that if she did not give up her wicked ways she would no doubt be found floating in the waters of the Blue Nile, which would cause one great deal of trouble (Balfour 1999: 46)

The account is unclear on multiple levels, in that like many colonial accounts it mentions same-sex relations in the same vein as child abuse, does not clarify whether the daughters in question had reached adulthood, oscillates between describing the alleged debaucher as a "girl" and "woman", and leaves what exactly the "debauching" constituted to the reader's imagination. Like many colonial accounts, therefore, it tells us little about the nature of gender and sexual diversity in Sudanese society, but does remind us that colonial officials saw the realm of familial and patriarchal authority, and implicitly that of communal justice, as potential arenas in which threats to sexual and gender propriety might be addressed.

14 Hayes Files: Sudan Government vs. Abdel Gadir El Gazuli AC-CP-70-42, Hayes Papers, SAD, Durham, UK.

15 2.D.Fasher A 45/1/1 McInnes to All Governors Ktm, 1 December 1949, NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

The Ruling Partnership and Elite Sudanese Attitudes

The memoranda in the "sodomy" file are also noteworthy for the fact that they discuss several articles in an Arabic language Sudanese newspaper, *Ḥaḍārat al-Sūdān* [*The Civilisation of Sudan*, usually shortened to *al-Ḥaḍāra*], which apparently sought to construct sexual deviancy as a social problem in a manner similar to the British. When Jackson proposed outlawing consensual homosexuality in 1925, he justified his call on the basis that "This abhorrence is being constantly referred to in the Hadara and all the religious teachers and respectable natives would welcome legislation of the kind proposed."[16] However, behind Jackson's claims lay a much more ambiguous British-Sudanese discourse about "sodomy", one which was at times mutually constitutive, and at times antagonistic.

The British-dominated Condominium regime had supported the establishment of *al-Ḥaḍāra* in the immediate post-war period. Heavily censored, and intended to act as an official government mouthpiece, it was this newspaper that provided vocal support for Britain's continued hegemony in Sudan, and it was also this newspaper that, at least according to the references made to it in the "sodomy" file, acted as a prominent advocate for a campaign against sexual non-conformity in the mid-1920s. The paper was funded by a number of religious dignitaries who in the years after the war had committed themselves to launching Sudan on the path to nationhood under British, rather than Egyptian, tutelage. It was also financially supported by the Condominium regime, thereby helping to ensure its largely pliant tone. Its editor and many of its most prominent supporters came from families at the heart of the Mahdist movement that had brought an end to Egypt's rule over Sudan in the 19th century (Sharkey 1999: 535–536; Troutt-Powell 2003: 180; Vezzadini 2015: 40–41). Having worked with the Egyptian government to defeat the Mahdist state in 1899, the British were now forming an uneasy alliance with the "neo-Mahdist" movement to curtail Egyptian influence in Sudan in the wake of Egypt's nationalist revolution (Warburg 2007: 677–678; Ibrahim 2004; Daly 2003: 285–287).

The establishment of *al-Ḥaḍāra* symbolised a new ruling partnership between the British administrative elite and the faction of the mercantile classes from riverain Sudan that had profited from the slave trade in the peripheries of the country in the 19th century, and which had backed the Mahdist movement as a reaction to the abolitionist policies of the British and Egyptians in Sudan, as well as anger at the excessive taxation imposed by the Turkiyya (Holt and Daly 2011: 63–65). The

16 Note by Governor, Berber Province, 19 January 1925, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

architects of the Condominium regime, such as Reginald Wingate, had used the anti-slavery cause to propagandise in favour of a campaign against the Mahdiyya, but once the Mahdiyya had been defeated, they sought to co-opt Sudan's slave-holding classes (Sikainga 1996: 37–38). In the 1920s the British and the mercantile elite shared two mutual interests; opposition to the Egyptian presence in Sudan, and a fear of the deleterious social consequences of rapid abolition, which in their view would unleash a Pandora's box of societal ills, including unemployment, prostitution, vagabondage – and sexual immorality.

