

**The development of the “Sudan Pionier Mission”  
into a mission among the Nile-Nubians (1900-1966)**

by

**GERALD LAUCHE**

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PROMOTER: PROF DR C SAUER

CO-PROMOTER: PROF DR J N J KRITZINGER

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Student No 34383638

## Declaration of Authorship

I declare that „*The development of the „Sudan Pionier Mission“ into a mission among the Nile-Nubians (1900-1966)*“ is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

  
Gerald Lauche

Cairo, February 22, 2015

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By	Gerald Lauche
Degree	DTh – Doctor of Theology
Subject	Missiology
Promoter	Prof Dr C Sauer
Co-Promoter	Prof Dr JNJ Kritzing

## **Summary**

This study deals with modern mission history in north eastern Africa. When the rigid Islamistic Mahdi regime in the Sudan was defeated by an Anglo-Egyptian army in 1898, H G Guinness and K Kumm came to Aswan and initiated the Sudan Pionier Mission (SPM) in 1900. The SPM had its spiritual roots in the Holiness Movement and became an interdenominational German-based faith mission. Although the SPM was started in Aswan to advance from there to the south to evangelize animistic people groups in the Eastern Sudan, the SPM actually consolidated its work in and around Aswan for internal and external reasons. Thus, the focus of the SPM shifted from an animistic to an Islamic audience with a special emphasis on the Nile-Nubians occupying the Nile valley between Aswan and Dongola. This study contributes generally to the historiography of the SPM between 1900 until 1966 and analyzes especially the development of the SPM into a mission among the Nile-Nubians during this period. The ethnic groups of the Nile-Nubians will be introduced and their historical, political, social, economic, linguistic and religious situation will be presented. This thesis further describes the topographical development of the SPM and its missiological approach. A special emphasis is given to the life story of the Kunuuzi Nubian convert Samu’iil Ali Hiseen (SAH-1863-1900) and his multifaceted contribution to the work of the SPM. SAH was the first Nubian evangelist in modern times and the major stakeholder of the Nubian vision. Neither the history of the SPM as “Nubian Mission” nor the life and work of SAH have been researched and presented before.

## **Key Terms**

Egypt, Nile-Nubians, Kunuuzi, Sudan Pionier Mission (SPM), Henry Grattan Guinness, Karl Kumm, Samu’iil Ali Hiseen (SAH), Samuel Jakob Enderlin, Gertrud von Massenbach, Elisabeth Herzfeld

# Dedication

I dedicate this work ...

... to the men and women of Nubia who have not yet heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

... to the men and women of Nubia who have heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and committed their lives to following their Saviour, whatever the price might be.

... to the generations of men and women who have dedicated their lives in a powerful demonstration of sacrificial ministry among the Nile-Nubians in Egypt and the Sudan.

... to future generations who are going to lay down their lives in an *Agape-driven* ministry to bring in the harvest.

Envoys will come from Egypt;  
Cush will submit herself to God.

Psalm 68:31

..., but [he] went on his way rejoicing.

Acts 8:39

And they sang a new song:

You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open the seals,  
because you were slain,  
and with your blood  
you purchased men for God  
from every tribe and language  
and people and nation.

Revelation 5:9

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I want to express my gratitude towards God that he has called me to serve this wonderful unreached people group. I want to thank him that he allowed me to discover his Story with the SPM and its successor organizations in their ministry to the Nubians.

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# Preface

This study is focused on the history of the Sudan Pionier Mission (SPM – Sudan Pioneer Mission). The mission changed its name twice during the time that was researched. In 1928 it became the Evangelische Muhammedaner Mission (EMM – Evangelical Muhammedan Mission) and in 1953 it changed again to Evangelische Mission in Oberägypten (EMO – Evangelical Mission in Upper Egypt). The Swiss branch became independent in 1935 and was then called Schweizer Verein für Evangelische Muhammedaner-Mission (SVEMM – Swiss Society for Evangelical Muhammedan Mission). This name was then changed in 1962 to Evangelische Nilland Mission (SENM – Swiss Evangelical Nile-Land Mission). In this study SPM has been used in reference to all the aforementioned names except when the use of a specific name was necessary for clarity.

All Biblical quotations and references have been taken from the New International Version (NIV) – version 1978.

Translations from German or Arabic into English are exclusively from the author if no reference is given.

Nubian names or words that are of particular importance are spelled in an easily readable way. The long vowels are doubled in these words, as in Hiseen, Dongolaawi or Kunuuzi.

Arabic words and place names are spelled in the common English way to provide the reader with easy recognition and understanding.

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## List of Abbreviations

ABS	American Bible Society
AM	American Mission
AMZ	<i>Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift</i>
AUC	American University in Cairo
AuÜ	<i>Afrika und Übersee</i>
AWM	Arab World Ministries
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BM	<i>Baseler Mission</i>
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Languages
BSOE	Bible Society of Egypt
CIM	China Inland Mission
CMJ	Church Mission to the Jews
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CSC	Cairo Study Center
DCVSF	<i>Deutsche Christliche Vereinigung studierender Frauen</i>
EDWM	Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions
EGM	Egypt General Mission
ELTG	<i>Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde</i>
ELTI	East London Training Institute
em	<i>Zeitschrift für Evangelikale Missiologie</i>
EMM	<i>Evangelische Muhammedaner Mission</i>
EMMK	<i>Evangelische Mohammedaner-Mission Konolfingen</i>
EMO	<i>Evangelische Mission in Oberägypten (since 1953)</i>
EMO	<i>Evangeliumsgemeinschaft Mittlerer Osten (since 1990)</i>
ETSC	Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo
FRG	<i>Federal Republic of Germany</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archology</i>
LXX	<i>Septuagint</i>
MECO	<i>Middle East Christian Outreach</i>
MN	Mission am Nil International
MO	<i>Le Monde Oriental</i>
MSOS	<i>Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen</i>
MW	The Moslem World
NAM	North Africa Mission
NMP	Nile Mission Press
NT	New Testament
OLZ	<i>Orientalische Literaturzeitung</i>
OT	Old Testament
P	<i>Der Pionier</i>
SAH	<i>Samu 'il Ali Hissein</i>
SCOC	Sudan Church of Christ
SENM	<i>Schweizerische Evangelische Nillandmission</i>
SGM	Scripture Gift Mission
SNR	Sudan Notes and Records
SOS	School of Oriental Studies
SP	<i>Der Sudan Pionier</i>
SPM	<i>Sudan Pionier Mission</i>
SUGIA	<i>Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika</i>



SUM	Sudan United Mission
SVEMM	<i>Schweizer Verein für Evangelische Muhammedaner Mission</i>
UNISA	University of South Africa, Pretoria
UPCNA	United Presbyterian Church of North America
UPCS	United Presbyterian Church of Scotland (UPCS)
WZKM	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZES	<i>Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen</i>
ZKS	<i>Zeitschrift für Kolonialsprachen</i>
ZuD	<i>Zeugnis und Dienst im Orient</i>

# 1. Introduction

Christian mission has always been challenged by the fact that there is a “large segment of the world’s population that lives without a viable witness of the gospel or a valid opportunity to accept or reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour” (Dunavant 2000:980). Therefore the Pauline principle “to preach the Gospel where Christ was not known” (Romans 15:20) has become a leading motive for many missionary initiatives throughout the centuries. The intense debate that started in the mid-1970s regarding the definition of what a “mission field” is has led to a paradigm shift. The focus shifted from the concept of regions and nation-states to people groups (McQuilken 2000:808-809). The new emphasis on the “hidden”, “unreached” or “unevangelized” ethno-linguistic groups does justice to the Biblical understanding of *ethne* in Genesis 12:3, Matthew 28:19 and Revelation 5:9.<sup>1</sup> Christian mission is a love response to the sacrifice and salvation of Jesus Christ and an attempt to proclaim the Gospel by crossing geographical, political, cultural, linguistic and religious barriers.

## 1.1 The background of this study

This thesis is concerned with a tiny part of modern mission history in Northeast Africa, to be more precise in the Nile valley between the First Nile Cataract near Aswan and the Sixth Nile Cataract near Khartoum. Christianity had infiltrated the Nile valley as early as the first century (Richter 2002:141-148). Yet the official conversion of the three Nubian kingdoms took place in the sixth century AD and Christianity lasted until the fourteenth century AD. In 1315 Islam became the official religion of the Nile valley while Christianity gradually declined and gave way to Islamization and Arabization (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000; Werner 2013). In Egypt, Christianity survived the onslaught of Islam and took on the role of an ethnic and religious minority. In Northern Sudan, Christianity virtually disappeared. When the rigid Islamic Mahdi regime was defeated by an Anglo-Egyptian army in 1898, western Christians considered this to be a clear signal to reach out to the unreached sub-Saharan Sudan Belt by way of the River Nile. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Sudan Belt was considered as one of the least reached areas in the world (Sauer 2005:21). The term Sudan Belt that is no longer in common use included the *Western Sudan*, the region along the river Niger, the *Central Sudan*, the region around lake Chad, and the *Eastern Sudan*, the area immediately to the west of the Upper Nile (:48-49). In this period which was characterized by

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<sup>1</sup> On the theological concept of the unreached regions cf Fiedler (1992:276-282).

a strong vision and different attempts to reach out to the unevangelized Sudan Belt, Grattan Guinness, Karl Kumm and Lucy Guinness-Kumm came to Aswan in 1899/1900 to initiate the *Sudan Pionier Mission* (SPM)<sup>2</sup>. This mission was intended to move forward from Aswan via the Nile valley to the unreached region of the Eastern Sudan.<sup>3</sup> The SPM started with an Egyptian Copt and a Nubian convert in Aswan and became a German-based mission (Held 1925:6). Regarding the historical typology of Protestant missions, the SPM is part of the post-classical mission movement that followed the era of the classical missions (Fiedler 1992:12-35). The major group of the post-classical missions was often referred to as non-denominational, independent, interdenominational or faith missions (Covell 2000:353). These faith missions are directly or indirectly influenced by Hudson Taylor and his mission principles. One of the main characteristics of the faith missions was to penetrate the unreached interiors or frontiers of many countries (:353; Bacon 1984:9). Although the SPM started in Aswan with the intention to advance to the south in order to evangelize mainly animistic people groups, it was forced to consolidate its work in and around Aswan for internal and external reasons. The focus of the SPM shifted immediately to an Islamic audience, away from the many tribes of the Eastern Sudan to the inhabitants of the Aswan region, the Bishariyyin, and especially to the Nubians in, around and south of the city. Soon, the SPM considered the Nile-Nubians as “their” unreached people group who were in urgent need of the Gospel. A constant reminder of this mandate was the Kunuuzi Nubian convert Samu’iil Ali Hiseen (SAH)<sup>4</sup>, the first Nubian evangelist of modern times and worker of the SPM from its beginning in 1900 until his death in 1927.

## 1.2 The need for and significance of the study

This thesis is meant to be a contribution to the historiography of the western international movement of faith missions, which today has sent the majority of missionaries worldwide, but lacks more detailed documentation. More specifically, it follows the urgent and general call

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the fact that the SPM became a German organization, throughout this thesis the German spelling of the SPM or its abbreviation will be used. The name SPM was changed into Evangelische Muhammedaner-Mission (EMM) (Evangelical Muhammedan Mission) in October 1928. This name was replaced by Evangelische Mission in Oberägypten (EMO) (Evangelical Mission in Upper Egypt) in 1953. Its present name, chosen in 1990, is Evangeliumsgemeinschaft Mittlerer Osten (EMO) (Fellowship of the Gospel in the Middle East). The Swiss successor organisations were called Schweizer Verein für Muhammedaner Mission (SVMM) (Swiss Association for Muhammedan Mission) since 1935. In 1962, it was renamed Schweizerische Evangelische Nillandmission (SENM) (Swiss Evangelical Nileland Mission). Since 1998, its name is Mission am Nil International (MN) (Mission at the Nile International).

<sup>3</sup> The name “Sudan” in the name of the organization was a constant reminder of the overall vision. During that period it was common to include a geographical reference in the name of the respective mission.

<sup>4</sup> Since Samu’iil Ali Hiseen was a key person in the work of the SPM, he is the one that will be most mentioned in this research. We have chosen the abbreviation of his three names “SAH” to indicate his former and his new religious identity.

by Klaus Fiedler to write the history of German faith missions, which has been neglected for so long (Fiedler 1998:136-151). This call was modified by Andreas Baumann and his request to write the history of the German contribution to the fulfilment of the Great Commission in the Orient (Baumann 2005:168-183) and by Christof Sauer who has called for the writing of the history of German missions to Muslims (Sauer 2005b:67-91). The present state of research that will be presented below will clearly show that the SPM has generally received only very little attention in recent historiographic studies.

Given the framework of this threefold call, the present study does not intend to provide a comprehensive historical description of the SPM. Moreover, it seeks to contribute an important piece to the historiography and missiology of the SPM by giving special attention to the ethnic focus of the SPM. About a decade after its inception, the SPM was regarded by other organisations as “the Nubian Mission” (Unruh 1950:23). This perception was based on four essential aspects. First, the mission’s center was located in geographical proximity to the Nile-Nubians. Second, SPM had established growing contacts to Nubians especially through the medical service. Third, the versatile involvement of the Nubian evangelist SAH was a constant reminder of the Nubian vision. Fourth, SAH’s outstanding contribution in the field of Bible translation and linguistics provided valuable material for the work among the Kunuuzi Nubians. Until today, the SPM and its successor organizations have remained the only mission agency with an ongoing ministry among the Nile-Nubians. This very special focus of the SPM has hardly found any mention and appreciation in scholarly missiological research.

Another significant aspect of this study is the first presentation of the comprehensive life story of SAH in a scholarly work. This is followed by a detailed description of his literary contributions including the translation of Biblical texts, the writing of ethnographic texts and other linguistics tools in the Kunuuzi language.

### **1.3 Present state of research**

In the following review on the present state of research, we will survey three aspects related to this study. First, we will indicate the references on the SPM in general. Second, we will mention any reference to the SPM as mission among Nubians. Third, we will refer to works on SAH.

### **1.3.1 Reference to the SPM in scholarly works**

There are only a few scholarly studies that deal with the SPM extensively. Peter Moor (1993) deals in his unpublished master's thesis, *Die Entwicklung zur Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Schweizer Evangelischen Mohammedaner Mission mit der Basler Mission von 1937 bis 1939* (1993), with the Swiss branch of the EMM becoming independent in 1935. R Strähler (1998) examined "the tension between a reserved and an aggressive approach of the missionary work among Muslims" in his unpublished MA thesis using the EMO as example. The most thorough piece of scholarly work can be found in the dissertation by Christof Sauer (2005) with the title *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt: Guinness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission* (2005). In his profound research, Sauer describes the early years of the SPM (1900-1904) and the crucial role of the Guinnesses and the Kumms in its inception, establishment and development. He pays attention to the SPM's work among Nubians and appreciates the role of SAH as a Nubian evangelist. Dagmar Bachhuber (2002) completed an unpublished medical-historical dissertation, under the title *Dr med Elisabeth Herzfeld (1890-1966): Eine der ersten in Leipzig niedergelassenen Ärztinnen*, describing the life and work of the SPM missionary doctor Elisabeth Herzfeld. In his extensive dissertation on the history and ecclesiology of faith missions, Klaus Fiedler (1992) makes numerous references to the SPM, based on SPM publications and materials from its archives. The nature of his comprehensive study only allowed him to touch on certain characteristics of the SPM and to present historical sketches of its founders Guinness and Kumm. Brief references to the SPM can be found in the scholarly writings of Spartalis (1994), Drescher (1998a; 2005), and Lashin (2005).

### **1.3.2 Reference to the SPM in mission historiography**

The SPM has received only very little attention in German and English missiological writings. Very short mention is made in Gareis (1902), Gundert (1903), Warneck (1905), Watson (1907, 1908), Richter (1908, 1941), Schlunk (1925), Oestreicher (1935), Latourette (1944), Westman and Sicard (1962), and Flachsmeier (1963). In the works of the following authors the SPM was not mentioned at all: Grundmann (1903), Mirbt (1917), Frick (1922), Gensichen (1961/1976), Neill (1964/1990), Müller and Ustorf (1995). Richter (1930) comments on the SPM in a longer section and in a more sympathetic way. Oehler (1951) also gives a more extensive description of the SPM work, but still displays the critical influence of Warneck.

### 1.3.3 Reference to the SPM in dictionaries and encyclopaedias

On the basis of the above findings, it is not surprising that only a few of the missiological dictionaries and encyclopaedias mention the SPM with a separate entry. *The Encyclopedia of Missions* (1904), edited by Dwight, Tupper & Bliss (1904:265, 812) is the first to mention the SPM and provides a short account of its work. The *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Missions: The Agencies* (1967) provides two separate entries for the successor organisations of the SPM, the EMO in Germany, written by Willi Höpfner (Höpfner 1967:507) and the SENM in Switzerland, written by Hans Merklin (Merklin 1967:1163). More recently, in 1991, Reimer's *Evangelistisch-missionarische Werke und Einrichtungen im deutschsprachigen Raum* provided a concise self-presentation of the SPM/EMO's *status quo*. The latest entry on the EMO appeared in the first volume *Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde*, edited by Burkhardt & Swarat (1992) that was written by Eberhard Troeger (Troeger 1992:581).

To summarize, it is fair to say that the SPM, for many years, has been marginalized, neglected or overlooked. Where it was mentioned, the information is limited, often based on secondary sources, influenced by early criticism, described only partially, selectively and not seldom incorrectly. The following reasons may provide a preliminary explanation for this statement. First, the SPM has remained a relatively small organisation through its more than one hundred years of history. Second, the work of the SPM has been limited to the geographical regions of Upper Egypt and the northern Sudan for most of its existence. Third, the SPM was part of the faith missions that were viewed with much criticism and received with much hesitation in their beginning. Fourth, the SPM was targeting Muslims. The representatives of the classical missions considered this an untimely undertaking.

### 1.3.4 Historiographical publications by the SPM

To date the publications of the SPM have consist of a number of popular booklets that were written for the supporters of the mission on the occasion of jubilees (Held 1925)<sup>5</sup>, Unruh (1950, 1955), Troeger (1975), Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger (1985). For the centenary celebration E Troeger was asked to write a comprehensive history of the SPM. The research for this extensive scholarly work that will cover the years 1900-2000 is still in progress and is awaited with great anticipation.

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<sup>5</sup> Held acknowledges his dependence on the material provided by Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen (1914) for the earlier years. Held was inspector of the SPM from 1913-1931.

### **1.3.5 Reference to SPM's ministry to the Nile-Nubians**

While the SPM as a whole has been neglected in missiological research for many years, even more its involvement with the Nile-Nubians has been ignored and by-passed. The few exceptions are Richter (1930), Oehler (1951) and Sauer (2005). In the context of this research a special emphasis will be given to the Kunuuzi Nubian Samuel Ali Hiseen, Gertrud von Massenbach, Jakob Samuel Enderlin, Elisabeth Herzfeld and their contributions to the implementation of the vision.

### **1.3.6 Reference to Samu'iil Ali Hiseen**

The main source of information for SAH's life and work is the autobiography written by SAH himself. He wrote Part one in 1910 and Part two in 1926. Part one was finally published in 1920 and Part two, together with Part one in one volume, was published in 1932. The SVEMM re-published Part one in 1942. In addition to this volume, in 1944 the SVEMM printed a booklet with SAH's letters that he had written to the SPM during World War I.

SAH was briefly mentioned by Richter (1930) and Oehler (1951). The initiation of SAH's autobiography and literary contribution to the scholarly world was through a conference paper that G Lauche (2002:325-331) presented at the tenth International Conference for Nubian Studies in Boston in 1998 that was published under the title *The Life and Work of Samuel Ali Hiseen (1863-1927)* in 2004. Until today, the most detailed account of SAH's life and work was presented by C Sauer in his thesis (2005:147-162, 319-320). Schäfer's brief account was based on a summary manuscript of part one of SAH's autobiography (1917:32-37). Popular accounts on SAH's life were based on his published autobiographies, such as Oehler (1953), Merklin (1955), and EMO (1997).

## **1.4 Rationale of the study and research questions**

The above has made obvious the need for this study. Beyond Sauer's thesis on the initial years of the SPM (2005), there are no further scholarly studies on the SPM's historical development in Egypt and the Sudan after 1904. Thus, there is no description available regarding the work of the SPM's among the Nile-Nubians in the Nile valley. In the light of these facts, this thesis aspires to be the first comprehensive and focused description of modern missions to the unreached people group of the Nile-Nubians in Upper Egypt and the Northern Sudan conducted by the SPM.

For this study we will not formulate a thesis statement but rather turn to research questions in order to approach the whole subject in an unbiased analytical way. The following

questions serve as a guideline as we approach the historical development of the SPM, describe the exceptional role of SAH and analyze the methods used by the SPM.

1. What was the role of the founders, Grattan Guinness and Karl Kumm, in shaping the vision for outreach among the Nile-Nubians?
2. What was the initial and intended purpose of the SPM? Was there a focus on the Nile-Nubians from the beginning or was it gradually developed?
3. How did the SPM adopt this ethnic focus at a time when the prevailing thinking among mission strategists was concerned with unreached regions and nation states?
4. How did the board of the SPM in Germany endorse this focus and communicate it with its workers and supporters?
5. What was the special role of Samu'iil Ali Hiseen in the work among his Kunuuzi kinsmen?
6. How did the missionaries implement the vision and develop the ministry?
7. To what extent were the SPM Board in Germany and the workers on the field united in their vision and approach?
8. What were the various methods being used and the different foci of the ministry among the Nile-Nubians?
9. Did the SPM use methods of approach that were particular, pertaining to the Nile-Nubians, distinct from other ministries to Muslims?
10. What lasting impact did the work of the SPM have among the Nubians?
11. Did the SPM have a pronounced intention and strategy to plant Nubian churches?
12. What hindered and prevented the extension of the ministry to the south into the Sudan?
13. Is it justified that the SPM was called the "Nubian Mission" by the other foreign mission agencies working in Egypt?
14. Are there any obvious reasons why the SPM remained the only agency that became involved with the Nile-Nubians?
15. What were internal and external factors that encouraged the development of the SPM into a mission among the Nile-Nubians?
16. What were internal and external factors that slowed down or hindered the advance of the SPM into Nubia?

The rationale of the present study can be summarized as follows:



We are studying the history of the SPM from 1900 to 1966, *because* we want to discover how the SPM developed into a mission among the Nile-Nubians *in order to* make this still unknown part of its history available to mission historiography and Egyptian and foreign Christians who are proclaiming the Gospel among the Nubians today *by* analyzing the publications and unpublished manuscripts and minutes preserved in the mission's archive.

## 1.5 Demarcation

The geographical context in which the *Sudan Pionier Mission* was active is confined within the boundaries of two modern states: the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Democratic Republic of Sudan. Although the name carries a clear geographical connotation and target, the SPM was not able to extend its activities beyond the southern boundaries of Egypt during the time under research.

This study does not intend to present a comprehensive and detailed historical description of the SPM. Yet it describes the basic and most important general developments of the SPM to set the stage for the more focused work among the Nile-Nubians.

As the SPM started its work in Aswan, it provided services for all groups and sections of the regional society regardless of their social, religious or ethnic background. Muslims and Christians, Copts and Protestants, Upper Egyptians, Bishariyyiin, Ababda and Nubians, educated and illiterates, rich and poor, foreigners and Egyptian and the Sudanese nationals were all served alike. In addition to this broad spectrum ministry, a special sense of responsibility began to grow towards the Nubians. The focus in this study is put on the SPM work among the Nile-Nubians.

The Nile-Nubians comprise the subgroups of the Kunuuzi and Fadija Nubians in Egypt and the Mahas and Dongolaawi Nubians in the Sudan. Due to the fact that the work of the SPM remained limited to Egypt, the main work was among the Kunuuzi and the Fadija Nubians. The missionaries of the SPM were in contact with both groups through the medical work in Aswan, the home visits and the club work in Cairo, but the vast majority of contact was with the Kunuuzi Nubians in Egypt.

The SPM was established in the beginning of the year 1900. The main focus will be on the time after its beginning. Nevertheless, research will start prior to 1900 since attention will be given to the pre-founding phase of the SPM in the second half of the nineteenth century as we deal with the role of the Guinness family and K Kumm, the persons that initiated the mission, and with the Nubian evangelist Samu'iil Ali Hiseen who was born in 1863 and went through his formative phase in Egypt, Europe, Lebanon and Nubia prior to 1900.

The chronological end demarcation of this research has been fixed to the year 1966. This date is considered meaningful because it marks the final return of Elisabeth Herzfeld and Marianne Bühler to Germany. With their departure, the SPM no longer maintained its physical presence in a Kuntuuzi Nubian village. It also seems that with their departure the last true stakeholders of the Nubian vision had left the field.

## 1.6 Sources

This research draws on both primary and secondary sources. The author has been able to use a variety of well-equipped libraries in Germany and Egypt.

In Egypt, valuable material was provided by the library of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo. The material available pertains to the mission history in the Middle East in general and to the history of the American Mission in particular. The library of the Anglican All Saints Cathedral in Zamalek, Cairo included a variety of material concerning the Church Missionary Society. Additional material on global and regional mission history was provided by the small library of the *Evangeliumsgemeinschaft Mittler Osten* in Aswan. Regarding Nubian history, ethnography and linguistics, the author was fortunate to draw from the library of the Nubia Museum in Aswan and his own private and well equipped library that he started to build up in the 1990s in Aswan and Cairo. It is likely to be one of the most comprehensive collections on the Nubian issue to be found in one place in Egypt.

In Germany, the author had access to the libraries of the *Freie Theologische Hochschule* in Gießen, the *Theologisches Seminar Adelshofen*, and the *Evangeliumsgemeinschaft Mittlerer Osten* in Wiesbaden.

