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Historical Dictionary Of The Sudan (Historical Dictionaries Of Africa)



Synopsis

The Republic of the Sudan was long the largest country in Africa and, according to the general consensus, also one of the least successful in many ways. This was not entirely its fault since it lay along the fault line between Muslim and Christian Africa and between the Nile Valley civilizations and African Sudanic cultures. This partly explains the long and bloody warfare waged by the Southerners to achieve independence, which they did in July 2011. So this hefty book actually covers not one but two states. This fourth edition of the Historical Dictionary of the Sudan does so, first, through a lengthy and detailed chronology tracing its relatively few successes and numerous failures. The introductory essay does an admirable job of putting it all in perspective. But the most informative part is the dictionary, with now over 700 entries for this fourth edition. They deal with important personalities, politics, the economy, society, culture, religion and inevitably the civil war. There are also appendixes and an extensive bibliography.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since the third edition was published, the Republic of Sudan has been partitioned, leading to the independence of the Republic of South Sudan in July 2011. As a result of this major development, this dictionary has been greatly expanded to include much new information on political parties, militias, towns and cities, and the civil war, among many other topics. In addition, new maps, charts, illustrations, and tables have been added. Authors Kramer, Lobban, and Fluehr-Lobban are experts

active in the Sudan Studies Association. They deserve commendation for trying "to project a Sudanese point of view to avoid or minimize Eurocentrism; where Sudanese judgments differ we have tried to present multiple and sometimes contradictory views." Similar to the other titles in Scarecrow's historical dictionary series, this work primarily includes A-Z entries covering people, politics, social issues, institutions, and events. In addition, it features maps (of uneven quality), an extensive chronological time line, and an unannotated bibliography. A very brief bibliographic essay provides evaluations of some useful sources. Especially helpful is the much lengthier introduction on the history of the country from the advent of Islam through postindependence. For coverage of much earlier times, see Lobban's Historical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval Nubia. A recurring problem with Scarecrow's historical dictionaries is that the entries do not cite any sources, making it very difficult for students and researchers to do follow-up research. Nevertheless, this is an outstanding ready-reference source providing hard-to-find information on one of the most important countries on the African continent. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-level undergraduates and above; general readers. (CHOICE)

The Historical Dictionary of Sudan, like its predecessor, starts with the rise of Islam. It concludes with Sudan partitioned into two countries. As with other Historical Dictionaries in the series, it begins with a chronology that has brief entries for the period from 5000 B.C.E. to the 1400s (the time period covered in the Historical Dictionary of Ancient Nubia) and fuller ones from 1504 to 2012 (the time period of this volume). An introductory essay precedes the alphabetic entries about people, places, events, and more. The seven appendixes are: a current factfile; ethno-linguistic groups in or adjoining the Sudan; sultans; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century administrators; 1890 agreement for the administration of the Sudan; political structure and administration; and educational institutions. There is an extensive bibliography broken down into areas such as historical, political, economic, cultural, and more. It includes electronic sources as well as books, journal entries, and audio-visual materials. This work is intended to be a comprehensive reference and research tool for undergraduates and generalist researchers and helpful to specialists in Sudan and African/Middle Eastern studies. (American Reference Books Annual) I would recommend this book to any library with an interest in the region, or in international relations in general, as one of the few balanced resources on an area of potential major conflict. (Reference Reviews)

Robert S. Kramer is Professor of History at St. Norbert College where he has taught African and Middle Eastern history since 1989. He first visited Sudan in 1986-87 and has been following it closely since then. During this time he has written numerous articles and book chapters on Islam

and Muslim societies in Africa and also produced a book, Holy City on the Nile: Omdurman during the Mahdiyya. He was already a co-author of the third edition of this book. Robert A. Lobban, Jr. is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Rhode Island College, where he served as Director, Program of African and Afro-American Studies. He, too, has written extensively, including co-authoring the second and third editions. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and was Director of General Education at Rhode Island College. Like her husband, she is an old Sudan hand, and has visited frequently and written extensively, this including co-authoring the second and third editions.

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