In this sense, Jackson's claims about the views expressed in *al-Ḥaḍāra* might speak to the synthesis of Sudanese and British forms of anti-queer animus. However, the original *al-Ḥaḍāra* articles are untraceable,[17] and because we are therefore reliant on the paraphrased rehashing of their content in colonial files, we must proceed cautiously. To some extent, Jackson was co-opting *al-Ḥaḍāra* to pursue a set of specifically colonial concerns, and we must be prudent, given the lack of access to the original source, although views of the type inferred certainly did exist within elite circles in both Egypt and Sudan. The writers in *al-Ḥaḍāra* would probably have been conscious of Sudanese, and even Egyptian narratives, maintaining that the rule of the Turkiyya in Sudan had brought about cases of same-sex marriage in Sudan, and that the Mahdiyya had cleansed Sudan of these ills (Jacob 2005; Ibrahim 2008: 167).

The active homophobia of the colonial state cannot simply be rationalised as a pragmatic adjustment by the imperialists to the "fanaticism" of the ruling Muslim classes that they had co-opted. Senior Condominium officials believed that they were rescuing Sudanese society not from religious rigidity but also from moral decadence, including homosexuality. Let us take, for instance, the views of Reginald Wingate, Governor-General between 1899 and 1916, and Rudolf Slatin, Inspector General of Sudan between 1900 and 1914. In 1896 Slatin published the text *Fire and Sword in Sudan* based on his period as a captive of the Mahdī and his successor the Khalīfa. The English translation of the German original was heavily edited by Reginald Wingate, in his role as Director of Intelligence of the Egyptian Army, who used it as propaganda for his campaign against the Mahdiyya (Daly 1997: 71–75). Having already maintained that the Khalīfa had allowed adultery to flourish, Slatin and Wingate continue to observe that "A certain number of people also indulge in unnatural love: and at first the Khalifa made some attempt to check this by banishment to Reggaf". Rejaf was a Mahdist outpost in Southern Sudan, perhaps seen as a fitting destination for sinners who were to be banished, given its location outside the Mahdī's Islamic community. Nevertheless, at this point Slatin and Wingate added,

17 Correspondence with Dr Elena Vezzadini.

"latterly he has given up doing so. He has come to the conclusion that it is much easier to rule by despotism and tyranny a degraded nation than one which possesses a high standard of morality" (Slatin and Wingate 1999: 345). The Egyptian soldier Ibrāhīm Fawzī's account of the same policy, which he describes as being targeted at *mukhannathīn*, interprets it as being far less lenient. He notes that the majority of those who were exiled to the South died, and that those who were not exiled were either imprisoned and tortured or constantly monitored in order to force them to abandon the feminine aspect of their identity (Jacob 2005: 163).

Attitudes similar to Slatin and Wingate's are visible in Davies' accounts of his campaign to clamp down on same-sex relations in Sudan. These remarks should be contextualised by noting that they appear to be a response to the implication by an author in *al-Ḥaḍāra* that the government should do more. Nevertheless, his comments indicate that even in the era of "moral surrender",[18] when colonial governments were in theory at their least interventionist, senior officials were determined that it was they who must take the initiative in dragging a reluctant Sudanese population into their campaign to punish divergences from cis-heteronormativity. Davies maintained that

> the Government authorities in Khartoum Province did their best and arrested all those who were suspected of this debased habit, and in short, the Police are fighting by all means at their disposal, in a praiseworthy manner. But what about the efforts of the public? Up to the present, the leaders of the nation, its Ulema and all the thinking men have not lifted a finger to assist in the matter as if their religion, the duties of morality and of patriotism do not make it incumbent on them to do so. . .[19]

The various classes appealed to here were among those that were central to bolstering British hegemony in Sudan. Since the inception of the Condominium, the British had been committed to supporting the orthodox religious establishment in Sudan as represented by the formal religious scholars, or *'ulamā'* (Salomon 2016: 43–44). The appeal to "leaders of the nation" also reflects the post-World War I political dispensation in which the British were eager to acknowledge the idea of a separate Sudanese nation so as to provide a counterweight to Egyptian influence in the Condominium while also maintaining that this nascent national entity would require British stewardship for some time to come. This perhaps explains Davies' didactic tone. For him, the ability to purge social vices such as "sodomy" can be understood

18 For an application of the notion of Mamdani (2018) in the Sudanese context, see Ibrahim (2008: 144–147).

19 Memorandum by Reginald Davies, 19 June 1926, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

as one of the benchmarks of true nationhood – and he as the coloniser is the one who is to judge whether this benchmark has been reached.