Regarding the research on the Sudan Pioneer Mission and its successor organizations, the author was granted access to four archives. First, the library of the *Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo* (ETSC) which includes the archive of the *American Mission* in Egypt. This archive comprises the original manuscripts of the *Synod of the Nile* and the annual reports of the *American United Presbyterian Mission* in Egypt. The material was helpful in obtaining information regarding the talks between the AM and SPM regarding a comity agreement and concerning Abbaas, the son of SAH who was a student at the ETSC from 1914-1917. Second, the Special Collections Library of the American University in Cairo (AUC) provided information about the School of Oriental Studies, the SPM missionaries who studied Arabic at the institution and about the responsibility of J Enderlin, who was a lecturer of Arabic and Nubian languages. Third, the author visited the headquarters of the *Mission am Nil International* in Knonau, Switzerland. Material from the archive was selectively made

available. It included publications, correspondence between Enderlin and Rubli, and the Swiss edition of the mission's journal *Der Pionier*. While in Germany the SPM had to terminate the publication of its journal at the end of 1939, but the *Schweizer Verein für Evangelische Muhammedaner Mission* (SVEMM) was able to continue the journal on their own. Fourth, the primary source for the topic under research were the well arranged archives of the *Sudan Pionier Mission*, referred to as the EMO archives in this study. A more detailed list of the material used can be found in the bibliography. The unpublished primary material includes three minutes books that cover the SPM an EMM board meetings between October 1900 and June 1948 in handwritten, mostly Suetterlin script.<sup>6</sup> The board minutes from 1948 to 1966 are preserved in a typed form. Many handwritten letters of board members, SAH, Kupfernagel, Enderlin and other missionaries are preserved, however they are mainly preserved unilaterally. Of particular value is the two-part typescript historical summary of the SPM (1900-1914) that was produced by Princess zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen, who was an eye witness to the early SPM history, at the request of J Held. In addition, the majority of personnel files of the SPM missionaries are still preserved. A big treasure in the EMO Archives is the original manuscripts of SAH's translation work, ethnographic texts, linguistic tools and part two of his autobiography in Nubian. Part one of his autobiography is preserved as a copy of the English version. A detailed list of SAH's manuscripts is given in the bibliography.

The EMO archives provide an extensive collection of the mission's publications including personal reports, travel accounts, and essays on historical and religious issues. Three monographs deal with the history of the SPM and its successor organisations and were published for the twenty-fifth, fiftieth and eighty-fifth anniversaries of the mission. A major published primary source that is completely preserved in the EMO archives is the mission's journal. In the course of the history of the mission, its name was changed from *Sudan-Pionier-Mission* (1900-1901) to *Der Sudan Pionier* (1901-1928), *Der Pionier* (1929-1939), *Der Nahe Osten* (1940), *Nachrichten der EMM* (1946-1953), *Nachrichten der EMO* (1954-August 1975), *Zeugnis und Dienst im Orient-EMO Nachrichten* (October 1975-1989), *EMO-Nachrichten Zeugnis und Dienst im Mittleren Osten* (1990-1999), *EMO Aktuell* (2000-today).

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<sup>6</sup> Ms Evmarie Hoppe, secretary of EMO, has undertaken the tiresome work to transcribe the SPM minutes from 1900-1928 and made them available in a digital version.

## 1.7 Methodology

In the beginning I want to make a personal statement. I joined the *Evangeliumsgemeinschaft Mittlerer Osten* (EMO) in the year 1985. The decision was based on a strong sense of God's calling to serve the Nile-Nubians in Egypt. Since the EMO was at that time still the only mission agency that was committed to the Nile-Nubians, I became a member of the organization. I am conscious of the fact that my work today is rooted in and based on the work of the generations that have laboured before me. Today, after thirty years of participation in the work of the EMO, I have myself become part of this organization's history. I am convinced that history can be one of the greatest teachers to mankind and mission history to the missionary community at large. It is my privilege to research God's history with the SPM and through the SPM with the Nile-Nubians. However through the high degree of identification with the ministry of EMO, I am faced with a twofold challenge. First, there is the danger of uncritically describing the developments of the SPM with a tendency to produce a hagiographical study. Second, there is the pitfall of being too critical towards the work of prior generations guided by an arrogant attitude and trying to invent the wheel again. Thus, I have chosen to use a number of research questions that help me to come to well reflected answers avoiding a simple and straight forward positivist approach.

This study deals with a historiographical topic that will be presented in an analytical and critical way and is based on literature research. It includes descriptions of events that have not been scientifically presented and studied before. Thereby it secures information and makes it available to a broader readership.

The topic of this study and the source base that is available suggest a combined approach that deals with the historical and missiological aspects of the development of the SPM. My personal perspective is that of a missiologist rather than a historian. The events that are described will also be analysed. The description of the events is based on the original source material of the SPM, especially board minutes, correspondence, annual reports and the mission's magazine. Wherever possible, this information will be checked in light of additional external sources to discover possible subjective tendencies in the mission's perspective.

The situation is different with the key stakeholder of the SPM, the Kunuuzi evangelist SAH. His reports, letters and two-part autobiography (1910, 1926) portray the insider perspective of a Nubian.

In chapter two and three, the context for the historical description of the SPM will be given. Chapter two contains a comprehensive description of the Nile-Nubians and in chapter three the historical, political, ecclesiastical and missional stage for the SPM is set. In chapters

four to six, we follow a chronological approach in order to show the sequence of events that enhance our understanding of the historical development with a double perspective: the general development of the SPM work in Upper-Egypt and the specific development regarding the SPM work among the Nile-Nubians. This will be combined with the analysis of the main factors that furthered or hindered the development of the SPM. Chapter seven to nine put the focus more on missiological questions related to the person of SAH and the missionary methods that were used by the SPM.

## **1.8 Logical sequence and overview of chapters**

The topic of this research is dealt with in ten chapters that follow a logical sequence.

Since the ministry focus of the SPM among the Nile-Nubians is the main reason for this study, chapter two is completely committed to the depiction of the history, culture, ethnic identity and linguistic situation of the Nile-Nubians. Further, it touches on the question of the origin of the Nubians and gives a survey of the references to Nubia in the Bible. Special emphasis will be given to the Christian period in Nubian history that lasted almost one thousand years, beginning in the sixth century. It also discusses the development of the situation of the Nile-Nubians due to the building of the Aswan Dam and the High Dam which caused a labour migration movement and a government planned resettlement scheme.

In chapter three, the context in which the SPM was established will be explained. The political, social and economic situation of Egypt and the Sudan during the nineteenth and twentieth century will be explained. Then, the general religious situation during this time frame will be studied, which includes the state of the Coptic Church and a survey of the missionary movements that started in the first quarter of the nineteenth century in Egypt.

Chapter four documents the founding stage of the SPM and the early development of the vision, taking into consideration the forming role of the founders Guinness and Kumm. It will also highlight the position held by the board in Germany and how it was communicated with the workers and published to the supporters of the SPM. In this chapter, it will also be discussed whether the original vision was changed and what hindered the extension of the work to the south. The different historical phases of the SPM will be analysed and how the focus on the Nile-Nubians was developed and practiced in each of these phases will be described. Further, the external relationships of the SPM with other organisations and how these agencies perceived the SPM will be examined.

Chapters five and six are completely committed to the outstanding life and work of SAH, the first Nubian national worker of the SPM. Chapter five presents his life story,

training and experience prior to his employment with the SPM (1863-1900). Chapter six describes his life and work in the service of the SPM until his death (1900-1927). This also includes a summary on his family affairs.

Chapter seven looks in more detail into SAH's rich ministry life and explains his role as literature colporteur, evangelist, Bible translator, teacher and loyal co-worker.

In chapter eight, SAH's literary output is highlighted. The chapter contains the complete story of SAH's involvement in the translation of Biblical books into his vernacular. It also contains information about his ethnographic writings, his Nubian correspondence with Schäfer, and his production of linguistic tools and Christian literature.

Chapter nine depicts the missionary approach used by the SPM. A special emphasis is given to the life and ministries of Jakob S Enderlin and Gertrud von Massenbach, who had the great opportunity of working together with SAH for many years and were very involved in outreach to the Nubians and linguistic work. The medical approach served as a unique bridge builder between the Nubians and the foreign missionaries. Therefore special attention is also given to the ministry of Dr Elisabeth Herzfeld who, as a gynaecologist and surgeon, led the medical work in Aswan, Koshtamne, Gerf Hiseen, Dakke and Gharb Seheel for a long period (1926-1939; 1950-1966).

The final chapter summarizes the findings of this research that for the first time comprehensively describes and analyses the work of the SPM among the Nile-Nubians. It provides answers to the initial research questions and summarizes the unique features of the SPM as a mission to the unreached Nile-Nubians.

## **2. Nubia and the Nile-Nubians – a comprehensive introduction**

In 1900, the *Sudan Pionier Mission* (SPM) was founded by H G Guinness and K Kumm. Aswan was chosen to be the starting location and a sending center for missionaries. The SPM was part of Guinness' vision to reach the unreached area of the so-called Sudan Belt through the Nile route. The Nile valley, from Aswan up to the Dongola region, was mainly inhabited by various sub-groups of the Nile-Nubians. It was only natural and logical that the SPM developed a concern for the Nubians from its very beginning. Despite many attempts to establish mission stations further south in the Nile valley, the SPM was not allowed to advance beyond the Egyptian territory mainly due to the colonial policy of the British government. Thus, the SPM developed a profound concern for the Nile-Nubians, especially for the Kunuuzi Nubians, within the territorial boundaries of Egypt. Therefore, in this chapter we will present a comprehensive introduction into the historical, geographical, ethnic, linguistic and religious aspects of the Nubian community in Egypt and the Sudan.

### **2.1 Nubia – a geographical description**

The geographic region that we call Nubia is located in the northeastern corner of Africa. At present, the term Nubia does not describe a modern day geo-political entity, but refers to the part of the Nile valley that is even today, to a large extent, occupied by the Nubian people who share a common cultural and historical heritage. Therefore, it seems to be appropriate to use the term Nubia for the region of the Nile valley in which the two Nile-Nubian languages are still spoken, i e between Aswan in Upper Egypt and ad-Debba in the northern Sudan (Werner 2013:28-29; Richter 2002:14-15). In the Middle Ages, Nubia stretched geographically along the river Nile from the First Cataract south of Aswan in Egypt to the

junction of the Blue and White Niles at Khartoum in the Sudan, beyond the Sixth Cataract.<sup>7</sup> Whereas the northern border was fairly well defined by the First Cataract region<sup>8</sup>, the southern border was not precisely defined, but the region of influence went beyond the Sixth Cataract. Due to the desert the western border is not clearly marked, but Nubian influence extended into Kordofan and Darfur at times. East of the Nile the Nubian Desert changes into the mountainous area of the Red Sea (Richter 2002:15). In length, it covered several hundred kilometers of the Nile valley, encompassing the southern end of Egypt and the northern region of the modern Sudan. Nubia was divided according to the direction of the flow of the Nile into Lower Nubia and Upper Nubia.

### **2.1.1 Lower Nubia**

Lower Nubia is considered to be the stretch of Nubia from the First to the Second Cataracts – or in modern terms roughly from Aswan to near Wadi Halfa. Ancient references considered it to be Wawat, and Greco-Roman sources referred to part of the region as Dodekaschoenos (Richter 2002:14). This frontier region was the main point of contact and often of conflict between Egypt and Nubia. That is why it became a site of major military fortification and colonial administrations through the long history of relations between Egypt and Nubia. Lower Nubia drew its importance from the fact that it provided access to the gold mines of Wadi al Allaqi and to the caravan routes in the Western Desert. Further, it served as a barrier against the Blemmyes or later nomads of the Red Sea Hills. When the kingdom of Egypt was weak or internally divided, Kushites, such as those from Kerma, Napata or Meroe occupied the region and beyond (Lobban 2004:241).

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<sup>7</sup> Cataracts are simply the general name for rocky formations or rapids in the Nile that were formed when the river had to overcome the outcrops of granite that underlie the region. They are counted from the north to the south according to the sequence of their discoveries through explorers. The six cataracts define the geography of Nubia and have often naturally marked in history important political, military or economic points. The First Cataract at Aswan indicated the ancient and modern border between Egypt and Nubia. The Second Cataract was the border between Egypt and Nubia during the Old and Middle Kingdom period marked by huge constructions of military fortifications. Today the Second Cataract is covered by Lake Nubia/Nasser near the modern border between Egypt and the Sudan. The region between the Second and the Third cataracts is known as “Belly of the Stones” (Batn al-Hajar), causing difficulties for river navigation. The Third Cataract constituted the natural border between Egypt and Yam (Kerma) during the Middle Kingdom period. The Fourth Cataract is situated close to ancient Napata and had less political importance than the other cataracts. This cataract and the region between the Fourth and Fifth Cataracts were bypassed by crossing the Bayuda plain. Downstream of the Fifth Cataract the ancient city of Meroe was located. The Sixth Cataract lies north of the confluence of the White and Blue Niles at modern Khartoum (Lobban 2004:98-99).

<sup>8</sup> The northern border of Nubia was essentially in the region near Aswan at the Philae Island or the settlement of Shellaal or al-Qasr. At times, only temporarily due to military conquests, the northern border was as far as 150 kilometers north of the First Cataract region (Werner 2013:28).



### **2.1.2 Upper Nubia**

There is no complete agreement regarding the domain of Upper Nubia. Yet it is safe to say that it begins at the Second Cataract and includes the Belly of the Stones region to the Third Cataract. Thus, Upper Nubia is located upstream or south of Lower Nubia. Some scholars regard the Nile reach from the Third to the Fourth Cataracts as a genuine part of Upper Nubia (Lobban 2004:398-399). W Y Adams pays attention to the fact that “there is no general agreement as to the boundaries of Nubia either in modern or in ancient times” (1977:21). P L Shinnie uses Nubia

“to mean not only the part which is linguistically Nubian today but to include the Nile valley to the junction of the Blue and White Niles at Khartoum and for some 250 kilometers further up the Blue Nile to include both banks of the river as far as Sennar, the southern limit of Nubian civilization as far as is now known” (1996:1).

## **2.2 Names used for the region**

Throughout history the Nile valley extending from the First to the Sixth Cataracts has been called by different names. Some of the terms only designate limited parts of the region, others have a broader meaning.

### **2.2.1 The term Nubia**

The name Nubia was given to the Middle Nile region by outsiders and can be traced back to Eratosthenes (275-194 BC) in the third century BC (Arkell 1961:177; Scholz 1994:682). Yet the meaning of the term Nubia is still debated. Some argue that the term refers to a Nubian word meaning slave (Arkell 1961:177). Others see the origin of this name in the ancient Egyptian word *nbw* (nub) for gold which would fit the fact that Nubia had a rich supply of gold in ancient times (Lacovara 2012:6). Nevertheless, it is not the designation Old Egyptians used for the region.

### **2.2.2 The term Ta-sety**

The Ancient Egyptians called the area by the descriptive term *ta-sety* (Land of the Bow) in order to indicate the skills of their southern neighbors in using bow and arrows for hunting and fighting (:6). The term may have been broad enough to include Upper and Lower Nubia (Lobban 2004:398-399).

### **2.2.3 The term Kush**

A second term that was used in Ancient Egyptian time was *kush*. Often the term was accompanied by the attributes *vile* or *wretched* to express scorn for their southern rival

(Lacovara 2012:8). It is possible that the inhabitants of the Nile valley called themselves by this term (Shinnie 1996:3). The term *kush* can be applied to different geographical areas. Some call the region between the Third and the Fourth Cataracts *kush* while others apply this term to all of Nubia, including Lower and Upper Nubia (Lobban 2004:235-237,398).

#### **2.2.4 Kush in the Bible**

The African nation of Cush and its geographical location are referred to a number of times in various books throughout the Old Testament.<sup>9</sup> The textual evidence includes fifty-seven references to Cush and its derivatives (Oswalt 1981:435). The Old Testament conception and description of Cush “corresponds to some extent to the views of ancient travelers from other countries” (Holter 1997:333).

Linguistically, the term *kush* derives from the Old Egyptian hieroglyphic *ksh* and is a reference to the southern neighbor of Egypt.

Geographically, the term is used to describe a huge land south of Egypt (Ezek 29:10) sharing boundaries at the First Cataract south of Syene (Aswan). Cush indicates the region at the very south of the map of the known world to the Old Testament writers (Is 11:11; Zeph 2:12; 3:10). It also marked the last satrapy at the southern border of the huge Persian Empire stretching from India to Cush (Esth 1:1; 8:9) in the time of Xerxes. It seems that the Biblical references to Cush verify the statement that Cush is a reference to the region of modern day Nubia and the Sudan. The Greek term *aithiops* “those with burned faces” is not a reference to the country that we call today Ethiopia, but to the fact that the Cushites were black skinned as expressed in the Arabic term *bilaad as-Sudaan* “the land of the black” as well. A radical suggestion was put forward by David T Adamo. He argues that Cush is a reference to Africa in the Bible. By doing so he wants to prove the African presence in the Bible. (Adamo 1992:51-64).<sup>10</sup>

Politically, Cush had obtained a certain political and military importance which is reflected in the Old Testament description. There are some references in the Old Testament prophets in which Cush is used in parallel construction as a synonym for Egypt (Is 20:3-5; Ezek 30:4; Nah 3:9). This may indicate Cushite dominance over Egypt. The so-called “Black Pharaohs” of the twenty-fifth dynasty ruled Egypt between 750 and 663 BC. Tirhaqa was one of the most influential and notable pharaohs of this period. Yet he tried unsuccessfully to stop Sennacherib’s expansion to the west (2 Kgs 19:9; Is 37:9). Due to its military strength Cush

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<sup>9</sup> For a detailed presentation of the Biblical evidence cf Yamauchi (2001, 2004) and Hays (2003).

<sup>10</sup> The difficulties of this position have been convincingly discussed by Holter (1997:334-336).

became an attractive coalition partner to the kingdom of Judah (2 Kgs 19:9; 2 Sam 18:21-32). In another situation, Judah was warned by the prophet Isaiah against trusting in Cush instead of Yahweh (Is 20). The Cushite army of Zerah referred to in 2 Chronicles 14:9 is still enigmatic as there is no extra Biblical evidence that supports a large Cushite army operating that far north in the time of Asa the king of Israel around 900 BC (Oswalt 1981:435; Crocker 1986:32-36).

Economically, Cush was perceived as a wealthy nation. It was obviously well-known due to its trade (Job 28:19; Isa 43:3; 45:14; Dan 11:43).

Anthropologically, the people of Cush are depicted as “tall and smooth-skinned” (Is 18:2). The prophet Jeremiah uses a proverb by asking the rhetorical question, “Can the Cushite change his skin or the leopard its spots?” (Jer 13:23).

Theologically, the Cushites are included in God’s universal plan of salvation. They will one day come and worship the God of Israel (Ps 68:31) and they will be included into the family of Yahweh (Amos 9:7).

There are also some references to Cushite individuals such as Cush, the son of Noah, who is regarded as the father of the Cushite nation (Gen 10:6-8), Moses’ wife (Num 12:1) and Ebed-Melek (Jer 38:7-13; 39:15-18) who rescued the prophet Jeremiah and was commended for his trust in Yahweh (Jer 39:18).<sup>11</sup>

The only New Testament reference to a Cushite individual is found in Acts 8:26-40. The narrative highlights the conversion of the Cushite eunuch from the Meroitic royal court by the evangelist Philip. For a long time, the Meroitic court official and treasurer of Kandake was identified as an Ethiopian coming from the kingdom of Aksum which was later called Aithiopia by some church fathers. It then became known in the Western world as Abyssinia until the end of World War II (Yamauchi 2004:163).<sup>12</sup> The Arabic designation for the region was *al-habasha*. The reference to Kandake decisively identifies Aithiopia as the kingdom of Meroe (:164). The Greek title Kandake, based on the Meroitic variants *kdke*, *ktke* and *kdwe*, referred either to the king’s sister (Török 1997:63) or to his mother (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:24). The title Kandake was not used in the Aksumite kingdom. If the treasurer was from Ethiopia proper, he most likely would not have returned by way of the Gaza road from Jerusalem to Egypt, but would have preferred the route back to Ethiopia via the Arabian peninsula and then crossed the Red Sea to Aksum (:24).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In addition to the above mentioned terms Cush or Cushite, the usually gentilic Cushi appears three times as a Hebrew proper name for different individuals (2 Sam 18:21-32; Jer 36:14; Zeph 1:1).

<sup>12</sup> For an extensive description of the Cushite court official cf Scholz (1988).

<sup>13</sup> For detailed discussion cf Yamauchi (2004:161-181) and Hays (2003:172-176).

### **2.2.5 The term Ethiopia**

The classical historians often called the region south of Egypt by the Greek word *aithiopia*, describing it as *the land of the burnt faces*. The term does not refer to the modern state of Ethiopia. The scribes who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek (LXX) translated the term *kush* into the Greek *aithiopia*. Thus, shifting territorial applications of this term have added to the complications of defining the confines of Nubia (Lobban 2004:161-162).

### **2.2.6 The term Yam or Irem**

The exact location of *Yam*, which was an independent trading kingdom, is still debated. It may apply only to segments of Upper Nubia. Lobban suggests that it could be the Egyptian or Kushite name for the ancient Nubian entity that became known as the Kerma Kingdom and was located in center of Upper Nubia (:398,406).

### **2.2.7 The term Wawat**

It seems that the ancient Egyptians referred to a sometimes independent polity that was located in Lower Nubia by the name of *wawat*. In the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, it served as a buffer zone between Egypt and its Upper Nubian rivals from Kerma. The administrative center of *wawat* was usually in Aniba (:404).

## **2.3 The early occupation of the Nile valley**

Although the region south of Aswan was called, among other names, Nubia, even by Greek historians it is incorrect to call its inhabitants ethnically Nubians from early history onwards (Poeschke 1996:21). W Y Adams suggests therefore to use the term Nubian in a cultural sense for peoples that settled in the Nile valley and are different from the Egyptians but strongly influenced by them. He leaves the racial, ethnic, and linguistic character of these peoples undefined (1984:44). It seems more correct to suggest that the nucleus of the contemporary Nubians moved from the western Sudan into the Nile valley and mixed with the population that had settled there from long before. The issue of when Nubian speakers first occupied the Nile valley is still very much debated (Shinnie 1993:V). Suggestions range from the time of Egyptian occupation of Nubia around 1500 BC (Bechhaus-Gerst 1994 and 1998) to the early centuries AD (Werner 2013:32-34). R Poeschke points out that

“the geographical region “Nubia” can be defined and distinguished from neighbouring regions in terms of culture (particularly language) and political history. Its population, however, has been composed of a mixture of settled people and immigrating groups – characterized by cultural, social and economic similarities, but without a collective identity” (1996:21).

Archaeological findings indicate that settlements in the Nile valley existed as early as the pre-dynastic period (Adams 1984:16). Parallel to the emergence of various Egyptian Pharaonic dynasties, a number of mainly petty kingdoms came into existence, all of which had close economic and political relations with their powerful northern neighbor. In the period of the Pharaonic Old, Middle and New Kingdoms, the region of Lower and later Upper Nubia were temporarily under Egyptian rule. Conversely from 751 to 635 BC, a dynasty originating from Nubia, known as the twenty-fifth, so-called Ethiopian dynasty, ruled Egypt.

### **2.3.1 The A-Group**

The so-called A-Group (Adams 1984:118-132; Fisher 2012:14-16) is the arbitrary name that was chosen by G Reisner<sup>14</sup> and refers to inhabitants of Lower Nubia from about 3800 BC to about 2700 BC. The origin of these preliterate farmers, gatherers, cattle herders, and fishermen is unclear, but their culture corresponds with that of pre-dynastic and early dynastic times in Egypt. In modern archaeology the A-Group is divided into early, classic, and terminal phases. In the last phase there was more political centralization than in the early phase. The group also lived in small villages with some social ranking, as is indicated by burial goods (Lobban 2004:11). It seems the A-Group culture ended abruptly with expulsion through Old Egyptian invasions and subsequent replacement by different cultural horizons (:12).

### **2.3.2 The B-Group**

Reisner defined the successors of the A-Group as B-Group, but this has not found confirmation in subsequent archeological work (Adams 1984:132). Thus, this reference has been abandoned, based on the understanding that this group may either have been survivors of late A-Group or a new, intrusive Nilotic people (Lobban 2004:100).

### **2.3.3 The C-Group**

Due to the fact that there is no textual evidence regarding the name of the occupants of the Nile valley, G Reisner assigned this arbitrary name to a local cultural group that appeared in Lower Nubia from about 2500 until around 1500 BC (Adams 1984:142-192, Fisher 2012:17-21). They were the purported later successors of the A-Group and occupied Lower Nubia up

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<sup>14</sup> George Andrew Reisner (1867-1942) – Harvard University professor of Semitics and a major figure in Egyptology at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston. Reisner excavated extensively at various sites throughout the Nile valley, including Nubia, Middle Egypt and the Near East. He came up with his chronology of the A-, B-, C-, and X-Groups for Nubian cultures. This way of defining certain phases was truly pioneering and is still being used today with some modifications (Lobban 2004:336-337).

to Aswan. Life of the C-Group centered on cattle herding. At this time, the Egyptians would refer to them by Wawat, Irtet, and Setjiu, indicating the region they occupied. As Egyptian power declined the C-Group gained more influence in the region (Lobban 2004:99-102).

### **2.3.4 The Kerma culture**

At the end of the third millennium BC (2250-1570 BC) the so-called Kerma culture began to rise prior to the First Intermediate Period in Egypt (seventh-tenth Dynasties). Until the end of the First Intermediate Period in about 2050 BC, Kerma had gained considerable strength and independence from Egypt. Its society displayed notable social stratification and differentiation (:221). It is possible that the Kingdom of Kush, near modern Kerma, is identical to the ancient state in Upper Nubia known as Yam (:219). Located near the Third Cataract, the Kingdom of Kush became the first African power to challenge Egypt's position. The royal city at Kerma became the earliest and largest of the known cities in Upper Nubia. Huge grave tumuli and human sacrifice of the Kushite kings suggest great wealth and power. The large mud-brick structure known as *deffufa* is another indication of the Kushite strength. When the Asiatic Hyksos conquered the Delta, the Egyptian army was forced to withdraw from Lower Nubia. Thus Kush, having become an ally with the Hyksos, was able to occupy Lower Egypt until Aswan (Fisher 2012:23-33; Adams 1984:195-216; Lobban 2004:219-224). When the Egyptians succeeded in expelling the Hyksos from Egypt they also advanced to Upper Nubia, assaulted and burned the Kushite capital at Kerma and occupied the region as far as the Fourth Cataract. During the Egyptian New Kingdom (1570-1070 BC) Nubia again had become a province of Egypt with Wawat in the north and Kush in the south (Adams 1984:217-245).

### **2.3.5 The Napatan period**

When the New Kingdom withered after the twentieth dynasty, a new Kushite power slowly emerged in this power vacuum. The period is called the Napatan period (950-593 BC) since Napata had become the capital city. The Napatan kings and queens began burials at Kurru around 850 BC.

This political process culminated in the emergence of the twenty-fifth dynasty at Napata, when the Kushites were able to seize power over the entire state of Egypt (Fisher 2012:33-36; Adams 1984:246-293; Welsby 1996 and 2002; Török 1995). The Kushite kings, Kashta, Piye, Shabako and Tirhaqa, known as the Black Pharaohs, reunified and ruled Egypt from 760-668 BC. When the Kushites were defeated by the Assyrian Ashurbanipal in Memphis in 611 BC

the Kushites withdrew to Napata at Jebel Barkal. About twenty years later the Egyptian king Psammetichis II made an incursion into Nubia seizing more than 4 000 captives. He may have sacked Napata, which probably provoked the Kushites to move their capital from Napata to Meroe, between the Fifth and Sixth Cataract (Lobban 2004:xxxviii). Thus, Lower Nubia had once again become a buffer zone between the Egyptians and the Kushites.

### **2.3.6 Persians, Greeks and Romans in the Nile valley**

When the Persian king Cambyses reigned in Egypt from 529-521 BC, he launched a campaign into Nubia until Napata. There are no detailed reports about the consequences of this incursion. Lobban suggests that it could be considered an intelligence-gathering mission (:303). Since the Persians were defeated in Egypt they did not have the resources to make any attempt to invade Nubia.

In 332 BC, Alexander the Great of Macedonia conquered Egypt and started to send expeditions to Nubia. The Greek language and culture was introduced which may have stimulated the creation of the Meroitic alphabet (:xxxix). During his reign, Ptolemy II ordered Nubia to be raided for captives, livestock, and even elephants (:174).

After the Romans had consolidated their conquest of Egypt in 30 BC under Caesar Octavian, a Roman prefect met Meroitic envoys at Philae in 28 BC. In 24 BC the Meroites raided Philae and Elephantine Islands at Aswan. In a retaliation campaign the Romans invaded Nubia as far as Napata. Later, a non-aggression treaty was agreed upon by the two sides. For AD 64 Nero had planned a military campaign against Meroe which was not carried out because of his assassination. It seems that in the following years, both parties had come to a peaceful and respectful relationship as the Kushites were allowed to reoccupy Lower Nubia up to Qasr Ibrim (:338-339).

### **2.3.7 Kingdom of Kush at Meroe**

In about 270 BC the Napatan period of Kush came to an end. Meroe eclipsed Napata as the capital of the last Kushite kingdom (Fisher 2012:36-39; Lobban 2004:x1.25-259). The Meroitic kingdom probably extended as far south as the confluence of the Blue and White Nile. The Kushites started to bury their kings in the Bagrawiya cemetery. In about 100 BC the *saqiya* (waterwheel) was introduced (:xli). When there were internal conflicts in Egypt, the Kushites of Meroe tried to regain control of Lower Nubia as far north as Maharraqa and the First Cataract. The Meroites also controlled trade routes coming from central Africa and leading to Egypt, the Red Sea, Kordofan and Darfur. As the Egyptian and Kushite cultures

were living side by side, there was strong Egyptian influence in Meroitic art and religion. Yet they also adopted elements from Hellenistic and African culture. The Meroites also developed their own writing system. The Meroitic writing probably first appeared in the third century BC and continued at least until the fourth century AD. It has remained unknown who invented Meroitic, but it seems that its emergence was during the time of the Ptolemies and their construction of the famous library at Alexandria. The Meroitic writing system uses hieroglyphic and cursive forms (Lobban 2004:259-265). Although the Meroitic letters have been deciphered, the language can still not be understood with the exception of twenty to thirty words. In the beginning of the fourth century AD the power of the Meroitic kingdom declined gradually and eventually collapsed due internal and external factors. Meroe's internal political structure had been weakened. Other reasons for the decline were the recurrent wars with the Christian kingdom of Axum, the influx of the Red and Black Noba tribes and the nomadic Blemmyes who were pushing back Meroitic influence in Lower Nubia (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:25-26). It is possible that the Black Noba correspond to the later Alodians and that the Red Noba can be identified with the later Nobatians. Both Nubian tribes migrated from their original homeland in the western Sudan, Kordofan and Darfur, into the Nile valley (Werner 2013:32-34). This migration could well have started while the political structures of Meroe were still functioning. In 340 BC, the Axumite king Ezana established Christianity in Ethiopia. By this time, the Meroitic kingdom had already disintegrated when Ezana and his army destroyed the remnants of the Kushitic state at Meroe (:258-259; Fisher 2012:38-39; cf also Burstein 1998; Welsby 2002). The precise circumstances of the final blow against Meroe are much debated, but more details need to be known to clarify this transition. The rough date of this terminal event was from as early as AD 320 to as late as AD 360 (Lobban 2004:58-59). Probably, when Ezana finally defeated the Meroites, the Nubian invaders gained control in the region. Cultural features, burial customs and agricultural methods show distinctly different features. The only logic explanation for this is that new people groups infiltrated and occupied the area (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:26).

### **2.3.8 The X-Group**

After the downfall of the last kingdom of the Kushites at Meroe, history remains almost silent. There is no textual evidence, but huge grave tumuli suggest small states with clear social stratification. The so called post-Meroitic X-Group or Ballana Culture arose in the wake of the collapse of Meroe and flourished in the Nile valley between the fourth and sixth century



AD around Qustul, Ballana and Tanqasi (Fisher 2012:39). The archaeological fieldwork and excavations of L P Kirwin and W B Emery in 1938 brought to light convincing evidence for the existence of this distinct culture (Lobban 2004:62). The culture of the X-Group shows a new syncretic blend of Pharaonic, Roman, Kushite and Christian characteristics; however, the origin is much debated. While some scholars argue that the X-Group was the result of a new group migrating into the Nile valley, others see clear evidence for the continuity of earlier cultures of the region (Lobban 2004:406).

### **2.3.9 The rise of three kingdoms in the Nile valley**

The fifth century AD evidenced the establishment of three kingdoms in the Nile valley between the First and the Sixth Cataract (Fisher 2012:40; Werner 2013:39-46). They are listed from the north to the south.

#### **2.3.9.1 Nobatia**

Nobatia, also called Nobadia or an-Nuba (Arabic) or Maris (Coptic), may have emerged in the late third century AD. It stretched from Aswan at the First Cataract in the north to the southern end of the Batn al-Hajar near the second cataract. Its capital city was Faras (Pachoras). Other important locations were Ibrim, Kalabsha and Gebel Adda. The Nobatians can be credited with having ousted the Blemmyes from the Nile valley, most likely with the reception of Roman assistance (Lobban 2004:285-286; Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:27; Werner 2013:39-40).

#### **2.3.9.2 Makuria**

Makuria, in Arabic *al-Muqurrah*, emerged after the defeat of Meroe and the X-Group phase (Lobban 2004:244). The capital was Old Dongola (*Dongola al-ajuza*) at the west bank of the Nile. The kingdom of Makuria occupied the area south of Nobatia including the Dongola reach until the border with Alodia, near present day Abu Hamed (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:27; Werner 2013:41-44).

#### **2.3.9.3 Alodia**

Alodia, in Arabic *Alwa*, formed the southernmost of the three Nubian states. Bordering in the north with Makuria, whereas its southern, western and eastern borders are difficult to define precisely. Soba, its capital city, was close to present-day Khartoum. The extent of Alodia is not known but it may have stretched upstream on both Niles south of Soba and, in times of

strong political influence, even included the Nuba Mountains (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:27).

## **2.4 The coming of Christianity to the Nile valley**

There was early contact in the Nile valley with Christianity even before the official conversion of the Nubian states to Christianity. Due to significant contact with Christians and much Egyptian Christian influence in the region, there were signs of the beginning of an indigenous church (Werner 2013:46).

### **2.4.1 Christian influence in pre-Christian time**

Although Christianity became the official religion in the Nile valley only in the sixth century AD, there are clear indications of a growing Christian influence before this (Richter 2002:141-14; Werner 2013:46-50). As Nobadia shared borders with Egypt, it is only natural that it came into contact with the Christian faith. In addition to mutual trade between the two states and the resulting contacts with Coptic Christians, there were also Coptic monks that came to Nobadia (Grillmeier 1990:268).<sup>15</sup> Persecuted Egyptian Christians also fled from Egypt to Nobadia and settled there in the third century AD. There is evidence that in the fourth and fifth century AD there were already some Nubian monks (Kraus 1931:48-49; Werner 2013:47). The establishment of a Coptic diocese on Philae in the second half of the fourth century certainly influenced Nobatia. The same influence can be assumed through the Coptic diocese in Aidhab at the Red Sea (Gabra 1986:231-234; Richter 2002:142). It is uncertain to what extent there was Christian influence already in the Meroitic kingdom during the first century AD. The only written evidence is Acts 8:26-29 in which the conversion of a high Meroitic official in the first half of the first century AD is described.<sup>16</sup> It can be assumed that a Christian minority began to arise in the fifth and sixth century AD.<sup>17</sup>

### **2.4.2 The Christianization of the Nubian kingdoms**

When the Blemmyes were driven out of the Nile valley into the desert, most likely by King Silko, the Isis Temple on Philae was closed in AD 535 by Justinian I and the transformation of the Isis Temple into a church had taken place, organized efforts to christianize the kingdoms in the Nile valley began. It was during the reign of Emperor Justinian I (AD 527-

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<sup>15</sup> He speaks of the silent Eremitic Mission in pre-Chalcedonian Nubia.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the historical value of this passage cf Richter (2002:141), Scholz (1988, 2003:248-254) and Hofmann (1988:39-48).

<sup>17</sup> Werner (2013:48-50) provides further evidence for the increasing Christian influence in the Nile valley prior to the organized Christianization efforts from Byzantium in the sixth century AD.

565) that the stage was set for the Christianization of the Nile valley. Due to political interests the Nubian kingdoms were approached to become part of the *orbis christianus*. The Constantinople based Emperor and his wife Theodora, an Egyptian-born former actress, were adherents of two competing sections within Christianity of that time, dyophysitism and miaphysitism. After the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451 where the nature of Christ was discussed, Constantinople (Byzantium) was the center of the Chalcedonian Christianity that followed the dyophysitic belief.<sup>18</sup> The dyophysites held the belief regarding the nature of Christ that he had two distinct natures and thus was “true man and true God, unmingled and unseparated”. This belief is maintained by the majority of the Orthodox Churches, as well as the Western Churches who were sometimes also called Melkites since it was the creed that was embraced by the Emperor. The anti-Chalcedonian fraction of the Church became the dominant belief in Egypt and Syria. They confess Christ as having only one nature in which the human and the divine is fused together. The divinity and the humanity of Christ have become a “hypostatic union.” The self-identification as miaphysitists is to be preferred over the term monophysitists which is the original description of their opponents (Meinardus 2001:65-72).<sup>19</sup> In the sixth century AD Egypt saw a competition between church hierarchies that followed one of the two streams.

The fact that the Empress Theodora held the miaphysitic belief and her husband Emperor Justinian I was a follower of Dyophysitism resulted in a competition for the conversion of the Nubian states to Christianity.<sup>20</sup> The most detailed account of the Byzantine missions and the conversion of the Nubian kingdoms is provided by John of Ephesus (507-586) who was miaphysite.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.4.3 The beginning of Christianity in Nobatia**

The first missionary to Nobatia was Julian. He was consecrated as a missionary bishop for Nubia by Theodorus, the exiled Miaphysitic Patriarch of Alexandria in Constantinople, with the approval of the Empress Theodora. The mission of Julian arrived in Nobatia in AD 543. He was received by the Nobatian king who accepted the Christian faith and was baptized. Christianity became the official religion of Nobatia. Julian labored in Nobatia until AD 546

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<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Meinardus (1999:52-55).

<sup>19</sup> Another name for the Miaphysitists is Jacobites which is derived from one of the most influential early leaders Jacob Baradaeus. This term is being used to refer to the Miaphysitic churches in Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria. The Egyptian and Ethiopian Christians that have adopted Miaphysitism are generally called Copts (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:29).

<sup>20</sup> For summary accounts about the Christianization of Nubia cf Vantini (1981); Lobban (2004:109-111); Werner, Anderson & Wheeler (2000:28-39); Werner (2013:50-65).

<sup>21</sup> For the discussion about the reliability of John's account of Richter (2002:39-40) and (Werner 2013:51-52).

and returned to Constantinople where he was received with great honour by the Empress. For the immediate follow up of the new believers, Bishop Theodorus of Philae, who had joined Julian during his mission, visited Nobatia various times. It is not known whether Julian went to Nobatia a second time. John of Ephesus tells us that the Emperor Justinian dispatched a dyophysitic missionary delegation to Nubia at the same time. But his wife Theodora had issued a death-threat to the provincial governor of Thebes, if he would allow the Emperor's delegation to pass first. Thus, the provincial governor delayed Justinian's group and gave preference to the Empress' missionary convoy (Werner 2000:28-30; 2013:51-54).<sup>22</sup> The emperor's mission was rejected on their arrival.

#### **2.4.4 The beginning of Christianity in Makuria**

There is no clear evidence regarding the time and the circumstances of the coming of Christianity to Makuria, the neighboring kingdom of Nobatia. It might be that, after their refusal by the Nobatian king, the missionary delegation of Justinian I proceeded to Makuria in AD 543. Another possibility is the sending of another mission by Justinian I at a later time. Evidence for the conversion of Makuria to Christianity has been provided by John of Biclar, an author contemporary to John of Damascus. He reports that a Makurian delegation arrived at Constantinople reporting to the emperor Justin II (565-578) that they had become Miaphysitic Christians recently and expressing their gratitude for introducing them to Christianity (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:33; Werner 2013:57-58).

#### **2.4.5 The consolidation of Christianity in Nobatia**

Longinus, who originated from Alexandria and became a member of the Miaphysitic church in Antioch of Syria, was consecrated bishop of Nobatia in AD 576. When Emperor Justin II (AD 565-578) heard of the plan, he had Longinus put into prison to prevent the spread of more miaphysitic influence in Nubia. After three years of imprisonment, Longinus was able to escape from Constantinople and returned to Nobatia in AD 569 or 570 (Werner 2013:59). Longinus labored in his first phase in Nobatia for six years. In this time, he taught the Nobatian Christians, built a church, ordained Nubian priests, set up an organizational structure for the church and introduced the Greek liturgy. After attending the Synod in Alexandria in AD 575<sup>23</sup> Longinus spent some years in Arabia and returned to Nobatia in AD 579/580 (:60).

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<sup>22</sup> For other early evidence of Christianity in Nobatia cf Werner, Anderson & Wheeler (2000:31-32) where he refers to the Coptic inscription in the temple of Dendur and the cathedral of Qasr Ibrim.

<sup>23</sup> We do not have any information about Longinus beyond his trip to Alodia. According to John of Damascus, Longinus played a dubious role during the election of the miaphysitic Pope in Alexandria which led to his

### **2.4.6 Beginning of Christianity in Alodia**

Shortly after Longinus left for Alexandria in AD 575, a letter by the king of Alodia reached the king of Nobatia asking him to send Longinus as a missionary to Alodia. Soon after his return to Nobatia in AD 579/580 the Alodians sent a delegation to Nobatia to ask Longinus to come to Alodia to preach, teach and baptize them. Despite some opposition from Alexandria who had sent a group to discourage the Alodians to be baptized by Longinus, the Alodians insisted on their request for Longinus (Werner 2013:60). Despite the fact that the Makurians tried to prevent Longinus from reaching Alodia, he was able to arrive around AD 580. Within a short time, the Alodian king and a substantial part of his people were baptized. In a letter to the Nobatian king, whom he describes as his physical and spiritual relative, the king of Alodia expressed his gratitude, offered military support, and assistance in building churches. In Alodia temples were changed into churches as well. Longinus asked for two bishops to be sent to the newly formed Alodian church. Thus, the kingdom of Alodia became part of Miaphysitic Christianity under the Alexandrian See in AD 580.

### **2.4.7 The organization of the Nubian church**

According to the evidence that is available, we can conclude that the Christianization of the three Nubian kingdoms in the Nile valley was well completed by the end of the sixth century AD. Nobatia and Alodia followed the Miaphysitic confession whereas Makuria accepted the Dyophysitic persuasion (Kraus 1931:59; Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:38; Werner 2013:64-65). Greek became the liturgical language in all three national churches. In the organization of their churches and the establishment of the ecclesiastical offices, they followed the respective tradition of their founders. It seems that the three kingdoms in fact did not differ significantly in their core teaching, customs and liturgy. Christianity developed well in all three Nubian kingdoms. Churches were built, the people were taught in their new faith and Christian art were developed (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:38-40).

### **2.4.8 The Islamic threat**

Following the death of Muhammad, the founder of Islam, in AD 632 the Arab Muslims started their conquest of the Middle East and North Africa. Egypt was invaded in AD 641 when the Muslim army reached Aswan. Although the Muslim invaders reached Dongola in AD 642 and 652, they were not able to subdue Makuria and had to withdraw. As a result of

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dismissal as Bishop of Nobatia. Although the Alexandrians tried to raise a Nobatian apposition against Longinus, they did not succeed (Werner 2013:60).

these unsuccessful attempts to conquer Dongola, a cease-fire agreement between the Arabs and the Nubians was negotiated, the so-called baqt (Latin: pactum) in AD 652.<sup>24</sup> It was later changed into a lasting peace treaty (Werner 2013:68). The baqt was a political agreement between two sovereign states and regulated the mutual exchange of goods, the provision of 360 slaves annually and the promise of no aggression against each other. The agreement confirmed the political independence of Nubia (:69).<sup>25</sup> Through this unique treaty, a relatively peaceful period of more than 600 years was secured (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:42-43).

#### **2.4.9 The unification of Nobatia and Makuria**

Discussing the potential time periods regarding the unification of Nobatia and Makuria, Werner argues convincingly for a date between AD 628 and 642 (Werner 2013:73-77; Godlewski 1999:55).<sup>26</sup> This would explain the lack of information about Nobatia in the seventh century AD. It is notable that there is no evidence for a new name that designates the two unified kingdoms Nobatia and Makuria. A still remaining enigma so far is the fact the Old Nobiin language of Nobatia obviously gained a dominating position over the Old-Dongolaawi of the Makurian kingdom (Werner 2013:77 fn 91). After Nobatia was integrated, the Makurian king started to reorganize the structure of state and church (:77). In addition to the linguistic differences between Nobatia and Makuria, there were also economic differences. Nobatia had strong trade relationships with Egypt whereas Makuria was able to cultivate huge agricultural areas (:80-81).

#### **2.4.10 The golden age of Nubia**

From the ninth to the twelfth century, the Nubian kingdoms in the Nile valley experienced a politically strong, economically prosperous and religiously flourishing era. The characteristics of a distinct Nubian Christian identity and culture can be seen in the art of church paintings, depicting Bible scenes and characters, portraits of saints, kings and bishops (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:62-68). Various other artistic expressions can be seen in handicrafts, such as wood work, metal work and pottery and in architecture and sculptural work (:68). Another significant feature of the Christian culture in Nubia is the fact that the

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<sup>24</sup> For more details of the nature and conditions of the treaty of the extensive and convincing discussion in Werner (2013:68-73).

<sup>25</sup> Lobban (2004:111-112) however, puts an emphasis on the pressure that the Muslims put on the Nubians to accept the tributary status.

<sup>26</sup> Werner has revised his earlier position dating the unification of both kingdoms towards the end of the seventh century AD (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:43-44).

Nubians put their own language into writing and developed a Nubian literature. Next to Coptic and Old Ethiopic, Old Nobiin was the third oldest African language that was put into written form by its Christian speakers (:68). Old Nobiin was spoken in Nobatia, whereas Old Dongolaawi was spoken in Makuria and possibly also in Alodia (:71-72). Large parts of the Bible and a large number of religious texts, such as legends of saints, sermons, liturgical texts, and secular letters and contracts were written in Old Nobiin (:74-77). In addition to Old Nobiin, Greek, Coptic, Arabic and partly Meroitic were used as well (:72-73; Werner 2013:185-197). In the faith of the miaphysitic Nubian church, the central focus was on the person of Christ as the ultimate Lord and on the cross. An important role was attributed to Mary and the saints, the angels and the four living creatures (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000: 78-82). The Eucharist and the liturgy and baptism played a central role in the Nubian worship. Pilgrimages to important churches or monasteries at the occasion of certain festivals and occasions were part of the Christian church tradition (:85-88). The Nubian church was organized according to the miaphysitic model and dependent on the Pope of Alexandria. Bishops, priests, deacons and monks originating mainly from Nubia, but also from Egypt were shaping the life of the church significantly (:82-83). In the early phase of Nubian Christianity, Pharaonic or Meroitic temples were changed into churches. Then, separate churches were built, using stone initially and mud bricks in a later period. Regarding the architectural style, the churches were of a Basilica and Cross-in-Square type (:84-85).

#### **2.4.11 The decline and disappearance of Nubian Christianity**

In the second half of the thirteenth century AD, internal battles and attacks on Egypt provoking Egyptian campaigns against Nubia led to the loss of Nubian sovereignty and the gradual collapse of the Nubian kingdoms. Kudanbes who ascended to the throne in 1311 was the last Christian king of Dongola. His successor Abdalla Barshambo, became the first Muslim Nubian king in 1317. In the same year the royal palace in Dongola was turned into a mosque. The Kanz ad-Daula dynasty took control over Makuria in 1318, which had become a Christian country under Muslim kings. Egypt had lost interest in Nubia and Makuria broke into a number of small insignificant principalities. One of these became known as the kingdom of Dotawo, located in Lower Nubia near the Second Cataract. Jebel Adda and Qasr Ibrim were the centers of the small kingdom. Together with Alodia, Dotawo survived until the close of the fifteenth century AD. Nubia became a refuge for rebels who fought against the Egyptian rulers and for Christians escaping Islamic excesses in Egypt (Lobban 2004:149; Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:90-101). The kingdom of Alodia that was situated at the

confluence of the Blue and White Niles was an important trade link between Central Africa and Lower Nubia, Egypt, Ethiopia and Arabia. Information about Alodia at this time is rare. It survived as a Christian state until its capital Soba finally fell to the Funj in 1504 (Lobban 2004:20; Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:103-108). As late as the fifteenth century AD Christian Nubians were noted as pilgrims to the holy places of Palestine. There are a number of travel reports from the sixteenth until the eighteenth century AD that still speak of the presence of Christians in Nubia (:108-110).

There is archaeological evidence for the influence of Nubian Christianity beyond the territory of the three kingdoms south of Alodia (:113), in the western Sudan (:113-114), Chad and West Africa (:114-115).

#### **2.4.12 Reasons for the downfall of Nubian Christianity**

There are a number of interconnected external and internal reasons<sup>27</sup> that led to the gradual disappearance of Christianity in the Nile valley over the period of several hundred years.<sup>28</sup> Internal factors for the decline of the Christian church in Nubia have been put forward by numerous scholars. It was argued that the church essentially disappeared due to its spiritual weakness, the exclusion of lay people from church rituals and worship, and the lack of indigenous theological schools. Further, it was added that the relationship between church and state was too close and the dependency on the Coptic Church was too strong. It was also suggested that the Nubian people were not led into a deeper understanding of their faith and did not participate in active evangelism of their surrounding neighbors, but increasingly followed magical practices and beliefs. It was also held that Christianity was the religion of the urban population and was not deeply rooted in the rural areas. To what extent these reasons contributed to the downfall of Christianity is difficult to say. They may have had their effect, but there are also arguments to mitigate their destructive impact.<sup>29</sup> Following the Arab invasion of Egypt and the *baqt* agreement, Arab Muslim tribal groups moved into the Sudan via the mountains at the Red Sea in the tenth and eleventh century AD (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:115; Werner 2013:175). The relationship between the Muslim rulers of Egypt and Nubia deteriorated when the Mamluks took over the Islamic Empire from the Fatimids. Their aggressive and intolerant policy against Nubia and their military campaigns led to

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<sup>27</sup> Cf Trimingham (1949); Monneret (1938); Vantini (1981); Adams (1975:11-17, 1984); Werner, Anderson & Wheeler (2000); Werner (2013); Shenk (1993:131-154).

<sup>28</sup> Against Cuoq (1986:91), who supposes the transition from Christianity to Islam occurred within three generations.

<sup>29</sup> Cf Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:116-118 who lists a number of possible internal reasons for the decline of Nubian Christianity, but in Werner 2013:171-174 rejects these arguments to a large extent.



destruction, economic decline and a decrease of the local population. They also interfered with the internal affairs and power struggles at the royal court in Dongola (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:115; Werner 2013:175-176). Due to the fact that the main trade route was diverted from the Nile route to the desert route, the economy of Nubia was significantly weakened and thus fell into impoverishment (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:116; Werner 2013:175). It is highly likely that after the first Muslim ruler took power in Makuria, he introduced the head-tax (*jizya*) which encouraged those that were not able to pay the annual tax to convert to Islam (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:116; Werner 2013:176). Another reason for the decline of Nubian Christianity was the increasing isolation from the wider church and the missing support and neglect by it. Geographically located south of the Islamic empire, the Nubian church was not able to participate in the necessary spiritual exchange (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:116; Werner 2013:176). Werner argues that the *causa movens* (main reason) for the decline and disappearance of the Christian faith in Nubia was the pestilence in the middle of the fourteenth century AD. It is this disaster that accelerated the destructive effect of the other factors (:177). In addition to this, Werner states that the lack of a political structure that could support Christianity in Nubia was a crucial factor for its decline.

#### **2.4.13 Remnant traces of Christianity in Nubia**

There are still some Christian traces preserved in customs among the Nile-Nubians today. Most of the time those that perform traditional rites are not even aware of their Christian origin or meaning. The sign of the cross used on certain occasions, Christian place names, rites related to child birth and modern Nubian words are reminiscences of Nubia's long Christian history (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler :110-112; Werner 2013:177-181; Kellerhals 1941:60-62; Vantini 1981:208-210).