Here, the aspiration for Sudan to be a nation free of homosexuality appears to be tied to the colonial politics of identity formation, rather than being a moral imperative emanating from the public at large. Remarks by Davies in 1926 are particularly revealing:

> On the other hand, the simple minded and ignorant people are liable to listen to the fabricated stories by those addicted to this habit and are more liable to be sympathetic with relatives and friends thus debased. Besides a number of mean, anonymous letters have been addressed to the authorities. This has, unluckily, been the attitude of the public towards an honourable campaign carried out by the Government.[20]

Unfortunately, no trace of these letters remains in the colonial archive, and it is hard to establish on what grounds the members of the Sudanese public referred to opposed the Condominium regime's queerphobic campaign. In different contexts, as we have seen, the colonisers maintained that the Sudanese public was alternately both deeply outraged by "sodomy" and utterly reluctant to do anything about it. Although it is impossible to generalise about the attitudes of the broader Sudanese public, the views of a number of elite Sudanese are accessible through their own writings.

For instance, although the original edition of *al-Ḥaḍāra* is untraceable, we can find similar views to those attributed to the editor of *al-Ḥaḍāra* in the memoirs of Bābikr Badrī, a former Mahdist warrior who went on to play a prominent role as an educationalist in Condominium Sudan. In his memoirs, Badrī recalls an encounter with a *mukhannath* (pl. *mukhannathīn*) who visited him in Omdurman market during the Mahdist period and his reasons for refusing his request to "make clove water to drink with his girls". Badrī explained to a friend "you know these *mukhannathīn*, how they long to get in touch with women in their homes, and what they say about them afterwards."[21] Badrī was afraid that the *mukhannath* would visit him in his home and become familiar with the female members of his household, and that if subsequently rejected they would "say of his women what [their] foul life and foul tongue prompted [them] to say" (Bedri 1969: 219–220).

Badrī's perception of the *mukhannath* as a threat to the domestic seclusion of women should be understood in the context of a broader elite moral panic in the 19th century about urban prostitution as a threat to the gendered power structures.

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20 Memorandum by Reginald Davies, 19 June 1926, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

21 I have used Yūsuf Badrī and George Scott's translation here, with the exception of the translation of *mukhannathīn* as "pansy-pimps", which is discussed below.

Yūsuf Badrī and George Scott's translation of Badrī's memoirs renders *mukhannath* as "a male prostitute and pimp", then later as "pansy-pimp" (Bedri 1969: 219–220).[22] This translation has much to say about the association of gender variance with prostitution in the minds of British colonial and Sudanese nationalist elites, since in classical and modern Arabic the term has had no such meaning.[23] Nevertheless, the social politics of prostitution in 19th century Sudan certainly informed Badrī's outlook. 19th century urbanisation had provided opportunities to a class of women who used prostitution as a means of living independently of their families, and both the Turkiyya and the Mahdist states had responded by attempting to enforce a policy of compulsory marriage (Spaulding and Beswick 1995: 525–526). For Badrī, the *mukhannath* is threatening not just because their gender ambiguity threatens to blur the distinction between the male and female spheres, but because, surrounded as they are by dissolute women, they might undermine the norms of sexual propriety he has established for the women of his own household. Badrī's hostility towards this figure is not principally expressed in cultural or religious terms, but in terms of the threat they pose to the gender order.

Just like Badrī, the colonisers saw male-assigned prostitutes as a threat to their particular vision of social order. The Condominium regime's treatment of these individuals differed markedly from its treatment of female-assigned prostitutes, who were in different contexts scorned and cherished by contemporary elites. At the peak of the 19th century, the possession of concubines came to signal social prestige, and following the nominal abolition of the slave trade by the Condominium regime, master-concubine relationships often evolved into client-prostitute relationships (Spaulding and Beswick 1995: 521–522, 528). As a result, the British Condominium government, the policy of which was shaped by its alliance with the former slaveholding classes, was willing to overlook the presence of brothels in which natal women offered sexual services. British troops in Sudan also frequented the same brothels, which encouraged the colonial regime to license a number of prostitutes so as to enable medical checks and prevent the spread of venereal disease to the soldiers (Spaulding and Beswick 1995: 527–528). Although the 1905 Vagabondage Ordinance officially criminalised runaway enslaved people and prostitutes, it was apparently used most frequently to target individuals who did not conform to the colonisers' binary gender model, often on the basis of a separate clause criminalising cross-dressing. For instance, in Khartoum North between 1923 and 1925, 2,159