### **2.5 The coming of Islam to Nubia**

The Nubian section of the Nile valley was Christian for less than a century when the Muslim army invaded Egypt in AD 640 and advanced to Aswan only one year later where the conquest was stopped. For several centuries, the First Cataract marked the southern frontier of Islamic Egypt and the northern border of Christian Nubia.

### 2.5.1 The insidious Islamization

Christianity in Nubia flourished during medieval times and the attacks of the Egyptian Muslim rulers were effectively blocked. Until the major invasion and penetration of Islam into Nubia began in the fourteenth century, the spread of Islam had occurred basically by assimilation of intruding settlers, traders and teachers (Lobban 2004:198). The Muslim settlers married into leading Nubian families and gradually changed the traditional kinship system from matrilineal to patrilineal. This development led to the spread of Islamic doctrine and legal practices (Kennedy 1978:8). In AD 652 the first *baqt* (treaty) was established between Nubia and Egypt when the Egyptian Muslims failed to conquer Nubia (:111). Some Muslims even sought refuge in Nubia as they were part of the defeated Abbasid Caliphate. During the Fatimid Caliphate (AD 969-1161), there were many Arab trading expeditions traveling along the Nile, dealing particularly in slaves. In 1171 Salah al-Din defeated a Nubian army that had invaded Egypt. In the fourteenth century Dongola, the capital of Makuria, fell and Abdalla Barshambo was crowned the first Muslim Nubian king. In May 1317, a hall in the royal palace in Dongola was changed into a mosque (Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:96-98). This event is often seen as the official end of Christianity in Nubia. Nubia was still Christian, but had become a Christian people under a Muslim ruler. Nevertheless, this military victory marked the final deathblow and introduced the progressive Islamization of Nubia.

### 2.5.2 Nubia under Ottoman rule

In 1517 Egypt became part of the Ottoman Empire. Hasan Koosy, of Turkish descent, was sent by Sultan Selim to become governor of Lower Nubia in order to exercise political and economic control. The following years saw the establishment of Ottoman garrisons in Aswan, Qasr Ibrim and Sai. The soldiers originated mainly from Hungary, Bosnia, Kurdistan and Circassia. They were culturally assimilated as they intermingled progressively with the local population. Even today, their descendants are partly identifiable as they bear family names such as Kurdi or Magari and have remained a distinctive part of today's population in Nubia (Poeschke 1996:23). Descendants of Hungarian soldiers are still called Magaraab (Sorbo 1985:93). Members of the Koosy family married into local lineages and the resulting regional aristocracy became known as the *kushaf*.<sup>30</sup>

In 1805, the Albanian Muhammed Ali became Viceroy of Egypt. In 1820-1821 he carried out a military campaign into the Sudan and brought the region south of Lower Nubia

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<sup>30</sup> *Kushaaf* is a title for Ottoman Turkish provincial governors (Kennedy 1978:8).

under Turco-Egyptian rule. The territory remained under Ottoman rule until 1855. During these years, slave trade had increased dramatically as young people in the south of the Sudan became the object of organized large-scale slave raids. Although the Nubians in general were not affected or involved in these raids, the Danaqla became actively engaged in this slave trade (Poeschke 1996:24; Hussein 1920:9-10).

### **2.5.3 Nubia under Mahdist rule**

When the movement of the Mahdi emerged in 1881, it was generally not supported by the Nubian population. Yet part of the Danaqla welcomed the movement and supported it. Mohammed Ahmed al-Mahdi had proclaimed himself the *Mahdi*, the awaited Muslim liberator. In 1885, the religion-based rebellion culminated in the massacre of the British General Gordon and his troops in Khartoum and led to the establishment of Mahdism throughout the northern Sudan. In 1898, the power of the Mahdist regime was broken and the Sudan was retaken by the Anglo-Egyptian army under the command of General Kitchner (Poeschke 1996:24).

### **2.5.4 Nubia under British-Egyptian rule**

Following the defeat of the Mahdi revolt in 1899, a joint Anglo-Egyptian government subjugated the Sudan to its rule. It is of significance to note that in the Condominium Agreement the border between Egypt and the Sudan was fixed at latitude twenty-two degrees north. The result was that an ethnic subgroup of the Nubians, the Fadija, was separated arbitrarily. Nubia, which had been a geographic, historic and ethnic continuum for many centuries, was irrevocably split (:24). In Egypt, the British had crushed the Orabi revolt in 1882. Following the victory, they established a de facto rule in Egypt even though the Egyptian Khedive retained his nominal sovereignty. In 1914, the British formally took over control from the Ottoman Empire when they made Egypt a British Protectorate. Thus, Egyptian and the Sudanese Nubia were under British rule until in 1952 the “free officers” in Egypt exiled king Faruk and in 1956 the Sudan became independent (:24-25).

## **2.6 The Nile-Nubians and their ethnicity**

As we have seen the rich and changing history of the inhabitants of the Nile valley it is of significance that we deal with this crucial issue of Nubian ethnicity. We have to raise questions such as: Who are the Nubians? Where do they come from? Are they a homogenous

group or a multi-ethnic melting-pot? Where do they live? What is their role in the Sudanese and Egyptian society?

### **2.6.1 The origin of the Nubians**

There are a number of ancient sources that mention the Nubians as a distinct ethnic group different from the Kushites of Meroe. The sources call them Noubai, Nobadae or Noba. As far as we know, it is Eratosthenes (275-194 BC) who mentioned the Nubians first as a group that resided west of the Nile in the Bayuda Desert. Strabo, who accompanied the Roman prefect in Egypt, Aelius Gallus, to Upper Egypt, mentioned the Nubians without any reference to their location. Werner argues that despite some contradictions the name Noba/Nobadae describes an ethnic group that resided in the Nile valley mainly west of the Nile (2013:31-32). It seems that the original homeland of the Nubians is the region of Kordofan and Darfur, west of the Nile. On the basis of the distribution of the Nubian languages it can be suggested that different Nubian groups moved from there into the Nile valley.<sup>31</sup> Werner suggests that the splitting up of the Nubian languages began about 3,000 years ago when through migration movements the Proto-Nubians began to separate (:32-33).<sup>32</sup> The evidence seems to support the theory that Nubian groups moved into the Nile valley only around the beginning of the Christian time. The stela of the Axumite king Ezana refers to his victory over the Red Noba and the Black Noba. The Red Noba possibly correspond to the Nobadae who were the Nobiin speakers. They may have also included the people of Makuria. The Black Noba may refer to the people of Nobadia or Alodia or both.<sup>33</sup> The evidence that is available so far does not allow for a doubt free description of the developments, nevertheless it points towards the fact that different Nubian groups were in existence. It may be safe to say that the groups that moved from the western Sudan into the Nile valley mixed with the already present groups and became the core group of Nile-Nubians that we know today. During the Christian period, we can assume that people from the west, the south and Egypt in the north immigrated into the developing Christian kingdoms. Another significant wave of ethnic immigration began with the coming of Arab tribes to the Nile valley in the Middle Ages and during the Ottoman occupation. Ottoman officials and soldiers settled in Nubia and mixed with the local people. Some of them originated from Bosnia or Hungary and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the heavy slave trade that took place via Nubia with Egypt, a

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<sup>31</sup> Herzog's idea that Nubian groups moved from the Nile valley to Kordofan (1957:38-42) needs to be rejected on the basis of the linguistic developments that took place already in pre-Christian time.

<sup>32</sup> Cf Rilly (2004) who suggests a coherent model of the splitting up of the East-Sudanic languages.

<sup>33</sup> It needs to remain open whether the differentiation between the two Nuba groups was also existent in their own understanding (Werner 2013:46 fn 130).

considerable number of officials and soldiers remained in Nubia and have become part of the respective Nubian communities. Thus, the people that we call the Nile-Nubians today are in fact a multifaceted and mixed ethnic group that has developed over the centuries shaped by the political developments in the region.

## **2.6.2 The ethnic sub-groups of Nile-Nubians**

As shown above, the ethnic group that we call the Nile-Nubians today occupies the Nile valley, neighboring regions and some parts of the bigger cities in Egypt and the Sudan. The Nile-Nubians that traditionally occupied the region upstream of the bend in the Nile between the Third and the Fourth Cataracts have abandoned their vernacular and mixed with emigrating Arab Nomads and Bejas who originated from the mountainous desert east of the Nile. The process of Arabization had already begun by the late Middle Ages (Bechhaus-Gerst 1989:21; Werner 2013:29). Their customs and traditions still point to their Nubian heritage and origin. The number of Arabized Nubian tribes, such as the Ja'aliyin, the Shaygiya, the Rubatab, the Manasir and others, has become considerable (:29). Adams rightly points out that the Nile-Nubians are racially more distinct from the majority of Egyptians, but not so much from a number of the Sudanese tribal groups. Language has become an important identity marker, therefore the modern term Nubian "is primarily a linguistic term" (1977:44-45). It is also significant to state that the Nubians are not a pure ethnic group. Although they are the descendants of the Nubians that occupied the Nile valley after the breakdown of the last Kushitic kingdom, they are today an ethnic mixture due to invasions and intrusions into the Nile valley and the frequent movements and migrations of people within the area (Poeschke 1996:26). Despite the fact that the different Nubian groups maintained their vernacular, they also moved into bilingualism, using Arabic increasingly, which became a unifying factor for the contemporary Nubian groups (Rouchdy 1991:20; Poeschke 1996:27). The occupation of the Nile valley as described below, reflects the situation in Old Nubia prior to the resettlement in 1963/64.

### **2.6.2.1 The Kunuuz**

The Nile-Nubians that occupy the northernmost territory from Aswan to Seba are the Kunuuz. Their distinct identity marker and uniting factor is the Kunuuzi vernacular. The Kunuuz are also called Mattokki (people of the east) and are thought to have been Dongolaawi Nubians that left their original region and moved to the area between the First and Second Cataracts in the Middle Ages. After their immigration into their new homeland,

they are considered to have mixed with the Arab-Beja Beni Kanz tribe. Nevertheless, they kept most of their original culture and language. Yet part of the Kunuuz proudly claimed to be of Arab descent which developed into a feeling of superiority over the other Nubian groups (Adams 1984:524-525; Poeschke 1996:27). It is of importance to note, that prior to the relocation in the 1960s the Nubian ethnic subgroups did not regard themselves as being members of one homogenous ethnic group. Despite the existing similarities between these groups in terms of social, economic and cultural organization as well as in terms of language, the designation Nubian was an etic term. It was used rather by the scholarly community on the basis of the above mentioned similarities than by the people themselves, except for the Fadija group. Certainly the construction of the High Dam has united the Nubians more than anything else (Poeschke 1996:27).

### **2.6.2.2 The Aleqaat**

South of the Kunuuzi settlements, the so-called Aleqaat occupied the area between Wadi al-Arab and Korosko. They consisted of nomadic Arab groups that settled in this part of the Nile valley and assimilated with the surrounding Nubians regarding cultural customs and traditions and their social organization, while still communicating in Arabic. Nevertheless, they were also considered to be Nubians. Poeschke points out that the Aleqaat did not refer to themselves as Nubian prior to the 1960s, but emphasized their descent from the Arabian Peninsula (1996:28).

### **2.6.2.3 The Fadija, Sukkoot and Mahas**

Adjoining to the south of the Aleqaat, the Nobiin speaking region began. They occupied the area between Korosko and Kerma. The ethnic subgroups in this language zone were - from north to south - the Fadija, the Sukkoot and the Mahas.

The Fadija group were the inhabitants of the area between Korosko and Adindan in Egyptian territory. Obviously, they did not designate themselves as Fadija prior to the resettlement. They would rather call themselves by the Arabic term Nubiyyiin and their language Nuubi. According to Fernea, the term Fadija was attributed to them by the Kunuuzi, referring to them as peasants and carrying slightly negative overtones (1973:15). This designation also included the inhabitants of the Wadi Halfa region, prior to the resettlement in 1964.

When the resettlement scheme was developed, the term Halfawiyyiin emerged to refer to the Nile-Nubians that had to leave their homes in Wadi Halfa and its neighbouring area. In the beginning the designation included non-Nubian settlers as well, but today it is mainly used

to refer to Nubians that originated from Wadi Halfa regardless of their present location, such as in New Halfa, in Khartoum or other parts of the northern Sudan (Poeschke 1996:28).

The Sukkoot were not affected by the construction of the Aswan High Dam and the resulting Lake Nubia as it is called in the Sudanese territory. As their land was not inundated, they still occupy their original homeland north and south of Abri.

The southernmost part of the Nobiin speaking Nile valley is occupied by the ethnic sub-group of the Mahas. Their settlements are south of the Dal Cataract up to the Kerma region, south of the Third Cataract.

#### **2.6.2.4 The Danaqla**

The ethnic subgroup of the Danaqla occupies the region south of the Kerma. It stretches from Dongola (al-Urdi) until ad-Debba, between the Third and the Fourth Cataracts. Despite the geographical distance, their vernacular strikingly resembles the Kunuuzi language which is spoken in the far north of Nubia. This “language sandwich” of Dongolaawi, Nobiin and Kunuuzi may be explained by the migration of some of the Danaqla in the late Middle Ages (Rouchdy 1991:15; Fernea/Gerster 1973:13ff; Fernea 1979:42ff; Bechhaus-Gerst 1994:19-20.). The process of Arabization has continued for quite some time and led to a tangible decrease of Dongolaawi. Therefore sometimes other Nubian groups refer to the Danaqla as Arabs (Poeschke 1996:28).

### **2.6.3 The dispersion of the Nubian population**

Old Nubia constituted a continuous region between Aswan and al-Debba prior to the extensive resettlement scheme in the Sudan and Egypt in the 1960s. However, due to external and internal reasons, the shape of Nubia has changed and it is only partly inhabited today.

#### **2.6.3.1 The dispersion of Nubians in Egypt**

It was the construction of the Aswan Dam in 1902 and its subsequent heightening in 1912 and 1933 that initiated an increasing movement of Nubians to Aswan, the surrounding region, and to the Esna and Luxor areas. Nubians also moved in considerable numbers to northern cities of Egypt, such as Cairo, Alexandria and to the Canal cities of Suez, Ismailiyya and Port Said. The strongest effect on the settlement of Nubia came through the later building of the High Dam about fifteen kilometers south of Aswan. In 1963/64 the Egyptian Government ordered a resettlement scheme and forty-three new villages for the resettled Nubians were established in the Kom Ombo region, north of Aswan, with their administrative centre in Madinit Nasr. Until today, more than 90% of the inhabitants of these villages in New Nubia are Nubians

being part of one of the three ethnic sub-groups. Only in some of the villages there are houses or small enclaves of non-Nubians. Between the new town of Abu Simbel and the High Dam, there are only a few new settlements of Nubians along Lake Nasser, such as Qustul and Adindan, Qaryit is-Salam, Tomas wa Afya, Koshtamne and Karkar.

### **2.6.3.2 The dispersion of Nubians in the Sudan**

Between ad-Debba, Dongola and Akasha, there are settlements with high Nubian populations. This region is part of the original homeland of the Nubians in the Sudan. Lake Nubia begins north of Akasha. The re-founded town of Wadi Halfa is the most northern Nubian settlement. Due to the lake, the Sudanese Nubians were resettled to New Halfa in the eastern Sudan in the Khasm al-Girba region. The area essentially accommodates the resettled Nubians from the Wadi Halfa region. The whole scheme, next to the administrative center in New Halfa, comprises thirty-three villages, of which twenty-five are occupied by resettled Nubians. In addition to these two areas, the Sudanese Nubians can be found in almost every city especially in the northern part of the country, like Port Sudan, Kassala, Gadaref, Wad Medani or Atbara. Beyond this, Greater Khartoum has attracted the biggest number of Nubians (Hale 1979b:172).

### **2.6.3.3 The dispersion of Nubians in the Arab and the western world**

Outside Egypt and the Sudan, Nubian migrant diaspora are found mainly in the urban centres of Arab oil-exporting countries such as Saudi Arabia (eg Jeddah and al-Riyadh), Kuwait (Kuwait City), the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi) and, to a lesser degree, Libya.

In their search for work and income, Nubians increasingly migrated to western countries during the 1980s. Today, Nubian communities can be found in Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Canada, and the USA (Helmer 1983; Poeschke 1996:42).

### **2.6.3.4 An estimate of the contemporary Nubian population**

It is basically impossible to precisely estimate the total number of Nubians today. The recent censuses in both Egypt and the Sudan do not contain the Nubians as a separate category. Poeschke in his study presents the estimates of Riad that are based on the censuses in Egypt in 1960 and the Sudan in 1955/56 and of Fahim and Geiser (1996:43-44). For 1993, Poeschke very carefully suggested a total number of Nubians of 1,100,000 Nubians living in Egypt and the Sudan as well as outside these two countries. He suggested roughly 300,000 Nubians of Egyptian and the Sudanese origin in Egypt, 700,000 Nubians that are almost exclusively the Sudanese nationals, in the Sudan, and about 100,000 Nubian migrants of Egyptian and the



Sudanese nationality in various host countries (:45). Today, it might be correct to carefully speak of 1,500,000 Nubians living in the Sudan, Egypt, the Arab World and Western World.

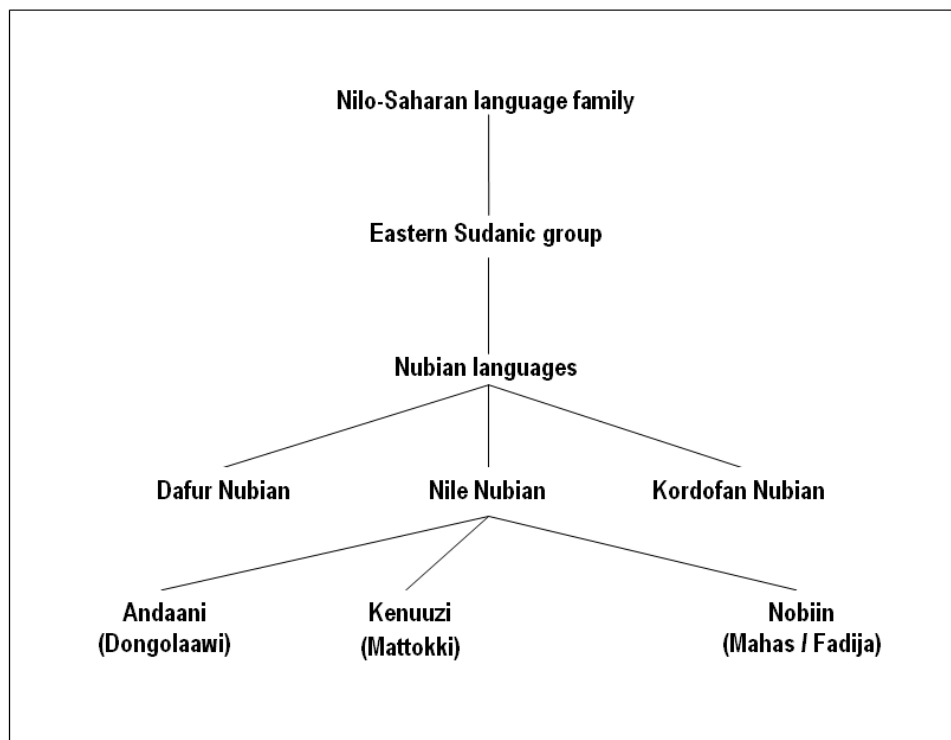
## 2.7 The Nile-Nubians and their languages

The markers of a strong self-identity of any people group are its common history, customs, traditions, religious beliefs and its language. A major factor of creating or maintaining the ethnic identity of an ethno-linguistic people group is the use of the vernacular. The following brief introduction is to bring orientation regarding the linguistic situation in the Nile valley.

### 2.7.1 The classification and geographical distribution of the Nubian languages

Among the four major language families in Africa, the Nubian languages are classified as being part of the Nilo-Saharan language phylum that is basically spoken in the area between West Africa and the southern Sudan.<sup>34</sup> Within the Nilo-Saharan languages, the Nile-Nubian languages are part of the Nubian languages that constitute a subgroup of the northeastern Sudanic branch (Thelwall 1982; Werner 1987; 1992; 1993; Rilly 2010). The following graphic based on Thelwall's analysis represents a hypothetical model (Werner 1993:15).

**Illustration 1: Classification of Nubian languages**



<sup>34</sup> Attempts to classify the Nubian languages as part of the Afro-Asiatic language phylum can be dismissed as inappropriate cf Werner (2013:32-33 fn 87).

The precise sub-classification of the Nubian languages is still under discussion (Werner 1993:16; 2013:32-34). M Bechhaus-Gerst suggested a new model for the internal classification of the Nubian languages. On the basis of historical and linguistic research, she proposes a Northern Nubian sub-group represented by Nobiin and a West/Central Nubian group represented by Midob, Birgid, Kunuuzi/Dongolaawi and Hill Nubian (Bechhaus-Gerst 1989:29).<sup>35</sup> Among the Nubian languages, such as Midob, Hill-Nubian, Birgid and Haraza, our focus is on the Nile-Nubian languages as these are still spoken by the occupants of the Nile valley between Aswan and ad-Debba today.

The Nile-Nubian languages<sup>36</sup> are classified as a sub-group of the Nubian languages consisting of the two languages Nobiin and Kunuuzi/Dongolaawi (Werner 1987:23; 1992:508-509; Rilly 2010:734). The latter has recently been recognized as a separate language in its own right and separated from Kunuuzi, being called Andaandi (Jaeger 2014:94). Nobiin on the one side and Kunuuzi and Andaandi on the other side are mutually not comprehensible. In Egypt as well as in the Sudan, the Nubian languages used by the Nile-Nubians are often named in Arabic as *rutaana* which means “to speak unintelligibly” (Rouchdy 1991:10). The term is not only used by non-Nubians, but can be frequently heard by Nubians as well.

### **2.7.1.1 Nobiin**

The term Nobiin was introduced by H Bell based on the self-designation of its speakers. It comprises dialectal variants that are known in literature as Mahas (Mahasi), Sukkooti, and Halfawi and that are spoken between Wadi Halfa and the Kerma region, in the resettlement scheme of New Halfa and in Greater Khartoum. Fadija is spoken by a significant part of the Egyptian Nubians north of Wadi Halfa, in New Nubia around the Upper Egyptian city of Kom Ombo about fifty km north of Aswan, and by the Nubians that live in Cairo, Alexandria and the Suez Canal region. Nobiin is a register tone language. It uses a high and a low tone and a combination of the two (high-low falling) (Werner 2004:1). Nobiin can be regarded as the successor language of Old Nobiin which was spoken during the Christian Nubian period between the fifth and the fifteenth century AD. This rare fact for an African language allows for diachronic studies (:1).

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<sup>35</sup> For a more detailed discussion cf Werner (1993:14-16).

<sup>36</sup> Another term is River Nubian as these languages are spoken in the Nile valley on both sides of the Egyptian-Sudanese border (Jakobi and Kümmerle 1993:vi).

### **2.7.1.2 Kunuuzi**

The Kunuuzi language was spoken north of the Nobiin and Arabic language zone, i.e. between Sebuja and Aswan. Today, Kunuuzi<sup>37</sup> is spoken in the Aswan region, in New Nubia around the city of Kom Ombo and by the Kunuuz that have settled in Cairo, Alexandria and the Canal cities such as Suez, Ismaelia and Port Said. Kunuuzi is an Arabic term based on the name of the Arab-Beja Beni Kenz tribal group (Adams 1984:524-525; Fernea and Gerster 1973:19).

### **2.7.1.3 Dongolaawi (Andaandi)**

The Dongolaawi language is spoken in the Nile valley of the northern Sudan, roughly between the Third Cataract south of Kerma upstream to the Nile reach at ad-Debba. The term Dongolaawi is derived from the name of Old Dongola which was the capital city of Makuria located on the eastern side of the Nile. Until recently the two dialects, Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi, were regarded as one language as they are closely related to each other. The Dongolaawi speakers call their own language, in their vernacular, Andaandi (Jakob & El-Guzuuli 2013:193).<sup>38</sup> For a long time, Dongolaawi speakers were bilingual as they still retained their vernacular but also have adopted the Sudanese Colloquial Arabic. Gradually, Dongolaawi has been threatened to be completely replaced by Arabic. Evidence for this development can be seen in the decreasing number of Dongolaawi speakers and the growing influence of Arabic on this Nile-Nubian language (:193). However, there are signs of a growing interest to preserve the Dongolaawi vernacular. Following a request of Dongolaawi speakers, since 2013 the Ethnologue now treats Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi as two separate languages (Jaeger 2014:94).

The linguistic situation among the Nile-Nubians is quite puzzling due to the fact that we find Kunuuzi Nubian speakers around Aswan and Dongolaawi speakers around Dongola. Both are closely related to each other and almost mutually understandable dialects of one language. Based on this fact, Adams suggests that the separation did not take place longer than five hundred years ago (Adams 1984:562-563). If this assumption is correct, this would mean that Dongolaawi speakers migrated from Dongola northwards to Aswan and connected with the Arab tribe Banu Kanz, who had already settled in Aswan. Fernea (1979:43-44) thinks that Dongolaawi women married men from the Banu Kanz tribe. The women accepted Islam and the men adopted the Dongolaawi language which became the Kunuuzi dialect. According to Roeder (1912:272) the Kanz tribe took control of the Aswan region in 1389. This may

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<sup>37</sup> Also called Kenzi or Mattokki.

<sup>38</sup> The term Andaandi means literally “the language of my/our home” (Jakobi & El-Guzuuli 2013:193).

indicate the beginning of the immigration of the Dongolaawis. In addition to this, it is possible that the movement to the north was at least partly motivated by the natural disaster of the pestilence in the fourteenth century AD that led to a depopulation of the region around the Third Cataract. As the Kunuuz are also called *mattokki* (people of the east), this may be an additional indicator that they came from the eastern desert. There is a certain commonality in the folktales between the two groups as well (Werner 2013:151).

## **2.7.2 The history of the study of the Nile-Nubian languages**

Although Nubiology became a new discipline in science only in the process of the salvage campaign of the Nubian monuments due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam, the study of Nubia, and especially the Nubian languages as part of Egyptology, has a long history which will be presented here in summary (Werner 1992:508-515; Lauche 2001:7-15).

### **2.7.2.1 The study of Nobiin**

Until the turn of the twentieth century, Nobiin was the best documented language. Reinisch, Lepsius and Almkvist had committed substantial time of their broad research especially to the study of Nobiin. After a substantial break in research on Nobiin caused by the two world wars, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, research was resumed by Bell (1986; 1970; 1970/71; 1974) and Werner (1987).

### **2.7.2.2 The study of Kunuuzi**

Until the involvement of Samu'iil Ali Hissen (SAH) in linguistic work in 1900, the study of Kunuuzi was much neglected (Schäfer 1917:14). The linguistic studies of Leo Reinisch (1879, 1911), Richard Lepsius (1880) and Herman Almkvist (1911) included some material on Kunuuzi. Yet the study of Kunuuzi was significantly boosted through Schäfer (1917, 1935) and Junker (1921) as they committed a substantial part of their Egyptological expeditions to Nubia between 1909 and 1912 to the study of the Kunuuzi vernacular. The texts they recorded on the basis of the manuscripts provided by SAH led to extensive material in Kunuuzi and a profound understanding of the language. The study of Kunuuzi was continued by the SPM worker Gertrud von Massenbach (1933, 1962) as she provided a grammatical sketch, a glossary and a collection of Kunuuzi stories. In modern time, it was the Kunuuzi speaking linguist Ahmed Sokarno who completed his grammar reference of Kunuuzi in 1988 and continued to publish additional articles on his vernacular.

### **2.7.2.3 The study of Dongolaawi (Andaandi)**

Beside the limited language material provided in the pioneering works of Reinisch, Lepsius and Almkvist, it was Charles H Armbruster who became the leading scholar on the Dongolaawi vernacular. His impressively detailed Dongolaawi grammar reference was posthumously published by R Shinnie in 1960 and his extensive dictionary in 1965. In 1962, Gertrud von Massenbach published a volume of Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi texts and a sketch of a Dongolaawi grammar. Recently linguistic research has been resumed by Marcus Jaeger and Kamal Hissein (2008) as well as by Marcus Jaeger and El-Shafie El-Guzuuli (2012). In 2008 the Dongolaawi speaker Naasir Satti submitted his thesis focusing on the grammatical analysis of phrases and clauses. In his thesis, he provides first preliminary evidence that tone is grammatically and lexically important (Jakobi & El-Guzuuli 2013:194). A study provided by Angelika Jakobi and El-Shafie El-Guzuuli in 2013 deals with perception verbs and their semantics in Dongolaawi (:193-215).

## **2.8 The impact of the Aswan dams on the Nubian population**

The history of the Nile-Nubians in the twentieth century AD cannot be fully understood without paying attention to the building of the two dams in the region. Based on the economic plans of Great Britain to increase the cotton production in Egypt, the idea of building a dam was suggested and put into practice. The objective was to extend the agricultural land, which needed to be supplied by a larger amount of water.

### **2.8.1 The Aswan Dam**

To implement their objectives the British started to build a dam at the First Cataract south of Aswan in 1898. The dam, which was completed in 1902, created an artificial lake which extended south into Lower Nubia for about 140 kilometers. This huge project had enormous consequences especially on the Kunuuzi Nubians. It resulted in the loss of agricultural areas and essential parts of their settlements due to inundation by the rising waters of the Nile. The Kunuuzi Nubians resettled in the vicinity of their original homeland or further north in the Aswan region. It was the Nubians that had to pay the price for this ambitious project, which created the feeling of being the victims of the colonial policy. This collective impression was even further nurtured by the heightening of the Aswan Dam in 1912 and 1933/34.<sup>39</sup> These

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<sup>39</sup> The SPM worker SAH who originated from Abu Hoor which lay in the affected area wrote an emotional article about the loss of the Nubian land due to the inundation caused by the increasing lake. The article was first published in the SPM journal (SP 1909:13-15) and later included in his autobiography (Hussein 1920:120-128).

additional projects became necessary as the existing lake proved to be insufficient for the increasing demand of water, but resulted in additional loss of land and villages. As there were no government-organized resettlement programs, those Nubians that did not rebuild their houses on higher ground started to leave their homeland and settled further into the Aswan region, close to Daraw and other areas in Upper Egypt or even in cities in Lower Egypt, such as Suez or Mahalla al-Kubra. The economic situation of those Nubians that were staying close to their original locations deteriorated to the extent that they were in need of financial support by the urban labor migrants (Poeschke 1996:35).

## **2.8.2 The Aswan High Dam**

The biggest blow for the Nubians came through the building of Aswan High Dam. The plans for this ambitious project of Nasser's post-colonial socialist government were finalized in the late 1950s. The project seemed to be very promising regarding a substantial increase of the arable lands, an increase of agricultural production from the existing cultivated lands, and the generation of electrical power for industrial development (Fahim 1983:27). At the same time it meant the loss and submersion of almost all of Egyptian Nubia and part of Nubia on the Sudanese territory. Again the Nile-Nubian groups, such as the Kunuuz, the Aleqat, and the Fadija, had to pay the price for the construction of the largest dam and the largest man-made lake in the world at that time. After the agreement between the Egyptian and the Sudanese governments about the water distribution and the compensation to the Sudan was signed in 1959, the construction of the High Dam was started in 1960 and completed in 1971. It created an artificial lake that at times extended up to about 550 kilometers to the south. The relocation process of the Egyptian Nubian population was started in October 1963 and completed in June 1964. Most of the about 50,000 Nubians were resettled in a newly established irrigation scheme around the city of Kom Ombo, around fifty kilometers north of Aswan. The new homeland was called New Nubia (an-Nuuba al-gadiida), located on the east side of the Nile and consisting of forty-three villages hosting all three ethnic sub-groups (Kunnuz, Fadija, Aleqat). The administrative center for New Nubia is the newly established Nasr City (Madinat Nasr). Although the villages were given the same names and arranged in the same order as in Old Nubia, they are, in contrast to the past, in much closer physical proximity now. The transfer of the Sudanese Nubians from the Halfa region to New Halfa (Halfa al-gadiida) in the

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The first heightening of the Aswan Dam led to the settlement of some Kunuuzi Nubians around Daraw. This fact was the basic motivation for the SPM to start a new ministry in Daraw. The second heightening of the Aswan Dam affected the SPM work in that respect that the medical clinic in Koshtamne had to be given up and was to be continued in Gerf Hiseen further south.

Khashm al-Girba area in the eastern Sudan, some 700 kilometers away from their homeland, took place between January 1964 and April 1967. The New Halfa irrigation scheme consisted of twenty-five villages for the Nile-Nubians from Wadi Halfa. The administrative centre of the relocation area was the newly built city of New Halfa. More than 50 000 Nile-Nubians found a new home there. Due to the more alien and isolated social, ecological and climatic environment, the adaption to new life proved to be much harder for the Halfaawi Nubians than for their Egyptian counterparts (Poeschke 1996:38).

Although there were positive aspects connected with the move, the Nubians generally had a common feeling of being the victims of the national policies of their respective governments (:39).<sup>40</sup> The level of rejection of the resettlement varied among the Nubians. The elderly and less educated people could not accept the idea of losing their homeland. The younger generation and the more educated majority with urban experience had a more positive and optimistic outlook towards life in New Nubia, overcoming the social restrictions of traditional village life. In addition to this, better access to formal education, participation in modern life, and overcoming the geographical isolation seemed to be attractive for some. In the beginning, life in the resettlement areas proved to be difficult and full of problems. The infrastructure in the new locations was insufficient and ill-prepared, houses were still unfinished and services were lacking. The architecture of the houses was not appropriate as they were significantly smaller than in Old Nubia and built with different material. The emotional stress of the relocation resulted in an increase of mental disorders and depression among those relocated. Other diseases that were caused by relocation were malaria and bilharzia (schistosomiasis) and infections partly due to unclean water. Another aspect of the dissatisfaction of the Nubian settlers was the new proximity to other ethnic groups to which they felt superior. Although Nubian men went for work to Lower Egypt even prior to the construction of the Aswan Dam, the situation in the new settlements encouraged a new wave of labour migration to the cities in the north of Egypt, Khartoum and the Arab Peninsula and the Gulf States (:39-40).

### **2.8.3 Nubian survival strategies**

Despite the challenges that the Nubians had to face due to the relocation (Fahim 1983), they developed strategies to survive and to find their place in the Egyptian and the Sudanese society.

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<sup>40</sup> It is safe to say that Nubians have immensely benefitted from the access to electricity, medical and educational service provided by the government and the increased presence of the fathers in their homes due to job opportunities in the resettlement areas or in the immediate vicinity (Rouchdy 1991:18-19).

### **2.8.3.1 Institutionalization of labour migration**

Poeschke draws attention to the institutionalization of Nubian labour migration (1996:46-57). As a matter of fact, agricultural resources in Old Nubia were even limited before the building of the dams, but were even more reduced through their construction. This situation led to the development of an economic system that proved to be complementary. There were “consuming households in the villages” and “producing units in the cities” (Geiser 1986:165). This organization served as a successful survival strategy resulting in the migration of large parts of the male population out of Sudanese and Egyptian Nubia. Scudder states that especially Egyptian out-migration rate was one of the highest world-wide (1966:103). It is significant that the Nubian labour migration can be traced back to the eighteenth century AD and is not a modern response to the building of the dams (Geiser 1973). Egyptian Nubian men went preferably to Alexandria, Cairo and the Canal Zone whereas the Sudanese Nubians favored multi-functional towns in the northern Sudan (Poeschke 1996:47). An interesting parallel development is that in Egypt, Upper Egyptian farmers immigrated to Nubia, becoming wage laborers and sharecroppers, whereas the Nubian absentees remained the landholders (:46). In the late twentieth century AD, in addition to the still ongoing rural-urban migration inside Egypt and the Sudan, Nubians became part of the international labor emigration to the rich Arab oil countries. Contacts with the wider family and village community have been maintained by all means of communication and regular visits, especially at the occasion of the major Islamic feasts. Without a doubt, the Nubian city dwellers have gained an increasing appreciation of the conveniences of urban life and better occupational and educational opportunities. The result of this development is that the younger generations are experiencing a gradual loss of contact with their relatives and an increasing loss of their Nubian identity. Although it is still seen as a preferable pattern of migratory behavior to return to Nubia at retirement age, the actual number of those doing so is decreasing (:51).

### **2.8.3.2 Occupational mobility**

Most Nile-Nubians have been traditionally engaged in small-scale subsistence farming combined with animal husbandry for their daily use. Millet and dates were the main crops. The most beneficial export items were the dates. Some Nubians were involved in boat building, trade and river transport activities (Geiser 1986:46). Still in the nineteenth century AD, Nubian traders were also involved in long distance slave trade (Poeschke 1996:58). As Egypt experienced tangible economic growth in the nineteenth century AD, slave trade was



outlawed in 1880, and rich Europeans began to settle increasingly in Alexandria and Cairo. Nubian migrant workers occupied the newly emerging occupational niches. They gained a monopoly of domestic service occupations.<sup>41</sup> Their dominance in the lower service sector was due to their low educational level and their reluctance for manual labor (:59). Since they built up a good reputation as being friendly, diligent, clean, reliable and faithful, they received job opportunities in private homes, restaurants and hotels. Their prominent service positions were doormen, house servants, waiters, cooks, messengers, and drivers. Through their good reputation, they were successfully able to broker fellow Nubian countrymen into similar service positions in their own working context. Fernea draws attention to the fact that the Nubians enjoyed a “symbiotic” relationship with their foreign employers and the relation between them resulted in “considerable reciprocal advantage” (Fernea & Gerster 1973:39). This resulted in a gradually increasing upward mobility. The Nubians were given the opportunity by their employers to bring their families to the cities and they provided access to the educational school system for their children. Within a few decades Nubians, men and women alike, have been able to obtain white collar jobs in the modern urban and rural service sector in Egypt. Poeschke concludes: “Thus, today there exists a wide field of occupational activities that includes those traditional low rank service occupations as well as positions with high status such as university lecturer or judge” (:59). In the Sudan, the Nubians that have stayed in the northern part of the country have remained prominent in the trade and travelling sector. Those that went to the larger cities, like the Nubians in Lower Egypt, were able to dominate the service sector. It was through the British administration that their occupational and economic upward mobility began (Poeschke 1996:62). Nubians in the Sudan gained access to western education and increasingly occupied a privileged intermediate position between other ethnic groups in the Sudan and their British patrons (:62).

### **2.8.3.3 The system of Nubian associations and clubs**

In order not to lose their Nubian identity and the relation with their original settlements, the urban Nubians in Egypt and the Sudan organized themselves into a system of clubs and associations. It seems that already in the seventeenth century Nubians were registered in Egyptian guild lists as watchmen and building workers (Baer 1964:6.13). Nubian guild lists with employees in domestic service occupations indicate the establishment of exclusive Nubian guilds in the nineteenth century AD (:135). In the middle of the nineteenth century AD, Nubian dock workers were recorded in guild lists (Fernea & Gerster 1973:39-40). In the

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<sup>41</sup> Geiser points out in a representative survey that more than 80% of Nubian migrant workers started their urban career with a service occupation (1986:168).

beginning of the twentieth century AD, the Nubian guilds were replaced by migrant societies which gradually developed into a system of Nubian associations and clubs that is still present today (Poeschke 1996:68).<sup>42</sup> After having met in public coffee houses, the Nubian workers, organized according to their original villages, began to rent apartments. The societies provided a place for exchanging news from Old Nubia, strengthening their Nubian identity and offering services for newcomers who were looking for work, accommodation and entertainment in the evenings. In Cairo, the Fadija Nubians organized themselves according to their original villages (*nahiya*), the Kunuuzi societies were organized according to their tribal affiliation in the beginning and later changed to their place of origin (Poeschke 1996:69; Roth 1991:44). Beside these societies, corresponding to the three ethnic subgroups – Fadija, Kunuuz, Aleqaat – Nubian clubs were established in the 1920s.<sup>43</sup> In places with a lower number of Nubian migrants, a similar system of networks was formed, but with a lower level of differentiation than the system in Cairo.<sup>44</sup> The basic function of the societies can be described first of all as a support system for the Nubian migrants in the process of their urban adjustment. Further, they reinforced the Nubian identity in their new urban environment, served as a support channel for the rural settlements and helped to keep the ties with the villages in New Nubia (Geiser 1966:165; Poeschke 1996:70). In Cairo, the three Nubian clubs collectively launched the Nubian General Club (*naadi an-nuuba al-‘aam*) in 1969 which was meant to function as a political pressure group to advocate for Nubian interests (:71). This step also strengthened a growing unified Nubian identity among the three different ethnic subgroups. The system of Nubian societies and clubs in the Sudan has taken a different development from those in Egypt but they fulfill similar social functions. The clubs are based on smaller communities, resulting in almost one hundred Nobiin speaking clubs, made up of twenty-seven Halfaawi, forty Mahasi and thirty Sukkooti societies, and one hundred associations for Dongolaawi speaking Nubians (:75).<sup>45</sup> These societies are represented on a national level through the Nubian Club of Khartoum. In addition to the above mentioned organizations, the Nubians in Egypt and the Sudan have established societies that have a clear focus on the preservation of the threatened Nubian heritage in both countries (:80-81). The Sufi Burhaniyya Brotherhood (at-tariiqqa al-burhaniyya), which was founded in the first

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<sup>42</sup> For a detailed historical and organizational description of Nubian organizations in Egypt and Sudan cf Poeschke (1996:68-82).

<sup>43</sup> The Nubian Club (an-naadi an-nuubi) served the Fadija Nubians, the Kunuuz Club (naadi al-kunuuz) served the Kunuuzi Nubians, and the Arab Club (naadi al-‘arab) served the Arabic speaking Aleqaat.

<sup>44</sup> Examples for this fact are Alexandria, Suez, Port Said and Greater Khartoum.

<sup>45</sup> The urban societies in the Sudan are more numerous than those in Egypt, although most of them were established at a later date than the Egyptian Nubian associations. For details on the various types of Nubian associations cf Sondra Hale’s doctoral study (1979:385ff).

half of the twentieth century AD, had its major impact on Halfaawi Nubians in the Halfa region and later in the urban locations of the Halfaawiyiin. Its major role was in defending common interests of the Halfaawi elite and furthering their identity.

#### **2.8.3.4 Intra-ethnic relations and social networks**

Nubians are known for the strong connections with their home villages. The urban Nubians try to keep their contacts on a personal level through letters, phone calls and their annual visits on the occasion of the two major Islamic feasts, the 'Iid al-Fitr and the 'Iid al-Adha. In the years past, the General Nubian Clubs in Alexandria and Cairo organized complete trains for the festival season to allow their members to travel for reduced fares. Sometimes, saints' days, weddings and funerals are additional reasons for a short visit to the extended family back home. In the Sudan, Nubians from Wadi Halfa in the north use the feast times to re-connect with their relatives in the New Halfa region, near Kassala (:85). Regarding the border crossing contacts, Poeschke states that "long lasting relations and contacts that exceeded the Egyptian-Sudanese national border existed, with a few exceptions, among the Fadija/Halfawiyiin only" (:85).

#### **2.8.4 Nubians as part of the respective national societies**

The Nubians in Egypt were stigmatized for a very long time. There was only little knowledge about them available to the average Egyptian. In their opinion, Nubia was distant and far away from the centres of civilization in Middle Egypt, Cairo and Lower Egypt. The Nubians in Egypt were traditionally associated with the Sudan, the land of the black. Until the building of the High Dam, they were generally called *barbari* (sg) or *barabra* (pl) which had a derogative connotation (Poeschke 1996:92). The same is true with regards to their language. The Nubians spoke *rutaana* which means a non-intelligible language. Education in Nubia was insufficient and not available and affordable for everyone therefore the Nubian men that came to Lower Egypt for work had to accept service positions as the majority of them were uneducated and even illiterate. Their command of Arabic was limited as many Nubians spoke "broken" Arabic. This social discrimination and stigmatization led many Nubians to withdraw to their associations, avoiding closer contact with the Egyptian society. Even today intermarriage between Nubians and non-Nubians is not looked upon favourably (Rouchdy 1991:12). In general, the Nubians were associated with positive characteristics such as honesty, trustworthiness, kindness, hospitality, peacefulness and dignity. They were respected by their foreign or high class Egyptian employers and often preferred to non-Nubians. Due to

this enhanced self-image, the Nubians often regarded themselves as superior to non-Nubians, especially to Upper Egyptians (:13; Poeschke 1996:96). In finding work it turned out to be of great advantage for the Nubians that they were well connected with their networks in the cities and were able to mobilize themselves at request. Thus, they were able to maintain a certain dominance in the sector of service jobs. When the Egyptian and the Sudanese governments launched the High Dam project, the ethnic description “Nubian” was introduced through the media and increasingly used in reference to all people that were affected by the project. As the Nubians are main stream Sunni Muslims, they were fully accepted in the religious communities. However, many Nubians are also part of Sufi orders such as the Burhaniyya or the Shadhliyya orders. In the Sudan, Nubians are more associated with a relatively high level of formal education, political influence and economic success. Regarding their participation in the political arena, Nubians in Egypt did not have much influence, but were marginalized and mainly active through pressure groups, demanding their fair compensation after the resettlement and the right to return back to the shores of Lake Nasser. The Egyptian Nubians neither have serious intentions nor the political and economic means to fight for independence or a unified state in the Nile valley. Nubians in the Sudan are more involved in politics. Their influence was the result of their collaboration with the British government in the colonial Sudan. When independence was gained in 1956, many of the Sudanese Nubians were already in leading positions in the public sector. As they joined existing parties, there was no need to establish political pressure groups outside the parliament. Many Nubians held high positions, such as those of ministers, province governors, diplomats, and influential politicians (:105-112).<sup>46</sup>

## **2.9 The religious life of the Nile-Nubians**

Regarding the religious and ceremonial life in Nubia, Kennedy (1978:8-18) defines three major categories of customs and beliefs that find their expression in a syncretism of ceremonial practices. These categories of the present religious blend are: Orthodox Islamic, Non-Islamic, and Folk Islamic. Surprisingly, he further notes that although Christianity had dominated Nubia for several centuries no significant practices have survived, except some customs of minor significance (:8-9). There are also hardly any remnants from the Old Egyptian religion. Yet there is still strong evidence of animistic features in the religious system and practices of the Nile-Nubians (:9).

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<sup>46</sup> Heads of government of Nubian descent were the Dongolaawi Sadiq al-Mahdi (1966-1967) and the Dongolaawi Jaafar al-Nimeiri (1965-1989).

### **2.9.1 Orthodox Islam**

The huge majority of Nubians are adherents of Sunni Islam. Within this division, they follow the Malikite School of teaching and doctrinal interpretation of the law. To the Nubians, al-Azhar University in Cairo is the normative reference institution. The basic practices of Orthodox Islam are the regular attendance of the Friday prayer (Fahim 1978:19-40) and the Five Pillars of Islam, especially during Ramadan, the month of fasting (Kennedy 1978:9). Based on observations of early travellers (Burkhardt 1822:136-137) and other eye witnesses (Hussein 1920), it seems fair to say that the observance of these Orthodox practices by the Nubians was not too strict. More regular adherence to these religious practices is quite recent (Kennedy 1978:8). While the Nubian men were exposed the more religious education and exchange in the cities of Lower Egypt, the mainly illiterate and ill-educated Nubian women remained in the villages and were basically excluded from the participation in religious activities related to Orthodox Islam (:10).

### **2.9.2 Folk Islam**

There are certain practices that are followed in Nubian religious life in close connection with events in Orthodox Islam, such as the Feast of Sacrifice or the Ramadan Feast. Other practices are related to Islamic events such as the Prophet's birthday or New Year's Day of the Islamic year. But there are also some practices that find the dislike of adherents of Orthodox Islam, such as the Dhikr rituals of the Sufi orders (Kennedy & Fahim 1978:60) or the worship of saints (Messiri 1978:61-103). The saints are pious men that are said to have performed miracles, who function as intercessors before God and whose shrines are *baraka*-endowed, meaning that visiting and touching them brings blessings in the life of the visitor. All these practices, which are mainly performed by women, are rejected by Orthodox Sunni Muslims.

### **2.9.3 Animistic beliefs**

The third category deals with non-Islamic beliefs and customs that are mainly practiced by women. These "crisis rites" are prominent at critical points in the lives of women such as birth, circumcision, marriage and death. They are linked to the spirits and creatures of the Nile, such as river angels or water girls (Guindi 1978:104-113; Grauer & Kennedy 1978:114-124). This category also includes the belief in *jinn*s (demons) that are generally associated with mountains and desert, the power of the Evil Eye and sorcery. All of these practices are reason for fear and the perception of threats in the daily lives of the Nile-Nubians (Kennedy 1978:125-149).

## 2.10 Summary

In this introductory chapter we have provided a concise description of the historical, geographical, ethnic, linguistic and religious aspects regarding the Nile-Nubians. The major results of this introduction that are relevant to the topic of this study can be summarized as follows:

First, the geographical region of Nubia is almost identical to the Nile valley between Aswan, Egypt and ad-Debba, the Sudan.

Second, although the region was named Nubia, for many centuries it was not occupied by ethnic Nubians, but by Cushites. The nucleus of the ethnic peoples that we call Nile-Nubians today may have originated from the western regions of Kordofan and Darfur. They invaded the Nile valley in the early centuries AD and mixed with the Cushite inhabitants of the area. The Nile-Nubians need to be distinguished from the tribal groups in the Nuba Mountains in the western Sudan.

Third, when Christianity entered the Nile valley, three Nubian kingdoms were already in existence. They all accepted Christianity in the sixth century AD. The Nubian Christian culture experienced its “golden age” from the ninth to the twelfth century AD. The Old Nobiin became one of the first written African languages.

Fourth, Nubian Christianity gradually began to disappear between the fourteenth and seventeenth century AD. However, the almost one thousand-year long Christian history has left its traces in modern Nubian daily life and is frankly recognized by many Nubians today.

Fifth, when the first Nubian Muslim king came to power, he promoted the subsequent process of Islamization and Arabization of the Nile valley.

Sixth, the Nile-Nubians can be divided into various ethnic sub-groups according to their language. These groups are: the Kunuuz who speak Kunuuzi, the Nobiin speaking groups in Egypt and the Sudan (Fadija, Sukoot, and Mahas), and the Danaqla who speak Andaandi.

Seventh, the Nubians have certainly suffered severely from the building of the two dams south of Aswan, resulting in the dramatic and traumatic process of their gradual and eventually complete resettlement. With their relocation they have lost a large number of their distinct customs and traditions, especially those that were interconnected with the Nile. Life in the vicinity of Arabic speakers poses a threat to the survival of their own vernacular.

Eighth, the Nubians in the Sudan have gained considerable political and economic influence, whereas the Egyptian Nubians have only limited influence in society. Occasionally, they are still considered second class citizens in Egypt.

Ninth, the economic limitations in Old Nubia have led to a labor migration movement among Nubian men. They have shown great mobility as they have found their niche in service occupations, especially in Lower Egypt, the Gulf States and western countries.

Tenth, possibly the greatest benefit from the relocation has been the creation of a unified identity. The Nubians have found effective ways to organize themselves in associations and clubs and promote the preservation and revival of their cultural heritage.

Eleventh, in terms of their religious preference and convictions the Nubians are faithful adherents of Sunni Islam of the Melkite theological school. Yet many Nubians still participate in folk Islamic and animistic practices and a considerable number of men are adherents of Sufi orders.