22 For the use of *mukhannath*/*mukhannathīn* in the original, see Badrī ([1959–1961]: 169–170).

23 Rowson (1991), in an article on the *mukhannathūn* of the first Islamic century, translates the term as "effeminates"; Hans Wehr (1994), in his *Dictionary of Modern Standard Arabic*, also gives "effeminate". Neither makes any reference to prostitution, nor does Almarri (2018) in his discussion of the term's etymology. I have also followed Almarri in using the "they" pronoun.

of the 2,714 individuals arrested for prostitution under the Vagabondage Ordinance were identified by the state records as male (Spaulding and Beswick 1995: 531). The fact that the colonial state criminalised cross-dressing is in itself evidence that it was far from being fully legally tolerant of gender and sexual diversity, and indeed that it was particularly fixated upon penalising the more "feminine" partners in any non-heterosexual relations.

Davies outlines the rationale behind the state's targeting of these individuals by once more referencing an article from *al-Ḥaḍāra*:

> The Editor begs to draw the attention of the authorities to the fact that [a] number of these low human beings do actually live in brothels with public women, where they practise their low trade, and as the ignorant public know that these public women are licensed by the government, they are under the impression that these low men are also licensed - so it would be to everybody's interests to try and expel all such persons.[24]

It should be reiterated that the original copy of *al-Ḥaḍāra* is untraceable, and as such it is impossible to ascertain to what extent Davies is distorting or exaggerating the editor's views so as to frame his own narrative and agenda. Nevertheless, his approach was very much tied to the colonial state's efforts to co-opt the class the editor of *al-Ḥaḍāra* represented, for whose benefit cis-female prostitution had been licensed. The Vagabondage Ordinance was in part a product of the colonial state's lukewarm attitude towards abolition, which was itself shaped by its desire to limit the costs of early state expansion, its preoccupation with social order, and its reliance on a ruling partnership with the former slaveholding classes (Sikainga 1996: 47–48). The Vagabondage Ordinance was principally used against recently emancipated Sudanese whom the colonial labour market had failed to integrate, and in practise served the purpose of deterring enslaved people from leaving their masters (Sikainga 1996: 47, 50). Condominium officials often maintained that the migration of emancipated Sudanese and their children towards urban areas was responsible for a proliferation of crime and general social disorder (Berridge 2012: 448). The colonial perception, influenced by contemporary racial narratives, was that both emancipation and urban migration had removed the natural order that restrained the childlike and amoral tendencies of Africans (Vezzadini 2010: 84). The moral panic surrounding emancipation and the perceived rise in vagabondage thus formed an important background to the queerphobic campaign of the colonial state. Davies observed of the targets of his queerphobic campaign: "We are told

24 Note by Reginald Davies, Intelligence Department, Khartoum, 7 June 1926, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

that the majority of those arrested are persons notorious as vagabonds and most of them have been previously tried as such".[25]

The British and Sudanese elite narratives coincided in their understanding of male-assigned prostitutes as a threat to the social order. Elsewhere, however, elite Sudanese employed queerphobic rhetoric to express their hostility to the colonial presence, and in particular the colonial education system. A number of the available accounts reflect the views of the class of qadis [religious scholars and judges], who were hostile to both the British teachers and the effendis of Gordon College, and contrasted the lifestyle there with their own more austere experience at *al-Maʿhad al-ʿIlmī*, which had been founded by the colonisers in 1912 to separate Islamic learning from the mainstream elite education system (Ibrahim 2008: 83–86). Mudaththir al-Būshī, a famous qadi who had studied engineering for a year at Gordon Memorial College (GMC) but left to join *al-Maʿhad al-ʿIlmī*, described the director of the GMC, N.R. Udal, as "not normally of good morality", and "a bad man in his policy, in his behaviours" who had "done a lot of disgraces to the college" (*Al-Riwāyāt al-Shafawiyya li-Thuwwār 1924* 1974: 65).[26] Al-Būshī's language was allusive, but his account coincides with a more widespread Sudanese perception that "homosexuality was prevalent among the British" (Deng and Daly 1989: 56–57). Others were more explicit. One teacher at the *Maʿhad* described the students at GMC as the "progeny of N.R. Udal", 'sprouted and watered by "men's semen", who "lay face down wiggling all night like a bride at her wedding ceremony" (Ibrahim 2008: 86).[27] The same author also attacked the students for wearing European dress and speaking the coloniser's language (Ibrahim 2008: 86). In this context, therefore, the rumours of passive and receptive same-sex relations at the college act as a metaphor for the passive reception of European culture by the effendis.