**Map 1: Nubia and the Nile valley**



(Shinnie 1996:2)

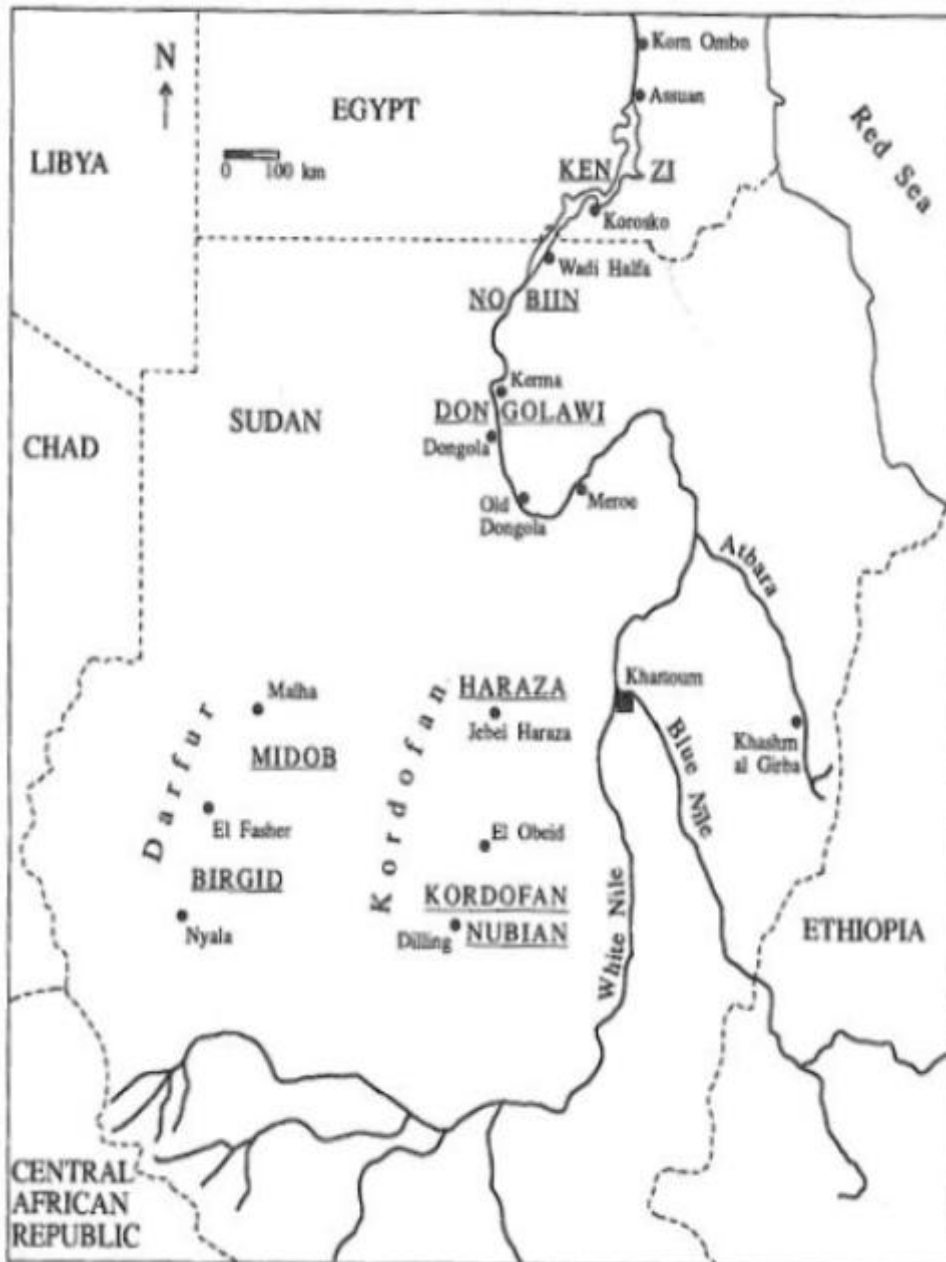
**Map 2: Nubian kingdoms**



(Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:35)

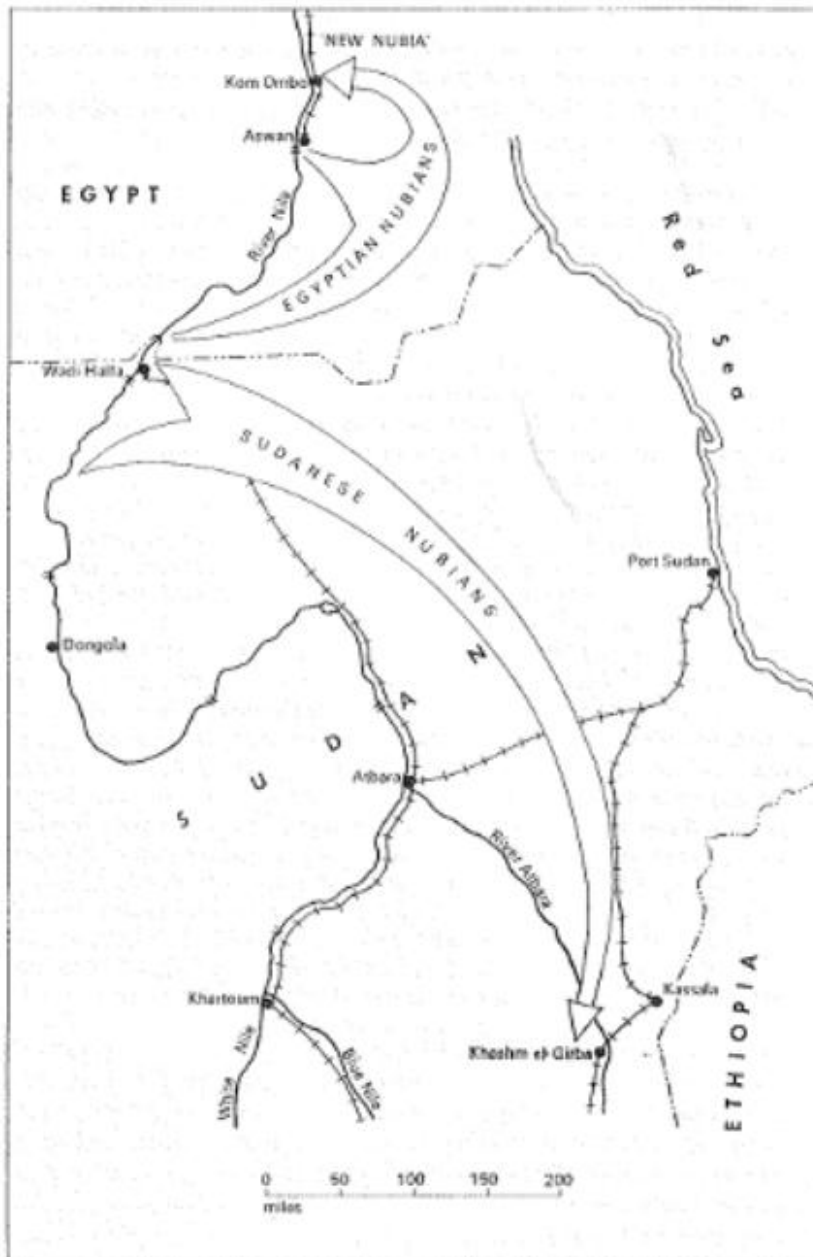


Map 3: Geographical distribution of the Nubian languages



(Jakobi & Kümmerle 1993:X)

**Map 4: Nubian resettlement in Egypt and the Sudan**



(Adams 1977:660)

### **3. Historical, religious and missionary developments in Egypt and the Sudan in the nineteenth and twentieth century**

Now that we have examined the distinct features of Nubian life, ethnicity and history, we will describe in this chapter the historical, political, social and economic situation of Egypt and the Sudan from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. We will also look into the religious situation of these two states and the Protestant missionary efforts during these centuries. Thereby, the historical stage will be described for the establishment of the SPM that was started in 1900 in Upper Egypt, but with an initial vision for reaching the Sudan Belt, the eastern Sudan and the Nile valley.

#### **3.1 The history of Egypt**

Egypt, due to its strategic location between the Mediterranean World and Africa was attractive to the often changing political powers of the region. It has a history of occupation by, and dependence on, foreign powers. The history of this continuous occupation included the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans and then the Islamic dynasties of the Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Fatimids, the Ayyubids and the Mamluks (1250-1517).

##### **3.1.1 Egypt under Ottoman rule (1517-1918)**

In 1517, Egypt came under the rule of the Ottomans that originated from Anatolia, Turkey. This period lasted formally around four centuries and witnessed Napoleon's campaign (1798-1801) and the British occupation in 1882. Turkish governors of the Ottoman Empire ruled and exploited Egypt. Their main objective was to receive taxes in order to enrich themselves and their superiors. Jews and Christians had to pay the *jizya*, the protection tax.

###### **3.1.1.1 The French invasion (1798-1801)**

The French invasion introduced the effective end of direct Ottoman control of Egypt. Particularly after Napoleon's campaign, Egypt began to disconnect and move away from Istanbul towards Europe. The French invasion marked the beginning of a new era in Egypt. Although it was a failure in military terms, the work of the accompanying scientists led to the beginning of Egyptology and a wave of enthusiasm for the land on the Nile in Europe (King 1984:297-298).

### **3.1.1.2 The rule of Muhammed Ali (1805-1848)**

Muhammed Ali came to power in Egypt in 1805. His long reign had an enormous impact on the country, on its position within the Ottoman Empire, and its relations with Europe. He was able to communicate to the British the strategic importance of Egypt in their relationship with India.

He is also regarded as the founder of modern Egypt since he reformed the educational system and developed the medical services. England and France had become Egypt's major trading partners at this time (Fahmy 2004:178-179). The *firman* issued by the Ottomans in 1841 greatly changed Egypt's position as province in the empire. Egypt was put under his government and Muhammed Ali was able to build up his dynasty (:178-179).

### **3.1.1.3 The rule of Abbas I (1848-1854)**

Abbas, the grandson of Muhammed Ali, became the ruler of Egypt after his father Ibrahim Pasha died after only two months in office in November 1848. Ibrahim had won some fame through leading the Egyptian army to major victories (King 1984:343-345). Abbas developed an effective legislative system, included more educated Egyptians in the administration with greater responsibilities, sought to protect Egypt's antiquities, initiated huge building projects and started to build the railway from Alexandria to Cairo. Above all, he strengthened the dynastic power. Egypt's autonomous position had become an irreversible political fact. Yet Abbas discontinued the westernizing and modernizing policy of his grandfather. In July 1854, Abbas was murdered in obscure circumstances (:89).

### **3.1.1.4 The rule of Said (1854-1863)**

Said, the son of Muhammed Ali and uncle of Abbas, became the next viceroy of Egypt in 1854. He reestablished the modernizing policies of his father and opened the doors wide for foreigners. Said completed the railway link between Alexandria and Cairo and granted a concession to his childhood friend Ferdinand de Lesseps to build a canal through the Isthmus of Suez. During his reign the Bank of Egypt was established in 1855. The downside of the apparent progress was the horrendous increase of national debt leading to an increasing financial dependence on England and France (:547-548; Hunter 1998:185-194). Said's preference for foreigners brought about a golden time for foreign missionary work as visas and land were easily granted.

### **3.1.1.5 The rule of Ismail (1863-1879)**

Ismail, the son of Ibrahim held power over Egypt from 1863 to 1879. In this period, he experienced Egypt's international bankruptcy and its eventual takeover by England in 1882. He closely followed the policy of Muhammed Ali in developing the country, preserving Egypt's autonomy against the Ottomans and extending Egypt's territory. In 1865 he took control over the Red Sea ports Suwakin and Massawa. Two years later, in 1867, he obtained the higher title *Khedive* including increased political and financial rights in dealings with the western powers (King 1984:365-366). Ismail started a postal service in 1867 and was present at the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869. Due to constant overspending, Ismail was unable to pay the interest payments on Egypt's debts. He had to sell his country's shares in the Suez Canal to England and allow for the establishment of a "European Ministry" which gave key ministerial posts to Europeans (:367). These developments birthed the National Party (al-hizb al-watani). When Ismail came under national pressure, he dismissed the European cabinet which led to his dismissal by the Ottoman Sultan in June 1879. Egypt's European creditors then exerted pressure on the Sultan. Ismail went into exile in Istanbul and died there in 1895 (:368; Hunter 1998:194-197).

### **3.1.1.6 The rule of Tawfiq (1879-1892)**

Tawfiq, the son of Ismail, followed his father as Khedive. Tawfiq served as Prime Minister for one month before his government, the "European" cabinet, was dismissed by his father in April 1879. Tawfiq had to deal with the increasingly powerful nationalist movement headed by Colonel Urabi Pasha<sup>47</sup> which showed great resentment against western control. Beginning in September 1881, Urabi tried to reverse the Anglo-French financial and political predominance. As Tawfiq was able neither to meet the demands of the national movement nor to control Urabi, he asked the British for support. The British army invaded Egypt to crush the uprising (Reid 1998:217-238). Tawfiq escaped to Alexandria, where he stayed until the British army restored peace and secured control of the country in September 1882. Urabi was exiled and Tawfiq for the rest of his reign was dependent on British, Ottoman and European opinions and decisions for the rest of his reign (King 1984:605-607). During Tawfiq's rule, the missionaries of the CMS launched their second attempt to establish missionary work in Cairo.

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<sup>47</sup> Urabi was brought up in a rural environment and joined the army during Said's reign. He became one of the early heroes of the national movement in Egypt. He led the uprising against growing foreign control over Egypt. He was exiled to Ceylon (Sri Lanka). When he returned in 1901, he did not play a leading role in the nationalists' movement (King 1984:162-164).

### **3.1.1.7 The rule of Abbas II (1892-1914)**

Tawfiq was succeeded by his son, Abbas Hilmi II. He assumed office at the age of seventeen. In the beginning he tried to limit British influence in Egypt when he dismissed the pro-British Prime Minister, Mustafa Fahmi, and replaced him with the Francophile nationalist Husain Fakhri (:90-92). Abbas II clearly sided with the nationalists but could not prevent a growing split between him and them. During his reign, the Anglo-Egyptian Army defeated the Mahdists that had ruled the Sudan since 1885. Although the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was signed by Abbas II, the administrative, political and military power stayed with the British. In 1905, he recognized Britain's claims to be the sole western controlling power in Egypt by signing the Khedival decree (:91). In 1910, the first Coptic Prime Minister of Egypt, Butrus Ghali Pasha, was assassinated by nationalists. Lord Kitchener further restricted the authority of the Khedive. In 1914, Abbas II survived an assassination attempt and subsequently went for medical treatment to Istanbul. While he was absent, the British declared Egypt a British Protectorate and deposed Abbas II after Turkey had entered World War I, on December 14, 1914 (:92).

### **3.1.1.8 The rule of Husain Kamil (1914-1917)**

The British appointed the son of Khedive Ismail and nephew of Abbas II, Husain Kamil, as Sultan of Egypt. When the British announced the Protectorate in Egypt, the official sovereignty of the Ottoman Sultan was terminated. In 1915 Husain Kamil survived two assassination attempts. Although the British controlled Egypt's economy at the expense of the Egyptian people, Husain tried to develop higher education, technical training, agriculture and the rights of the farmers. He died in 1917 (:332).

### **3.1.1.9 The rule of Fuad I (1917-1936)**

Fuad I was made Sultan of Egypt in 1917. He was educated in Europe and spoke little Arabic. In 1922, the British issued a declaration that announced the transition of Egypt from a British Protectorate to nominal independence. Fuad's title was changed to King. In 1923, the first Constitution was promulgated, but Fuad preferred to rule autocratically. Between 1930 and 1934 he ruled under a revised constitution that limited the power of the parliament. Fuad promoted higher education and supported the opening of the first Egyptian state university, Cairo University, in 1925. Fuad opposed the national movement in Egypt (:299-300).

### **3.1.1.10 The rule of Faruq (1937-1952)**

Fuad's son, Faruq, was made king in July 1937 and held this office until the Revolution on July 23, 1952. In the beginning, the young king was popular among his people. But when he assumed an autocratic leadership style like his father and a hedonistic lifestyle he lost the support of his subjects. He was not able to provide strong leadership in pre-revolutionary crisis situations and allowed forces from outside the parliament to control national life. When the Free Officers launched their coup in July 1952 he was in Alexandria and subsequently was sent into exile to Europe where he died in 1965 (:285-286).

### **3.1.1.11 The rule of Ahmad Fuad II (1952-1953)**

When Faruq realized that the British would not rescue him, he abdicated and transferred the office to his infant son Ahmad Fuad II. He was officially the last ruler of the Muhammed Ali dynasty. Although he was proclaimed king, a regency council was established to act in his place. After the new revolutionary military government consolidated its power, the monarchy was dissolved and Egypt was declared a republic in June 1953.

### **3.1.1.12 The rule of the Free Officers (since 1952)**

The Free Officers, under titular leadership of General Naguib, seized power on July 23, 1952. In 1953 Naguib announced a provisional constitution and the intention to restore democracy in a transitional period of three years. Naguib became the first president of Egypt in 1953. A year later the withdrawal of British troops was negotiated and Naguib was stripped of his presidency and put under house arrest in November 1953. In June 1953, Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected president. One month later, he nationalized the Suez Canal. The revenues were to be used for the construction of the High Dam at Aswan. In October 1956, Egypt was defeated in the Suez Canal War by Israel. Israel's invasion was followed by an invasion of Egypt by England and France. In the end of the 1950s, the construction work of the prestigious Aswan High Dam began and was completed in 1970 (:78-83).

## **3.2 Christianity in Egypt**

Arab Muslims conquered Egypt in AD 641 and introduced a gradual Islamization of the Egyptian people. The majority of Egyptian Christians belonged to the Coptic Orthodox church. Coptic Christianity has survived all opposition and attacks until today. The specific situation of Egyptian Christianity has changed often during the centuries. After 1815 the government did not ask for the *jizya* (religious tax) and abolished it officially in 1856. In 1856

the prescribed dress code was cancelled as well. In 1831 the equality of all subordinates before the law was declared (Hage 2007:186). The governmental administration respected and appreciated the contribution of the Copts.

Pope Murqus VIII (1796-1809), representing the official church, was cautious in the evaluation of the French invasion. A large number of Coptic laymen took side with the invaders and collaborated with them. Consequently during the revolts in 1798/99, the Copts were targeted. After the withdrawal of the French troops, the Pope was able to foster a good relationship with Muhammed Ali, the future Viceroy of Egypt. Through a generous donation Murqus VIII was able to move his patriarchy to the Ezbekiyya district (Reiss 1998:5).

His successor, Pope Boutros VII (1809-1852) was in office when Muhammed Ali was in power. Due to the religious tolerance of the Viceroy and the good mutual relationship, many Copts were appointed to high positions in the state administration. Following the Sudanese expedition of Muhammed Ali, the Pope used the excursion of the Viceroy to include the Sudan in his sphere of influence. In 1823 he ordained bishops for the Sudan and established a new diocese in 1835. When the first CMS missionaries came to Cairo, he wrote some booklets in which he rejected western missionaries (:5-7; Verghese 1973:77). He also resisted Roman Catholic missionaries in whom he saw a Western threat against his church (Atiya 1968:112).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Pope Kyrillos IV (1854-1861) contributed to the renewal of his church that had stagnated for so long (Hage 2007:437-438). Although he only reigned for seven years, he inaugurated a reform movement in his church. That is why he was also called “the Father of Reformation” (abu al-islam). He established girls’ and boys’ schools and the first non-governmental printing press. In order to address the ignorance of his priests, he invited them for systematic reading and theological discussion (Atiya 1968:105; Verghese 1973:77-78; Reiss 1998:7-9).

Pope Demetrius II (1862-1870) stopped all reforms that were introduced by his predecessor. Instead of promoting the necessary reforms in his church, he reacted towards the work of the AM with force and a clear threat to excommunicate the sympathizers of the protestant movement. During his visit to Assiut he intended to give a deathblow to the new Protestant movement (:9-12).

After the position of the Pope was vacant for about five years, Cyrillos V (1867-1927) was elected Pope. During the interim period, the inner tensions grew between the conservative faction that refused reforms and the lay movement that was in favour of changes. Cyrillos V



was a conservative traditionalist and pushed back the lay movement. Yet he started the theological seminary in Cairo in 1893 (Verghese 1993:78).

His successor, Pope Yuannis XIX (1928-1942), established a theological school for monks in Helwan, south of Cairo and consecrated bishops for Ethiopia (:78).

Pope Makarius III (1944-1945) was only in office for one year. Due to his early death, he was not able to pursue any reforms. Yet he had been a metropolitan bishop in Assiut for forty-nine years and had spiritually influenced many priests. He also led the Copts in their political involvement (:78-79).

The power struggle inside the Coptic Church between the conservative clergy and the educated lay movement was put aside when Kyrillos VI (1959-1971) took office. Before his coronation as Pope, he had already been connected with the Sunday school movement; initiated by laymen. During his time, the Coptic Church was able to overcome its isolation that had lasted for centuries and became a founding member of the World Council of Churches and a member of the All Africa Church Council in 1962 and the Middle East Council of Churches in 1974 (Hage 2007:188-190). After the revolution, the Copts were initially pushed back since they were suspected adherents of monarchism. But the relationship between state and church developed positively. Though religious courts were abolished and the general land reform of the government minimized the property of the church. Copts participated in politics and Nasser furthered the construction of the St Mark cathedral financially and participated in its inauguration in 1968 (Hage 2007: 189-190).

### **3.3 The mission history of Egypt**

It needs to be recognized that the existence of Coptic Orthodox Christianity is an outstanding reality in Egyptian church history. The church, which came into existence during the first century AD, spread all over Egypt from Alexandria in the north up to Aswan in the south and beyond. The Egyptian church contributed various theological aspects to the regional and the worldwide development of early and later Christianity. The theological school in Alexandria, the readiness to become a church of martyrs, the miaphysitic theology, the founding of monasticism and its expansion to the south into Nubia and Ethiopia became distinct features of this church. Despite numerous challenges, the church of Egypt withstood the onslaught of Islam beginning in AD 641 and survived various crisis situations. Due to Islamic policy and strategy for Egypt to become an Islamic country the Christians of Egypt decreased in number and became a minority. However, the Coptic Church is still the biggest Christian church in any Middle Eastern country. It succeeded in preserving its faith and its existence in a varying

hostile society. Yet the church lost its missionary vision, and despite keeping the traditions of the fathers, deteriorated in its practical expressions of faith to a certain degree. Western Christianity, that had gained so much from the church of Egypt and the churches in the Middle East, the cradle of Christianity, to a large extent, had forgotten the existence of the body of Christ in this region. But this situation was about to be changed (Sauer 2005:126-130, 133).

### **3.3.1 First contacts with western Protestant Christianity prior to the eighteenth century**

In the sixteenth century AD there were some first contacts between individual Protestant Christians from the West and Christianity in Egypt. These western Christians came to the region for various reasons and soon established contact with the local church leadership without any missionary intent.

#### **3.3.1.1 Protestant contact with the Greek Orthodox patriarch**

J Richter points in a very short remark to the first known contact between Protestant Christianity and the relatively small Greek Orthodox Church in Alexandria (Richter 1930:55). Kyrillos Lukaris (1572-1638), patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in Alexandria was born in Kandia, Crete and educated in Venice and Padua. It seems that he came into contact with Protestant ideas there. After he was consecrated patriarch of Constantinople in 1620, he became acquainted with the preacher of the Dutch ambassador, Anton Leger (1628-1636). Leger won an increasing influence on Lukaris, through which Lukaris started to develop plans to reform his church according to Calvinistic theology. He initiated the translation of the Bible into colloquial Greek, started schools and wrote his *Confessio* in 1629. In his published confession he disclosed his Calvinistic convictions in the traditional language of his church. Yet the subsequent opposition from within his own church and defamation led to his assassination by the sultan and brought an end to all reformation efforts (:56).

#### **3.3.1.2 Contact of Peter Heyling with the Coptic Orthodox Church (1633-1634)**

Peter Heyling became the first known person to promote protestant doctrine in Egypt (Raupp 2000:433; Sauer 2005:126-127). He was born in the hanseatic city of Lübeck in 1607 or 1608. During his school education, he was influenced by Lutheran theology which he wholeheartedly accepted. The writings of Martin Luther (1483-1546), Johann Arndt (1555-1621), Johann Tauler (1300-1361), and Thomas a Kempis (1380-1471) left a profound impression upon the young student. Early in his life, he felt a strong sense of calling to share

his religious convictions. As the Thirty Years' War was in full swing increasingly involving the Hanseatic cities, Heyling left Lübeck in 1628 to study law in Paris. While in Paris, he joined a small circle of seven friends, all of whom aimed at the fulfilment of the evangelical command to go out into the world and to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their goal was the rejuvenation of the ancient Eastern Orthodox Churches which according to their estimation had departed from the protestant truth. The group was also influenced by the Dutch scholar Hugo Grotius and his book *About the Truth of the Christian Religion* that was translated into several languages including Arabic. In spring 1633, Heyling arrived in Alexandria. Soon, Heyling understood the need to study Arabic in order to have any impact. Although his long-term goal was to reach Ethiopia, he entered the monastery Abu Maqar in Wadi al-Natrun to study Arabic. During this time he introduced Coptic monks to the ideas of the Lutheran theology and reformation which was appreciated by many. His ideas were rejected by Roman-Catholic missionaries who accused him of heresy. After his visit to Jerusalem during Easter 1634, he travelled to Ethiopia in fall of the same year joining an ecclesiastical delegation from Cairo. Heyling was received well at the royal court in Gondar. He worked there as a theologian and educator for seventeen years. It is said that he had translated part of the NT into Amharic (Richter 1930:57). In 1652, Heyling, on his return to Cairo, was killed in the Red Sea port of Suakin by a local Turkish ruler who believed him to be a spy and demanded his conversion to Islam. After his fearless confession of Christ he was beheaded. There is no clear evidence of any lasting impact of his efforts. There was also no one to succeed him in his work (Richter 1930:57).

### **3.3.2 Contact with western Protestant Christianity in the eighteenth century**

It took another century for a renewed interest in the oriental churches to arise within the Protestant Western community. The first organized contact between western Christianity and the Coptic Church began through the coming of the Moravians to Egypt.

#### **3.3.2.1 The Moravian Brethren (1749-1783)**

The community of the Moravian Brethren had its roots in the east of Bohemia soon after the death of Johan Hus in 1415. Under the leadership of Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), a fervent Lutheran and follower of the pietist Spener, the Moravians found shelter on his estate at Bethelsdorf, which was later named *Herrnhut*, meaning "the Lord's watch." Due to a revival in 1727 the Moravian community was driven by a passion for foreign mission, leading it to become a strong sending community (Zimmerling 1999:171-178). As they were

desiring spiritual fellowship with the Ethiopian church, they sent the physician Friedrich Wilhelm Hocker to Cairo. He was commissioned to obtain a competent knowledge of the Arabic language, collect information about the actual situation of Ethiopia, collect travel data and receive the support of the Coptic patriarch in Cairo. After a first short visit to Egypt in 1749, Hocker again returned to Egypt in 1752 which marks the beginning of serious efforts to work among the Copts. During his stay in Cairo, Hocker presented a letter from Zinzendorf to the Coptic Orthodox Patriarch, Pope Mark VII (1745 – 1769) which was received positively and opened the door for future Moravian activities. Hocker translated some of the sermons and hymns by Zinzendorf into Arabic. The attempt to start work in Ethiopia turned out to be a failure. In 1768 Hocker returned to Cairo bringing with him Johann Heinrich Dancke, a carpenter. One of the Moravian principles was that their artisan missionaries would work in their profession and support themselves. Whereas Hocker continued his work in Cairo, Dancke started a new work in Bahnese, the old Egyptian Oxyrhynchos, between al-Minya and Beni Suef in 1770. Other Moravian missionaries followed in the subsequent years. Hocker, the leading missionary, shaped the Moravian work in Egypt. For him the main task was to remind the Copts of the core issues of the gospel that they had forgotten: salvation by grace through the blood and death of Christ (Manukyan 2010:376). Hocker, although he was the senior of the Moravian team in Egypt, had been asking since 1770 to be called back to Herrnhut. His growing age, physical weakness, internal tensions, accidents and the lack of success in their work were sufficient reasons to ask for his return. Yet, the leadership in Herrnhut considered him indispensable and the drawing of the lots hindered his return to Europe. On August 8, 1782, Hocker died and was buried in Cairo (:379). The Synod of Herrnhut, after much discussion in August and October 1782 on the situation of the work in Egypt, decided to discontinue their work. In a letter from December 4, 1782, they asked the remaining missionaries Wieniger, Paulson, Lehmann, and Clausen to return to Herrnhut. On May 23, 1783 they finally left Cairo and arrived in Barby on November 20, 1783. When in 1825 and 1854 the English and American missionaries started their work in Egypt, they were not able to find any visible traces of Moravian work (:380). Yet since the Moravians decided to work within the Coptic church without any intention to form their own Egyptian Moravian church, it has remained a secret how many people were introduced to the gospel and came to a saving faith in Christ through their efforts.

### **3.3.3 Protestant missionary initiatives in the nineteenth century**

It was only in the nineteenth century that Protestant missionary initiatives started on a sizable scale in the Middle East. In most of the cases, the work was started on the assumption that it would need a revival of the historic churches in order to evangelize both the Jews and the Muslims in the region.

#### **3.3.3.1 Work of the Bible Societies**

The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) was founded on March 7, 1804 in London. It soon established a centre in Malta. In 1811, the BFBS sent for the first time colporteurs to Alexandria and Cairo and established a continuous presence in 1817 (Troeger 2013:22).<sup>48</sup> Permanent Bible depots were established in Alexandria, Port Said and Cairo. The Swiss Christopher Burckhart obtained the permission from the Coptic Patriarch to serve as a representative of the BFBS in the distribution of the Holy Scriptures. He started to sell Bibles to Greeks, Copts, Turks, Syrians and Jews. In 1883, Egypt became an independent region with the Bible Society. The office in Alexandria developed into a distribution center supplying twenty-two different depots in the country. The colporteurs sold their Bibles to Copts and Muslims (:22).

In 1816 the American Bible Society (ABS) was founded in New York. The work of the ABS in Egypt began in 1836 when their first agent S H Calhoun came to the Middle East. In 1903 negotiations between the ABS and the BFBS led to an agreement regarding the distribution of the areas of work. The BFBS was assigned to colportage work in the Delta and Lower Egypt and the ABS was assigned to Upper Egypt. Both organizations maintained their presence in Cairo and Alexandria. In 1937 the BFBS and the ABS created a joint agency that was administered by the BFBS until the Suez crisis in 1956. As the British had to leave Egypt, the ABS took over the administrative responsibility. Until then, the distribution of Bibles, tracts and literature took place through itinerant colporteurs and the establishment of bookshops in Alexandria (1883) and Cairo (1937). In 1963 the first Egyptian, the Rev Dr Abd el-Masih Istefanous, was appointed General Secretary of the joint society. He promoted the distribution of Scriptures through the church rather than by the traditional work of colporteurs (Meinardus 2006:120). In 1966 the joint work of the BFBS and the ABS was handed over to

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<sup>48</sup> Meinardus dates the beginning date of the BFBS in the year 1818 and connects it with the first visit of William Jowett who was commissioned to conduct a survey about the state of religion in Egypt for the CMS.

the Egyptian church and the Bible Society in Egypt (BSE) was inaugurated. The BSE became an associate member of the United Bible Societies (UBS) in 1977 (:120).<sup>49</sup>

### **3.3.3.2 Mission to the Jews**

In 1808, the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (later Church Mission to the Jews, CMJ) was founded by the German Christian Jew, Christian Frey (1771-1850). The CMJ began its work in 1817 in Lower Egypt visiting Jews in Alexandria and Cairo. The missionaries of the CMJ distributed Christian tracts and Bibles, established schools for Jewish boys and girls, baptized individual Jews and gathered them in small groups to celebrate services with them (Troeger 2013:22-24).

In addition to the CMJ, the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland (UPCS) established its work among Jews in Cairo and Alexandria in 1853 through the Scottish missionary Dr Philip. They carried on their ministry largely through education as they had started a school (Elder 1958:165). They also planned another school for higher education which was opened in 1856 by John Hogg.<sup>50</sup> Since the school was not very successful and the UPCS decided to give priority to its work in Algeria, and the work in Alexandria, was discontinued. When the CMJ terminated its work in Egypt, the mission of the UPCS continued its work in Cairo and Alexandria (Boehmer 1910:140-141). Thus, there was a concentrated effort to proclaim the gospel to the Jews particularly to those who were residing and working as artisans and merchants in the cities between Cairo and Alexandria. The missionary efforts towards the Jews declined in the twentieth century and came to an end after the founding of the State of Israel when most of the Jews left Egypt (Troeger 2013:25).

### **3.3.3.3 The first attempt of the Church Missionary Society (1825-1852/62)**

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, a growing interest in classical and Biblical history led to increasing travels to the Middle East and Egypt as these trips had become both possible and fashionable. In addition, the route from Europe to India, prior to the building of the Suez Canal, involved disembarking in Alexandria and proceeding to Suez via Cairo before boarding another ship. In this period of time a number of Anglican clergy were recorded to have accompanied distinguished and rich travelers as chaplains and tutors. In 1812 the Rev Thomas Legh and his college friend, the Rev Charles Smelt, travelled up the Nile to Nubia. In 1817 the Earl of Belmore spent the winter in Thebes with a chaplain and a doctor in

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<sup>49</sup> In 1990 Ramez Attallah took over the leadership as General Secretary of the BSOE. Under his leadership the society produced a huge amount of diverse Bible promoting products. By 2014 the BSOE had set up twelve bookshops across the country.

<sup>50</sup> John Hogg joined the American Mission in 1860 and became their leading missionary in Assiut.

attendance. They, like others, held small services for European Christians without the intention of establishing a local congregation. Egypt was increasingly becoming a place of religious, political and economic interaction with European partners.

As an outflow of the Evangelical movement in the Church of England, the Society for Missions to Africa and the East was founded in 1799 under the leadership of John and Thomas Scott. In 1812 its name was changed into the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East (CMS).<sup>51</sup> In its first phase, the CMS had strong links with the Basler Mission which was founded in 1815 and drew missionary personnel from Basel Mission Seminary. Early in its history, its focus was upon the Oriental churches of the Levant. Because the island of Malta belonged to Britain since 1800, it was regarded as the ideal place for spreading the gospel to ancient churches and to the Muslims in the Mediterranean region. In 1815, Malta was chosen as headquarters of the Mediterranean Mission of the CMS. Its responsibility included Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Palestine. A printing press was established which produced a vast number of Christian literature, tracts and Bible versions in the old oriental languages. It was the aim of the CMS to revive the Eastern Churches and evangelize the Muslims through them.

The visits of CMS missionary William Jowett to Egypt in the years 1819, 1820 and 1823, led to the decision to start missionary work in Egypt. The Coptic Orthodox Patriarch received Jowett with goodwill and allowed him to distribute gospels among Coptic priests and monks. The beginning of permanent CMS work in Egypt can be dated towards the end of 1825 when five German and Swiss graduates of the theological seminary of the Basler Mission were sent to Cairo. Samuel Gobat, who later became the Lutheran bishop of Jerusalem (1846-1879), Christian Kugler and Theodor Müller were sent to Cairo to prepare for their work in Ethiopia. Due to the civil war in Ethiopia, Gobat and Kugler didn't go to Ethiopia until 1829 and therefore got involved in missionary work in Cairo and Alexandria before this time. Kruse and Lieder were able to labour for many years in Egypt. As the Coptic Patriarch Butrus VII (1809-1852) gave them freedom, they focused on work among the Copts. They distributed evangelical literature in the Coptic churches and monasteries and conducted evangelistic conversations. They founded schools for boys and girls and began a theological school in 1842. The intention was to train Coptic priests and introduce them to Protestant theology. Some of the graduates of the CMS School were ordained as priests and even as bishops (Reis 1998:20). In six cities the CMS established Evangelical meetings with Copts attending. The intention of the CMS was the revival of the Coptic Orthodox Church and not

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<sup>51</sup> For a comprehensive history of the CMS cf Stock (1899).

the establishment of an Egyptian Anglican Church. Lieder was convinced that a revival of the Coptic Church was possible. Gobat disagreed and demanded a new strategy of the CMS work with more independence from the Coptic Church. It seems that the leadership of the CMS was dissatisfied with the success of its work in Egypt and saw priorities in other countries. Thus, in 1852 Kruse was transferred to Palestine, leaving Lieder behind who continued as a respected missionary influencing some of the Coptic bishops and the Patriarch. It seems that the CMS effectively stopped working as an organization in Egypt in 1852 although the CMS took official action to discontinue the mission only in 1862 (Troeger 2013:25-32). Lieder continued to work in Egypt as Consular Chaplain until 1865.<sup>52</sup>

#### **3.3.3.4 The American Mission (1854-1956)**

As a result of a revival movement in North America, there was a growing desire to get involved in overseas mission in the various Presbyterian Churches in North America. This led to the establishment of numerous mission societies. In 1843 the Associate Reformed Church in the West sent their first missionaries to Syria.<sup>53</sup> It were the missionaries of the work in Syria who urged their General Synod to start a new work in Egypt. In November 1854, the first missionaries, T and H McCague and J Barnett, arrived in Cairo and commenced their work.<sup>54</sup> They intended to preach the gospel to Muslims, Jews and Christians. Due to a greater openness among the Copts, the work developed with a focus on Coptic Christians who were waiting for spiritual renewal (Richter 1930:243). Within the first ten years, the basic character and foundation of the future work was laid. The workers were involved in evangelistic, educational, colportage and women's work. Church services were offered right from the beginning and in 1863 the first congregation was established in Cairo. The AM work extended to Alexandria and the Delta region as well to Upper Egypt. John Hogg, who joined the AM in 1860, became its foremost pioneer missionary in Upper Egypt. When the missionaries entered the Coptic stronghold of Assiut, they and the growing Protestant community faced fierce Coptic opposition. Yet the work of the AM was expanding and the infant Protestant Church grew in number and strength. The AM continued to use every opportunity to present the Gospel to Muslims especially through the educational institutions (Troeger 2013:80-84). In the first forty years, the AM workers were able to baptize a total of

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<sup>52</sup> The issue of success of this first missionary phase of the CMS has led to a debate with contradicting views. Troeger collected some evidence that the work of the CMS was not in vain (2013:31-32).

<sup>53</sup> In 1858, the Associate Reformed Church in the West and the Associate Presbyterian Church merged and formed the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA), which simply became known as the American Mission (AM).

<sup>54</sup> For a detailed description of the work of Richter (1930:243-248), A Watson (1897), C Watson (1907), Elder (1958), Wahba (2012), Sharkey (2008), Troeger (2013:37-112).



seventy-five Muslims (Richter 1930:246). Whereas the work in Lower Egypt developed slowly, the work in Upper Egypt saw a fast development. The AM soon developed into the dominant Protestant missionary force in Egypt. The return of the CMS and the coming of the North Africa Mission (NAM) to Egypt were seen with some apprehension by the AM (Watson 1898:407). The AM was using numerous methods to share the gospel. The missionaries used boats, like the *Ibis*, to conduct evangelistic tours on the Nile up to Aswan. They established many new schools to meet the educational needs of Egypt. In 1906, the AM had established a respectable total of 198 schools with 16,575 students enrolled. Most prominent were the colleges in Assiut and Cairo, as well as the establishment of the American University in Cairo (AUC) in 1920 (Murphy 1987). The AUC became the first secular university in Egypt (Elder 1958:155; Troeger 2013:108-111). The publication and distribution of scriptures and other religious books played a prominent role in their work as well. The cooperation with the BFBS and the ABS was fruitful. The new Arabic Bible translation that was started by Eli Smith and completed by Cornelius van Dyck in 1865 in Beirut (Lauche 2007:135) had an enormous impact on the work in Egypt. Beyond the secular education, the AM put a lot of effort into the Christian education of Coptic children. In the weekly Sabbath Schools, many children received Bible teaching and were introduced to Protestant doctrine (Troeger 2013:100-101). The arrival of Sarah Dales marked the beginning of work among women that later led to the employment of indigenous “Bible Women.” In order to train native leaders for the newly established congregations, formal theological education was started in 1863 in Cairo and 1867 in Assiut (Troeger 2013:101-104). The medical work of the AM was started in 1868 by Dr Johnston in Assiut. Later two hospitals were established in Assiut and Tanta (:104-105). The AM was also involved in social work and the Fowler Orphanage was inaugurated in 1906 (Elder 1958:135). In 1860, the UPCNA agreed to the application of the missionaries to establish a presbytery in Egypt. The Ezbakiyya congregation became the first organized Presbyterian Church in Egypt in 1863. Later churches were established in Assiut, Alexandria, Quus and other places. By 1904 the number of organized churches had grown to sixty-three which constituted the largest indigenous Protestant body in the region. In 1895 the Egyptian presbytery was divided into six districts, in 1898 into four districts. In 1905 the Synod of the Nile was formed. In 1958 the Synod of the Nile became independent of the UPCNA. Today it is divided into eight presbyteries (Meinardus 2006:108-110). The AM was not able to initiate a widespread revival movement within the Coptic Orthodox Church, but it was led to establish a new Protestant body of believers, the Coptic Evangelical Church. In addition to this development, the work of the

AM also had some evident impact on Egyptian society and on the Coptic Orthodox Church. The Van Dyck Bible was accepted by the Copts, preaching during the Coptic services attained a more prominent role, and the Sunday School Movement was inspired by the Sabbath School of the AM (Reiss 1998).

### **3.3.3.5 The Kaiserswerther hospitals in Alexandria and Cairo (1857-1939)**

Theodor Fliedner (1800-1864)<sup>55</sup> from Kaiserswerth, near Düsseldorf, the “Father of the Deaconesses” went to the Middle East and there established a house for deaconesses in Jerusalem following the request of Bishop S Gobat (Neubert-Preine 2003:57-70). When Fliedner came to Egypt in the years 1856/57 for health reasons, he was overwhelmed by the health situation of the population and the low standard of nursing. In 1857 he rented a spacious villa, sent four deaconesses to Alexandria and started the first Deaconesses Hospital (Richter 1930:252). Later this house was bought but had to be replaced due to hygienic reasons. In 1870 a new one hundred-bed hospital was built in the district Muharram Bey and six deaconesses were responsible for the nursing.<sup>56</sup> In 1908 a new building was added since the number of beds proved to be insufficient to meet the demand. In 1909, seventeen deaconesses were working in the 200-bed hospital that was led by Sister Dora Brooke (Kaufmann 1898:117). Due to World War I, the deaconesses had to leave the country and the hospital was confiscated by the British. In 1920 the hospital was transferred by the British military administration to a British-Swiss committee and renamed it into Swiss-Anglo Hospital after they had refused to return it to Kaiserswerth (Khoury 1974:24). In Cairo the German, Swiss, British and North American community together made plans to build a hospital in 1881.<sup>57</sup> Due to the Urabi Revolt in 1882, the hospital was not inaugurated until 1884. The hospital was named in honor of the English Queen Victoria and put under the administration of the Kaiserswerth Deaconesses. The hospital was located in the European district close to the German church (Troeger 2013:33). In the beginning the hospital had only twenty-four beds and an outpatient clinic, but it was modernized in 1904 and expanded in 1911 (:33). In 1915 the German deaconesses were deported from Egypt. During World War I when the German deaconesses from Kaiserswerth were deported from Palestine and interned in Helwan, south of Cairo, they were granted the permission to work in the Victoria Hospital (Khoury 1974:30-32). They were allowed to continue their work until the beginning of World

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<sup>55</sup> For a description of his life and work cf Gerhardt (1933/37).

<sup>56</sup> According to Kaufmann (1898:18, 51) in 1904 the number of deaconesses had increased to fourteen.

<sup>57</sup> On the occasion of the centenary celebration of the inauguration of the German church building in Bulaq, Cairo, Angelika Marks has contributed to the Festschrift an excellent summary of the history of the Victoria Hospital (Marks 2012:189-226).

War II in 1939.<sup>58</sup> After the war the work was not resumed, as the hospital was taken over by the Egyptian government. It seems that deaconesses confined the extent of their work to Christian charity as they asked missionaries of other organizations to preach and speak to the patients.

### **3.3.3.6 Spittler's Apostles' Road (1860-1875)**

The conquest of the northern Sudan by the troops of Egyptian viceroy Muhammed Ali (1819-1821) had opened a free land access to the highlands of Ethiopia. This fact gave reason to the founder and leader of the *Pilgermission St Chrischona*, Christian Friedrich Spittler (1782-1867) to send artisan missionaries to Ethiopia. Bishop S Gobat who had been to Ethiopia before invited the missionaries to come to Jerusalem first to be prepared for their ministry in Africa (Troeger 2013:34). Together with Ludwig Krapf (1810-1881) Spittler developed the idea to establish an Apostles' Road (Apostelstraße). The Apostles' Road was understood as a chain of twelve missionary stations leading from Jerusalem via the Nile valley to Ethiopia. Each station was named after an Apostle and supposed to be staffed with self-supporting artisan missionaries and their families. When during that period knowledge about the countries around the Victoria Nyanza reached Europe through Burton and Speke, Spittler dreamed of a second chain of twelve stations from Khartoum to Victoria Nyanza, the so-called Prophets' Street (Richter 1930:249). Although this dream never came to realization, between 1860 and 1875 five stations of the Apostles' Road were established. In 1860 the missionaries started from Jerusalem and established the station St Markus in Cairo (1860-1872) and supported the founding of a German church and the operation of the newly established boys' school (Baumann 1999:52-63). 1862 St Paulus was started in Matammah (1862-1868), near the Ethiopian border (:63-67). The next station St Thomas was founded in 1864 in Khartoum (1864-1871) (:67-74). In 1865 St Matthäus was started in Alexandria (1865-1875). The Swiss Carl Heinrich Rappard (1837-1909) started a French and German speaking school there (:75-78). The last station was St Petrus that was started in 1866 in Aswan (1866-1867), but transferred to Esna (1867-1868) in 1867 and handed over to the AM in 1868 (:78-81). Political developments in Ethiopia, a financial crisis, health problems and the death of Spittler led the *Pilgermission St Chrischona* to abandon the project (Troeger 2013:35). Although the

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<sup>58</sup> The workers of the SPM had a long standing relationship with the deaconesses of the Victoria Hospital. Rev Ziemendorff, the chairman of the SPM had experienced their caring love for his wife who died in Alexandria in January 1905 and for himself prior to his death in 1912. Abbaas Danyaal the son of SAH was admitted several times to the hospital in Cairo in 1917. The Deaconess Charlotte Weimann was sent to Aswan to work in the SPM hospital. When the senior missionary S J Enderlin was sent to Cairo to teach at the SOS and start a ministry among Nubians in Cairo in 1932, he maintained a good relationship with the deaconesses. Sometimes he was invited to preach in their chapel and to share the gospel with German speaking patients.

chain idea lasted only a relatively short time, it served as an example for other adventures in Africa (Fiedler 1992:107-115).

### **3.3.3.7 The private mission of Mary Louisa Whately (1861-1901)**

Mary Louisa Whately (1824-1889) was the daughter of the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin. The Whately family cared for the poor which led to the establishment of a school for them. They also opened their home to Italian refugees that had come to Ireland fleeing from the Crimean war. In 1858 Whately visited Egypt for health reasons for the first time. While she was in Egypt, she was struck by the situation of the children selling water without having access to formal education (Gushiken 2000:1013-1014). In 1861 she opened a school for girls and later a school for boys. She was able to do so with the help of Farida Shakur, Mansur Shakur and Jusif Shakur, who were trained by the AM in Syria. Whately and her team were involved in Scripture distribution, home visits, coffee-house evangelism, medical missions and visits in the surrounding villages.<sup>59</sup> The girls' school at times had about 200 pupils and the boys' school about 300 pupils in attendance. The girls' school in the Fagaala district of Cairo became Whately's best known work.<sup>60</sup> As she grew older, she requested the CMS to take over her schools, but no agreement was ever reached. After her death in 1889, her sister first led the schools and then handed over the responsibility to the Syrian Farida Shakur. In 1901 the work of Whately was transferred to the AM and integrated into their extensive work (Watson 1907:203-204; Richter 1930:253).

### **3.3.3.8 The Dutch Ermelo Mission (1865-1868 and 1871-1939)**

The involvement of Dutch missionaries in Egypt began with Spittler's request for workers that could join the Apostles' Road project. In 1846 Rev Hermanus Willem Witteveen (1815-1884) became pastor of the Reformed Church in Ermelo. Since Witteveen had been occupied for some time with the desire to contribute to the spiritual situation in Egypt, Spittler's call provided an opportunity for realizing this vision. In 1865, Witteveen's *Zendingsgemeente* in Ermelo, Holland supplied the two brothers Adrianus Mooij and Jacob Mooij to be missionaries for the Apostles' Road. After Jacob Mooij died in the southern Sudan on

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<sup>59</sup> The popular publications by M L Whately, such as "A Ragged Life in Egypt" (1862), "More about Ragged Life in Egypt" (1864), and "Among the Huts in Egypt. Scenes from Real Life" (1871) promoted the wide publicity of her work.

<sup>60</sup> When Whately visited Geneva, Switzerland in 1885, she agreed with the brother of T Necker that SAH should come to Cairo to become a teacher at her school. Unfortunately, he felt neither appreciated nor well cared for by Whately so he left work after only about half a year.

Christmas Eve 1867, Witteveen called back Adrianus Mooij in 1868 admitting the failure of this venture (Lems 2005:26-28).<sup>61</sup>

Despite the failure of the first attempt to get involved in mission, Witteveen did not abandon his plan. In 1870, Gerrit Nijland, a farmer, applied for the work in Egypt. He left for Egypt in February 1871. After some months of introduction into the language and customs of Egypt, Nijland went to the village Qalyuub, north of Cairo. He rented a house and started to visit people, care for the sick and hold Bible classes. Soon he faced opposition and mistrust from the Muslim majority and the Coptic community as well. Nijland asked Witteveen for an assistant. This request was answered in Jan Hendrik Spillenaar and he arrived in Egypt in autumn of 1874. In November 1874, a small school was started for Coptic and Muslim children. Nijland and Spillenaar were intensely involved in house visits, selling literature and conversations about the question of faith. In 1876, Nijland surprisingly joined the BFBS work in Palestine (:29). As Spillenaar was in need of support, the Ermelo Mission asked the Neukirchner Mission to send workers to Qalyuub (Brandl 1998:124-125). The Neukirchner Mission sent one couple and one single male missionary in 1885. However, as they disagreed over basic mission principles the two partners terminated their cooperation in 1887 (:155-159). After the death of Witteveen, the *Vereeniging tot Uitbreiding van het Evangelie in Egypte* (Dutch Society for Spreading the Gospel in Egypt) was founded in 1886 to continue the young work and to secure the financial support for the sent workers (Lems 2005:32-36). Only a few workers were sent during the following years. In 1893 a new work was started in al-Qanaatir al-Khairiyya (also called: “Barrage”), which was only nine kilometers away from Qalyuub. A small school was established and evangelistic meetings were started. Egyptian Christians were employed as teachers, evangelists and colporteurs. In Qalyuub a congregation of Copts and some former Muslims was founded in 1887 and grew to sixty persons by the end of 1899 (:46). The medical work in Qalyuub was regularly done by doctors from the CMS (:52). In 1906 Pieter Bijl started his ministry with the Dutch Mission. In 1909/10 a small church was built in Qalyuub and was called “Bethel.” In 1931 a congregation was established in Barrage and became a branch of the Qalyuub church (:72). Both congregations were under the leadership of Bijl, received official governmental recognition and became members of the Protestant Council of Churches. After World War II no Dutch missionaries were sent to Egypt, but the Dutch Mission continued their support for projects in Egypt. The two established congregations in Qalyuub and Barrage joined the Synod of the Nile (Troeger

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<sup>61</sup> Richter (1930:249) sees the reasons for the failure of this first involvement in the lack of training and experience.