Al-Būshī was a prominent participant in the White Flag League who looked favourably upon Egyptian nationalism, and while adopting a similar emphasis on the "externality" of sexual immorality to Jackson, identifies the British as the culprits in its importation. The synthesis of British colonial anti-queer animus and Sudanese elite narratives, therefore, was far from complete. We can only speculate as to whether the authors of the now untraceable articles in *al-Ḥaḍāra* saw the British, the Egyptians or Sudanese society itself as being most responsible for the rise in sexual immorality they sought to decry. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of Sudanese elite narratives might explain why at times Jackson and Davies appear to be using the authors in *al-Ḥaḍāra* to justify their queerphobic crusades, and at others

25 Memorandum by Reginald Davies, 19 June 1926, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

26 My thanks to Elena Vezzadini for providing this reference. The translation is hers.

27 Here I am relying on Ibrahim's paraphrasing of the author's words.

seem to be concerned to shift the blame for the perceived prevalence of "sodomy" in the Condominium away from themselves and on to the Sudanese. At the same time, there is a parallel between the accounts of al-Būshī and the *Ma'had* teacher and those colonial officials who, as discussed above, saw both modern education and homosexuality as among the "septic germs of modernity". The British themselves attempted to rein in the influence of the generation of effendis trained at the GMC in the wake of the White Flag movement, viewing them as responsible for the rise of secular nationalism, and to foster "traditional" forms of authority instead. In this sense there is an overlap between the colonial and conservative Islamic criticisms of the supposedly effeminising effects of modern education.[28]

British Colonial Hypermasculinity and Queerness Denied

Aside from anti-Egyptianism, contemporary medical ideology and concerns about abolition and Sudanese labour, there is another potential factor that might explain why members of the Sudan Political Service (SPS) pursued such a virulent queerphobic campaign at this time: it was a means of undermining the new Governor-General of Sudan, Geoffrey Archer (1925–1926), whom they believed to be a homosexual. Hassan Ibrahim claims "that Archer was a homosexual, and that this was widely known by members of the service who could not understand his appointment to such a position as Governor-General of Sudan" (Ibrahim 1980: 222). He bases this claim on his own correspondence with the historian Robert O. Collins, who had personal contacts with many of those who served in the late Condominium period. Whether these claims about Archer's sexual orientation were true or just rumours circulated to undermine his unpopular governor-generalship, the coincidence between Archer's arrival and the demands by SPS officials for a campaign against homosexuality is uncanny. Archer arrived in Khartoum on 5 January 1925, at which point, Daly (1977) notes, "he was instantly disliked." It was on 19 January 1925 that Jackson circulated his memorandum calling for "sodomy" to be made illegal in Sudan.[29] The Condominium Regime's public campaign against sexual and gender minorities in Sudan, as documented in the "Sodomy" file, appears to have been at its most vehement in the period during and shortly after Archer's governor-gener-

28 For the synthesis of British colonial and Islamist narratives about modern education, see Berridge 2019.

29 Note by Governor, Berber Province, 19 January 1925, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

alship, from which he was forced to resign due to the personal hostility of his fellow SPS members. After this point, the correspondence dries up, with the exception of a note in 1934 by Douglas Newbold advocating leniency.[30]

One important question remains: given that the attitude of British colonial officialdom in Sudan was so overtly queerphobic, and that the state often used the available legislation to penalise sexual and gender transgression, why did the Condominium regime make such a notable break with its counterparts elsewhere in the Empire such as India or the other African colonial territories, and twice refrain from introducing a law criminalising same-sex intercourse – in 1899, when Sudan's criminal codes were first established, and in 1925, when they were being reviewed?[31] It is impossible to answer this question without a degree of supposition. It might be argued that there was an unspoken concern that formal legislation criminalising same-sex intercourse might expose "scandalous" behaviour within the British administrative elite itself, thus threatening to undermine the fragile vision of white hypermasculinity upon which the colonial racial hierarchy was built.

It is well established that in spite of the visceral homophobia of official colonial discourse, many colonial Europeans saw the colonies as places where they could escape the sexual restrictiveness of the metropole, where the government had criminalised acts of "gross indecency" between one man and another (Aldrich 2003: 1–4; Cook 2006: 65). This did not prevent the formal criminalisation of same-sex intercourse in other British territories, however, so why was Sudan an exception? Degrees of celibacy within the SPS were high even in contrast with other colonial administrations. Recruits were required to be single men, and permission was not usually granted for them to marry until four or five years into their period of service. In 1930, only 64 of the service's 158 members were married. Even married officials were often forbidden from bringing their wives to Sudan on the basis that they would supposedly not cope well with the climate. This contributed to the Sudanese perception that in the absence of female companions, many British officials were practising homosexuals (Boddy 2007; Deng and Daly 1989: 56–57).

Colonial officialdom would no doubt have been concerned by the perception in Sudan that homosexuality was widespread within the British administrative elite. All the colonial officials interviewed on the subject by Martin Daly and Francis Deng in the post-Condominium era strenuously denied that this was the case, maintaining that strict selection procedures focused on "robust" masculinity, and rigid taboos

30 Memorandum by Douglas Newbold, 31 December 1934, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

31 For the 1925 revision of the Sudan Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, see Massoud (2013: 60).

against same-sex relations prevented any such liaisons from occurring. When seeming evidence of such relations did emerge, it led to conspiracies of silence. One notable murder trial in the 1940s, in which Ramsay, the District Commissioner in Kapoeta, was believed to have been murdered by one of his Sudanese servants, forced British officials to confront the apparent existence of homosexuality among members of the SPS. Rowton Simpson, the SPS official who acted as President of the Major Court that tried the case, argued that the court "was left in no doubt" that the official in question "was on abnormally familiar terms" with one of his Sudanese manservants. The Court was satisfied that "sodomy" had taken place, and further believed that the jealousy this provoked in another manservant was what led to the murder.[32] It is notable that all three presiding members on the Major Court were British, which was unusual for such cases in the late colonial period, and that Simpson denied Ramsay's relations with his manservant in conversation with other officials. Another District Commissioner, A.J.V. Arthur, wrote to his parents that the story of Ramsay's intimate relationship with his manservant had been spread by a police official, but that "Simpson himself does not believe this was true – and I find it impossible to believe", noting that Ramsay "was one of the nicest and straightest fellows you could hope to meet anywhere".[33] The secrecy surrounding the trial would almost certainly have been a product of the fear that official recognition that homosexual relations had occurred across the colonial divide would undermine the gendered and racial hierarchies that were critical to the Condominium regime.[34]

A series of allegations made in private correspondence by Sudan's Director of Public Works, MacDougall Ralston Kennedy, illustrates the significance of the unspoken fear that cases of same-sex intimacy coming to light might destabilise the colonial racial order. Kennedy had long been at odds with the Governor-General, Reginald Wingate, over major public works decisions, and in 1918 the Condominium Government had put him on trial on charges of "insubordination".[35] Kennedy was furious, and wrote to Wingate, who was now High Commissioner in Egypt, threatening to discredit the trial by exposing the role of the new Governor-General, Lee Stack, in "countenancing a career of sodomy on the part of one of his senior British officers" with Wingate's backing. Kennedy declared that after he reported "charges of sodomy brought by certain of my native clerks against this official" to Stack, Stack's response was that "as British official prestige would suffer it would be well not to take up the matter officially – better to let it "slide", as the official would

32 See Rowton Simpson Memoirs, SAD 720/4, Durham, UK, p. 170–179.

33 A.J.V Arthur, Letter to Parents, 18 April 1952, SAD 726/6/73, Durham, UK.

34 For a similar case provoking similar anxieties and handled in a similar manner, see Schmidt 2008.

35 C.W. Gwynn to Mr Barrington, 22 April 1956, SAD 400/3/32, Durham, UK.

fairly shortly be out of the country".[36] Kennedy noted that "I did let it "slide" merely out of respect for the reputation of our race", but now facing his own disciplinary trial, he effectively attempted to blackmail Wingate by threatening to send letters to officials in Egypt revealing the details of the case.[37] Kennedy was ultimately dismissed, and was charged with criminal libel alongside another British official in 1921.[38] It is obviously impossible to discern the factual accuracy of Kennedy's claims; whether or not the incidents referred to occurred, however, it is clear that the threat legal charges of "sodomy" posed to "the reputation of our race" was at the forefront of colonial officials' minds. The scandal provoked by Kennedy's letter would presumably have still been at the forefront of their minds when Sudan's criminal codes were reviewed in 1925.

Some of the officials who spoke to Daly and Deng were willing to concede that various of their colleagues may have had a sublimated homosexual orientation. Two of Deng and Daly's interlocutors suggested that Douglas Newbold, a long-serving member of the SPS, who was at one point civil secretary, enjoyed the company of men, while denying that he would ever have been a practising homosexual. Robin A. Hodgkin categorised Newbold as being one of those he considered "homosexuals in a nonactive way", noting that he was criticised by many for having young district commissioners round to stay at his house, although Hodgkin himself maintained that these relationships were purely platonic (Deng and Daly 1989: 58–59). Colonial cultures were often defined by a highly ambivalent attitude towards male homosexuality insofar as they exploited the relative absence of white women to valorise white homosocial bonding, while denigrating visible manifestations of non-heterosexual orientation as unmasculine and degenerate (Bronski 2012: 44–46).

As noted above, it was Newbold who in 1934 attempted to bring the SPS internal discussion on the criminalisation of homosexuality to a close by advocating leniency. As Governor of Kordofan, he noted that

> I have no doubt that some of the Sudanese officials of this province are homosexuals. I state this as a pathetic fact rather than as a criticism and I would only urge that until medical science, by psycho-analysis or surgical means, can devise a cure for these unhappy addicts, we should err on the side of leniency.[39]

36 M. Ralston Kennedy to F.R. Wingate, 10 February 1918, Wingate Papers, SAD 167/2/211, Durham, UK.

37 M. Ralston Kennedy to F.R. Wingate, 10 February 1918, Wingate Papers, SAD 167/2/211, Durham, UK.

38 Michael Barrington to Richard Hill, 13 June 1961, SAD 400/9/9, Durham, UK. Barrington does not mention what allegations the libel trial concerned, and may have been unaware of Kennedy's allegations against the unnamed official, or wary of discussing them.

39 Memorandum by Douglas Newbold, 31 December 1934, CivSec (1) 41/1/2 "Sodomy", NRO, Khartoum, Sudan.

The fact that Newbold referred to "homosexuals" rather than "sodomy" suggests he was more open to contemporary sexological discourse than Jackson and saw it as relevant in Sudan. We might surmise that the SPS resolved a number of its own unspoken inner conflicts by projecting them onto the Sudanese public. Debates over how to respond to Egyptian and Sudanese homosexuality could be understood as a way of articulating sentiments about homosexuality in the SPS that could not be expressed openly – what Stoler (1995: 129, fn 96) calls a "deflected discourse". This might explain why Newbold responded to the perception that he was himself homosexual – assuming he was aware of it, of course – by advocating leniency towards a "Sudanese" problem, or why SPS members who feared the Sudanese perception that homosexuality was a British "import" (Deng and Daly 1989: 57) targeted Egyptians officials for doing the same, or why officials who wanted to target Archer on the basis of his purported homosexuality instead attempted to purge Sudanese society of those who failed to conform to colonial heteronormative ideals.

Conclusion

Both the ideological outlook and the practice of the Condominium government were profoundly queerphobic, but it did not exercise its prejudices through legislation designed specifically to target those who deviated from colonial cisheteronormativity. The Condominium state's reluctance to formally introduce a law penalising same-sex intimacy may have stemmed from its own fear of the emergence of scandals involving colonial officials that would undermine the colonial racial hierarchy, which was built on an image of the British administrator as hypermasculine and heteronormative.

In seeking the roots of state anti-queer violence, therefore, it is important to emphasise not just legislation but also the broader discursive frameworks that have constructed non-normative sexual and gender identities as "external" to Sudan. When marginalised communities are deprived of the capacity to narrate their own history, it becomes possible for more empowered actors to exploit their identities for their own political, cultural and ideological ends. This was the case throughout the Condominium period, as both colonial and Sudanese actors mobilised rumours of same-sex sexuality as a means of justifying their particular worldviews and delegitimising a variety of opponents. For many of the British colonisers, the narrative that same-sex sexuality was an Egyptian import was a natural means by which to undermine their unwanted co-dominal partners. The understanding of same-sex sexuality as a foreign import was also tied to the British sense that they were stewards of a timelessly "tribal" Africa that had to be protected from urban vices. In

many regards, British and Sudanese queerphobic discourses were mutually constitutive, as the homosexual/pansy/*mukhannath*/*lūṭī* was constructed as the "other" of a social order produced by the ruling partnership of the SPS and "traditional" elites, while at other times, homophobic tropes were employed by Sudanese nationalists to undermine the colonisers.

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