2013:116-117). Due to the lack of attendants, the church in Qalyuub had to be closed down, but the church in Barrage and its school were continued (Elder 1958:285).<sup>62</sup>

### **3.3.3.9 The second phase of the CMS (1882-1952)**

Prior to the British occupation of Egypt, the CMS board had decided to return to Egypt and to restart their missionary involvement (Stock 1899:514). The leadership of the CMS had come to realize the central role and importance of Egypt for missionary work among Muslims in the Middle East. The political situation in Egypt had changed due to the putting down of the Urabi Revolt in 1882. Although the Khedive remained the official and legal authority and representative of the Ottoman Empire, in reality Lord Evelyn B Cromer was directing the affairs of the country from 1882-1907. In the framework of this new situation, the CMS sent its first worker in December 1882.<sup>63</sup> Initially, only Rev F A Klein, an experienced Palestine missionary and scholar of Arabic was sent to Cairo. He was asked to establish contacts, distribute evangelistic tracts and resume his translation work into Arabic. Klein held regular services in the hall of Whately's school and opened an open reading room through which he came into contact with many Muslim inquirers (:514-515). In this phase the CMS work concentrated much on the production and distribution of literature. Although Klein established new contacts with the Coptic Church, the CMS had changed its focus. This time, the missionary effort was clearly directed toward Muslims. In order to develop the work of the CMS and to meet the need of the population, Klein asked the CMS to start medical work and send a physician (Hewitt 1971:306). In 1889, the Irish physician Dr Frank J Harpur was transferred from Aden to Cairo and joined Klein (:312). During the next forty years under his leadership, the medical work of the CMS developed greatly (Lasbrey 1939). Harpur was able to continue his ministry until his retirement in 1932. In 1891 a small hospital was constructed in Old Cairo which developed into the largest mission hospital in the world at that time. In 1903 Harpur handed over his responsibility for the hospital in Old Cairo in order to be released for his mobile medical work in the Delta (:24). With a houseboat he visited the villagers and helped them medically and spiritually. In Minuf he started another hospital in 1912. The hospitals became known under the name "Harmel Hospitals" (SP 1909:84). Harpur made open evangelization supported by medical service his priority (Troeger 2013:124). The CMS was also involved in founding schools for boys and girls. A new phase of the CMS

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<sup>62</sup> In his description of the work of the Dutch Mission (2013:113-119) Troeger draws attention to the life and work of Lydia Matta and Safwat al-Bayaadi who became influential personalities in the Protestant movement in Egypt (:117-119).

<sup>63</sup> The CMS had kept some links with Egypt during their twenty years of absence from Egypt. They supported M L Whately's work among the children in Cairo (Stock 1899:514).

work was introduced when Douglas Thornton (1873-1907) arrived in Cairo 1898 (Gairdner 1908) followed by his friend William H Temple Gairdner (1873-1928) in 1899 (Padwick 1929; Shelley 1988). Both worked together in approaching the educated Muslims through public discussions and production of literature. Constance E Padwick (1886-1968) became a key person in the promotion of the literature work in Egypt (Troeger 2013:142-143). Gairdner was constantly looking for new ways to reach out to Muslims. Beyond dialogue, discussions and literature production, he wrote Biblical stories in drama form to reach the Egyptian audience (:140). He and Thornton started the magazine *Orient & Occident* that was widely distributed in Egypt and established a bookshop with a reading room. After the Islam Mission Conference in Lucknow, India (1911), Gairdner and Zwemer started the *Cairo Study Center* in November 1912 which became a distinguished institution for training missionaries in Arabic and Islamic Studies (Shelley 1988:161). In 1920, the CSC became an integrated part of the newly founded American University in Cairo (AUC) and commenced its program as the School of Oriental Studies (SOS) in 1921 (:170-171). In 1904 the CMS had five stations with twenty-eight missionaries in Egypt. It ran five schools and seminaries with almost 500 students and a hospital in Old Cairo that cared for more than 25,000 outpatients and more than 800 inpatients (CMS 1905:144). For a very long time, the CMS remained committed to its policy not to establish their own church for converts coming from Islam and from existing churches. It still had hoped that the Orthodox Church could be revived, involved in evangelism among Muslims and motivated to integrate Muslim converts. But in 1906 the CMS missionaries in Egypt expressed their opinion to establish an indigenous church for believers from a Muslim background (Hewitt 1971:9). This took the CMS until 1925 to accomplish this with the founding of the Episcopal Church of Egypt. It consisted of the missionaries, some converts and a number of Christians from different Oriental churches that had found their spiritual home in the Anglican community or had become co-workers in the CMS work (Troeger 2013:141). By 1930 the CMS had put its social projects and evangelistic work under local leadership with the exception of the hospitals and the schools (Hewitt 1971:311). In 1952 the CMS handed over all its institutions to the indigenous Anglican Church of Egypt (Meinardus 2006:103).

### **3.3.3.10 The North Africa Mission (1892-1925)**

In 1881 H G Guinness and his wife Fanny were instrumental in founding the interdenominational North Africa Mission (NAM) in England. It was originally called the *Mission to the Kabyles and other Berber races* and began its work in Algeria in the same year

as its founding. Soon the work extended to Tunis, Morocco and Libya. In 1892 the first workers came to Egypt and started work in Alexandria. Under the leadership of William Summers, they put a geographical focus on work in Lower Egypt that was still neglected by other agencies. Evangelization, education and medical work served as avenues for effectively sharing the gospel (Troeger 2013:145). The workers used donkeys, the train and their own boat to visit different villages. A school was established in Alexandria and Muslim patients were visited in the Kaiserswerth Hospital (:146). In the small city of Rosetta work was started in 1897 and it was only through English lessons that the missionaries found access to the people. In 1899 a third station was established in Shibiin il-Qoom. It was from 1898 to 1900 that Karl Kumm (1874-1930), the future co-founder of the SPM, was a missionary with the NAM. He put a special focus on the Bedouins in the Libyan Desert and visited the oases of the region (Sauer 2005:107-124). The peak of the development of the work was reached around 1900 when thirteen missionaries were working in Alexandria, Rosetta and Shibiin al-Qoom. When the NAM was in need of workers in other countries, they started to withdraw their missionaries from their ministries in Egypt. The work in Shibiin el-Qoom was handed over to the AM in 1922. When the NAM finally terminated its work in Egypt in 1925, they also handed over their school in Alexandria to the AM. The work of the NAM was mainly directed towards the Muslim population in the Delta. Despite a lot of opposition they saw some conversions but were not able to plant a church of Muslim converts (Troeger 2013:148).<sup>64</sup>

### **3.3.3.11 The Peniel Missionary Society (1895-1975)**

The *Peniel Missionary Society* known as the Peniel American Mission (Watson 1907:204; Elder 1958:164) began in 1895 in Los Angeles. The society was the structure under which the Evangelical interdenominational fellowship of Theodore P Ferguson (1853-1920) and his wife Manie P Ferguson (1850-1932) organized their involvement in world missions. The fellowship had its spiritual roots in the holiness movement (Troeger 2013:149). The PMS started a mission to seamen in Port Said in 1895. Two years later, in 1897 they started a school for Muslim girls that was run by two or three female teachers. After World War I, the PMS asked the Holiness Church for personnel support. The church seconded Sarah Longhurst to direct the school in 1920 until she died in 1940 at the age of eighty. It seems that Longhurst had a great concern for the publication and distribution of Christian literature (:149). After the death of Longhurst, the *National Holiness Missionary Society* (since 1954 *World Gospel*

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<sup>64</sup> In 1987 the NAM changed its name into Arab World Ministries (AWM) and returned back to Egypt. In 2010 AWM merged with Pioneers International.



*Mission*, Marion, Indiana) made the two female missionaries, Spurlin and Young, available to the PMS to lead the school. It seems that the school work was discontinued after the two teachers joined the Free Methodist Mission in Assiut in the mid-seventies (:149). The PMS did not have any ministry outside the Port Said region.

### **3.3.3.12 The Egypt General Mission (1898-1956)**

Another missionary enterprise was the coming of seven young men from Belfast to Egypt in 1898. They had their spiritual roots in the revival movement in Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century. The independent female missionary Annie van Sommer, who was active in Alexandria since 1895, had played an important role in the coming of the group of men that called themselves in the beginning *Egypt Mission Band*. In 1903 they changed their name into *Egypt General Mission* (EGM) (Swan 1932:28). The EGM was an interdenominational faith mission and has not aimed throughout its history to establish its own churches. Churches that came into existence through its work were integrated into the Synod of the Nile. The EGM worked in close and mutual cooperation with the AM. Geographically, they focused on the Delta region including Alexandria and Cairo and thereby complemented the work of the AM that had difficulties placing enough workers in the important cities of the Delta (Watson 1907:202; Troeger 2013:150). The Delta area outside Cairo and Alexandria was inhabited by a 98% Muslim population residing in about 11,000 locations (:150). In the beginning the EGM preferred a direct approach in the presentation of the gospel avoiding any institutional, organizational and administrative encumbrance. But the religious conditions in Egypt compelled them to modify their approach (Watson 1907:202). The ministry of the EGM was directed to Muslims and nominal Christians alike. In Alexandria they opened a reading room, invited Muslims for religious conversations and distributed tracts. In 1900 they began a school in the Muslim city of Bilbees and in 1902 they opened a polyclinic there. Some people became followers of Christ. In Shibiin al-Qanaatir the work began at the same time and in 1913 a small hospital was built and extended in 1919 so that a hundred patients could be admitted. A special aspect of the spiritual ministry among the patients was the obligatory final conversation when the patient was discharged from the hospital. Some Muslims became Christians through the medical work (Whitehouse 1986:24). The work in Suez began in 1901 and in 1904 in Ismaeliyya. In Port Said a bookshop was opened. In 1907 the EGM established its headquarters in Zaituun. The centre of the mission served also as a conference place and

hosted conferences for Muslim converts.<sup>65</sup> By 1907 a church was planted in Zaituun and a small church was built in 1920 that was pastored by Rev Markus Abd al-Masiih.<sup>66</sup> In 1908 the EGM was active in eight places in the Delta with twenty European workers and twenty-four native workers. They ran five schools, issued an Arabic magazine and were involved in literature distribution and in medical work. The verbal proclamation had a clear priority in its diverse ministries (:160). In 1945 the EGM had become the second biggest foreign organization with sixty expatriate and seventy national workers involved in preaching, literature distribution, church planting, educational and medical work in Alexandria, Gianakliis, Damanhur, Bilbees, Abu Hammad, Shibiin al-Qanaatir, Ismaeliyya and Zaituun (:166). Due to the need to provide a place of security and peace for female converts, the EGM established a home for them in Matariyya in the year 1919. The home was administered by Mrs Liggins who joined the mission as its first female missionary in 1900 (:168). During World War II, the work of the EGM basically continued without interruption. In addition to the ongoing work, the EGM also became involved in working among soldiers that had come from various Commonwealth states and Britain to Egypt (:169-170). After World War II, the EGM tried to establish a farm project for converts that were farmers. The idea was to invite them to live with their families on the farm and receive Biblical teaching as they were very often expelled from their families and village communities. The project was started in the village Kafr Yusuf Shahata, near Shibiin al-Qanaatir, but was not very successful due to the lack of an agricultural expert (:170). The general climate in the 1950s became increasingly aggressive and hostile towards the English in the country. This affected the work of the EGM as well. The Suez crisis in 1956 led to the expulsion of all British workers of the EGM and the property was confiscated by the Egyptian state. The missionaries found new fields of ministry in Lebanon and in Eritrea which led to the change of the name of the EGM to *Middle East General Mission*.<sup>67</sup> The EGM was the mission organization that worked most committedly for almost sixty years in the Delta. It proclaimed Christ in areas where he was not known, led a considerable number of people to Christ, established churches, cared for Muslim converts and provided education and medical service for an uncountable number of people (:173).

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<sup>65</sup> Among the participants of the first conference was the SPM evangelist SAH who was amazed to see so many converts together (SP 1909:74).

<sup>66</sup> For a summary of his life story cf Troeger (2013:159-160).

<sup>67</sup> In 1976 the *Middle East General Mission* merged with the *Lebanon Evangelical Mission* and the *Arabic Literature Mission* (the successor organization of the *Nile Mission Press*) into the *Middle East Christian Outreach* (MECO).

## **3.4 The history of the Sudan**

In the previous chapter we examined the historical development specifically in the Nile valley with regards to the Nubians that settled in Upper and Lower Nubia. In this section we will summarize the general political developments after the downfall of the Christian kingdoms Makuria in 1315 and Alodia in 1504 (Holt and Daly 2000; Trimingham 1983; Scholz 2000; Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002). Consequently, after Muslim infiltration and invasion the transitional process of Islamization and Arabization continued.

### **3.4.1 The regional states period (sixteenth–nineteenth century)**

The sixteenth century saw the emergence of a number of larger, regional states within the country that we today call the Sudan.

In the early sixteenth century, the Funj Sultanate was established in central and northern Sudan. Its capital was Sennar. The exact origin of the Funj is still debated. This probably non-Muslim, non-Arab ethnic group may have moved into the Sudan from the south or southeast. The power structure followed traditional African patterns of kingship. Soon the Funj converted to Islam which then became the major cultural and political force in the region. It seems that the Funj extended their control at times east into the Red Sea hills and west into Kordofan (Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:lxxxii). In the eighteenth century, tensions between the old Funj aristocracy and the Hamaj arose. The Hamaj broke away from Sennar. Localized smaller kingdoms emerged indicating a fractured political situation in the early nineteenth century.

In the western Sudan, in Darfur the sultanates of the Daju, the Tunjur and the Keira were emerging (:lxxxiii). The Islamic Keira dynasty was defeated by the British during World War I.

Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, crucial developments regarding the formation of the southern region in the Sudan took place. Ethnic migration brought various Nilotic and non-Nilotic groups to their modern locales, such as the Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk and Azande people (:lxxxiv).

### **3.4.2 The Turco-Egyptian period (1821-1881)**

In the nineteenth century various circumstances initiated developments that brought the otherwise disparate peoples into a political unit. The first dramatic change was introduced by the conquest of Muhammed Ali, the Viceroy of the Sublime Porte in Egypt. The army was led by his son Ismail in 1820-1821 and did not find any serious opposition from the non-

centralized peoples and their non-unified armies (:lxxxxv). The conquest served Muhammed Ali's aspirations to expand his power, pacify the conflicting parties on the southern border and consolidate his rule in Africa. The provinces of Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria and the central and northern areas were conquered. The Turco-Egyptian rulers established a civil and military administration in the new capital Khartoum and expanded their territory of influence up to the Red Sea hills and Darfur. Although Ismail was murdered by a Ja'aliyi leader, the Turco-Egyptian forces did not have to face spells of fierce opposition until the rise of the Mahdists in 1881. The regime during the Turkiyya period was seen by the people as a terror regime and grew unpopular (Scholz 2000:315). As the government of Muhammed Ali had huge economic problems, they were heavily involved in slave trade and the search for the gold mines to fill their treasury and finance their prodigality (:315). When the Suez Canal was inaugurated in 1869, it was seen as a chance to connect the Sudan with the western civilization through the harbour in Port Sudan replacing Suwakin. With time, the Egyptian rule was more and more ineffective, disliked and opposed by many local groups reaching its climax in the late 1870s (Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:lxxxvi).

### **3.4.3 The Mahdi period (1881-1898)**

The growing opposition to foreign rule coincided with the conclusion of the thirteenth Islamic century. Many Muslims were expecting the arrival of a religious leader who would restore the Islamic faith. Muhammed Ahmed believed himself to be the one that would restore the purity of the Islamic society as an answer to the westernized influences of the Egyptian rulers. Before he proclaimed his mission as *Mahdi*, he started to gather support. The government underestimated the movement which eventually led to a theocratic state and an open revolt (Ballin 2000). Soon the Mahdists controlled most of the northern Sudan including Nubia, except Wadi Halfa, Khartoum and Suakin and eradicated the remaining autochthonous Christianity. In January 1885 General Charles Gordon was killed when he went to Khartoum to evacuate Egyptian officials and military and attempted to defeat the Mahdists. When the Mahdi died in 1885, he was succeeded by Khalifa Abdullahi who followed the Mahdist strategy of isolation and invasion (Scholz 2000:316). Only in 1896 did the British government answer the request of the Khedive to send troops to Khartoum and to terminate the Mahdist state. Under the leadership of Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchner (1850-1916), the Anglo-Egyptian army completed a railway across the Nubian Desert to Abu Hamed and finally defeated the Mahdi troops in a battle north of Omdurman in September 1898.<sup>68</sup> A long period

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<sup>68</sup> The SPM evangelist, SAH, participated in this war as interpreter for a British officer.

of enormous suffering had come to an end, which had reduced the population of the region from 8,5 million to two million people (:317).

#### **3.4.4 The Anglo-Egyptian period (1899-1956)**

After the war, the Sudan came back under the influence of the Anglo-Egyptian administration which was organized under the Condominium Agreement of January 19, 1899. Although the name suggests a co-leadership role of Egypt and Great Britain, the Sudan was effectively controlled solely by the British (Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:lxxxviii). In the arrangement that was devised by Lord Cromer the administrative, governmental structure was defined. In 1936, this agreement was modified into the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (:23). In the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953, the steps were outlined that eventually were to lead to the Sudanese independence. It provided the legal basis for parliamentary elections in 1953 and the formation of the first government under Ismail al-Azhari (:23). After some border conflicts in the south were settled, the new administration started to focus on building the infrastructure of the Sudan. The government officials were drawn from the Egyptian services. The development included the building of railway lines, streets, towns and dams. Cotton was grown for export. A postal service was established. The administration opened the door for anthropological, ethnological, archaeological and linguistic research. Mission work among the non-Arab population in the south was encouraged. English became the *lingua franca* in the south expressing a sense of independence from the Arabic speaking majority. In 1902, Gordon Memorial College was established which developed later into the University of Khartoum. Coptic merchants from Egypt settled in the northern Sudan (Scholz 2000:317). In the 1920s the Sudanese nationalists requested an increased share in the leading of the country and built an alliance with the Egyptian nationalists that were voicing anti-British tones. The movement was crushed by the British expelling the Egyptian officials and limiting the influence of the Sudanese in the administration of the country (Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:xc). In the next decades the British developed the concept of indirect rule encouraging more national political activities. Since 1938, political organizations were established that became the basis for national parties. During World War II, Sir Hubert Huddleston, governor general of the Sudan (1940-1947), formed a government with local politicians. In 1953, the first parliament was elected and in 1955 was inaugurated after some internal tensions had been settled. The parliament was led by a majority of the National Unionist Party. The Umma Party and the Liberal Party formed the other blocs. On January 1,

1956, the independence of the Sudan was declared and the British handed over the country and withdrew (:xcii; Scholz 2000:318).

### **3.4.5 The post-independence period (1956-present)**

Even before the independence of the Sudan the peoples of the south criticized the lack of their participation in the Sudanization process of the government. They felt that the south was not given enough consideration in the establishment of a unified Sudan. They were afraid of the northern dominance (Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:xcii). After independence there were quick changes of governments from Ismail al-Azhari (1956), Abdallah Khalil (1956-1959) and Ibrahim Abboud (1958-1964). Jaafar Numeiri was president from 1969-1985. During his presidency the civil war began in the southern Sudan. Thus, the military system was strengthened and international financial assistance was re-channelled to cover the major spending on the army (Scholz 2000:318).

## **3.5 Christianity in the Sudan**

Beginning with the fourteenth century the Nile valley saw a gradual decline of Christianity and an increasing process of Islamization and Arabization. The remaining Nubian Christians were cut off from other Christian communities and surrounded by Muslims.

Yet, members of the Coptic Orthodox Church could be found in the Sudan despite the disappearance of indigenous Christians. As they were educated men they came to work for the kings of Sennar as accountants and secretaries (Vantini 1981:233)

Daily life during the Turco-Egyptian rule was quite miserable and characterized by bribery, oppression and slave-raiding. The Egyptian officials that were sent to the Sudan were not of the best quality and understood their being sent as punishment which often was true (Anderson 1963:26). Yet, the country opened up for trade since it was connected with Egypt and the wider Mediterranean region. Among the merchants that came to the Sudan were Christians from Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Chaldean and Syrian Churches, as well as Maronite, Armenian Catholics and Egyptian and Ethiopian Copts. Although they constituted a minority in the Sudan, they marked the beginning of a Christian presence in the Islamic country (:270-271; Lobban, Kramer & Fluehr-Lobban 2002:68). The immigration of Christians from Egypt and Syria increased during the Anglo-Egypt rule (Richter 2006:218).

## **3.6 History of missionary work in the Sudan**

In addition to the Christian presence in Sudan through those that had settled there due to professional or economic reasons, organized missionary effort began in the middle of the nineteenth century (Pitya 1996; Werner, Anderson & Wheeler 2000:121-208; Sauer 2005:312 fn 3).

### **3.6.1 Catholic missionary efforts**

Contact with Catholic Christianity in the Sudan began through Catholic priests that fled persecution in Ethiopia and had come to Khartoum in 1842. Luigi Montuori established a small school for foreign Christians and a church in Khartoum (Vantini 1981:235). When the Holy See set up the Vicarite Apostolic of Central Africa in 1846, Canon Annetto Casolani was appointed the first Vicar Apostolic and bishop. In their concern for central Africa, the Catholic mission wanted to use the Nile route. Wars, slave trade and sicknesses constituted big challenges for the missionaries. The death toll during the years 1848-1862 was forty-six. As the price was too high, Pope Pius IX ordered this mission to be stopped (:235-240). In 1864, Daniele Comboni, who is regarded the founder of the Catholic Church in the Sudan, proposed a “Plan for the Regeneration of Africa by means of Africans”. Comboni bought African slaves, trained them in Verona and commissioned them for the work in the Sudan. It was his vision that Africans would run their own affairs. Comboni founded the Verona Fathers and returned to the Sudan in 1873. He was appointed bishop in 1877 and died in 1881, but the work continued and developed well. In 1974, the Holy See set up two ecclesiastical provinces, one for all of the northern Sudan and the other province comprising all dioceses in the southern Sudanese region (:246-253).

### **3.6.2 Protestant missionary efforts**

The attempt of Spittler’s Apostles’ Road in the 1860s included the setting up of a station in Khartoum, but the project failed. Following the Anglo-Egyptian conquest of 1898, the Sudan came in the focus of Protestant missions. It is regrettable that the British government in fear of Islamic unrest and rebellion did not allow direct evangelism north of Fashoda which is located 650 kilometers south of Khartoum at the White Nile (Hussein 1920:106). Through this, the administration dictated the missions’ agenda, yet allowed educational, medical and Bible translation work (King 2000:915). The door in the multi-ethnic south was wide open though.

### **3.6.2.1 The work of the Church Missionary Society**

General C Gordon, the Governor-General (1877-1879) urgently asked the CMS to send missionaries to the Sudan. In 1899, L Gwynne established a church in Khartoum and began work in Omdurman. In 1906, the CMS missionaries started work in the south. In later years, the work expanded to Malek, Juba, Jei, Jambio, Opari, Fui and Meridi. The CMS ministered to the Dinka, the Bari and the Moro and also among the tribal groups of the Nuba Mountains (Richter 2006:220).

### **3.6.2.2 The work of the American Mission**

The AM came to Egypt in 1854 and started its work in Cairo, Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt. In 1900 the Egyptian pastor, Gabra Hanna, was sent by the Synod of the Nile to the Sudan to gather the Protestant community. In the same year, the board of the AM sent Giffen and McLaughlin to explore the possibilities for starting a new work in the Sudan. The place that was chosen for work in the southern Sudan was at the East bank of the Sobat near the confluence of the Sobat with the Nile. In March 1902, Giffen and McLaughlin and their wives arrived in Doleib Hill and spent two years there in ministry to the Shilluk. They offered medical services and started a small school. In 1911, work among the Nuer was started. After five years a school in the local language of the Nuer was opened in Nasir. The concentration of the AM was on these two stations prior to World War II. In 1965, the AM handed over the work to the nationals (Vantini 1981:259-266).

### **3.6.2.3 The work of the Sudan United Mission**

In 1904, the Sudan United Mission (SUM) was founded by K Kumm as an interdenominational and international Protestant mission. Its teams in the Sudan were mainly staffed by missionaries from Australia and New Zealand. In 1920, the SUM was asked by the government to start medical and educational work in the Nuba Mountains. Their centers were at Heiban (1920), Abri (1922), Tabanya (1930), Moro (1933) and Kauda (1936). The work among the people groups of the Nuba Mountains led to the founding of the Sudan Church of Christ (SCOC). The CMS, AM, and SUM established an Intermission Council in order to promote their respective ministries and present their common concerns before the government in a unified way (:258; Richter 2006:220-221).



### 3.7 Summary

In this chapter we have briefly studied the political, religious and missionary situation in Egypt and in the Sudan prior to the inception of the SPM and during its beginning years. The results can be summarized as following:

First, after the French invasion at the end of the eighteenth century, Egypt gradually disconnected from Ottoman control and moved towards Europe for orientation. Particularly, Muhammed Ali, the founder of modern Egypt, opened the country to the west and reformed the educational and medical services. He not only developed Egypt into a strong province but also built up his own dynasty. His successors led Egypt into international bankruptcy and eventually provoked the takeover by England in 1882. The British dominance in Egypt lasted until the middle of the twentieth century.

Second, although the situation of Egyptian Christians was often changing after the Islamic conquest in AD 641, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century the governmental administration respected the Copts as Egyptian citizens, brought relief to their daily lives, and appointed Copts to high political positions. The Coptic Orthodox Church dominated Christian life in Egypt but was in urgent need for spiritual renewal. Reform oriented Popes alternated with traditionalists. The church suffered from an internal power struggle between the conservative clergy and the educated lay movement.

Third, in the nineteenth century, Egypt saw the beginning of growing western Christian activities. For most of the time, the British administration provided the necessary legal protection for their work. Parts of the western church were eager to bring the Gospel back to the region from where it had originated. The strategic question that had to be answered was whether western missionaries should focus on Muslim evangelism or try to bring renewal to the “sleeping lion” and encourage the oriental Christians to reach out to their Muslim neighbors. Thus, organizations such as the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the American Mission (AM), the Egypt General Mission (EGM) and others had to make a strategic decision as to where to focus their efforts. Most of the organizations were using literature distribution, Bible translation, and educational and medical institutions as useful avenues for conveying the Gospel. Their focus was either on the wider Christian community, specifically on Muslims or on both. The concise survey on the various mission agencies that were active in Egypt during the nineteenth and twentieth century has also shown that there was no planned and organized ministry among the Nile-Nubians.

Fourth, after the downfall of the three Nubians kingdoms in 1315 and 1504, the Nile valley experienced a time of Islamization and Arabization. A number of larger regional states

appeared. Major change was introduced by the conquest of Muhammed Ali in 1821. The region that we call the Sudan today received a centralized civil and military administration in the new capital of Khartoum. However, the Islamic Mahdi rule brought much suffering to the people in the Nile valley. The defeat of the Mahdists in 1898 was followed by an Anglo-Egyptian rule that was terminated by the independence of the Sudan in 1956.

Fifth, although the indigenous church in the Nile valley had generally disappeared by the nineteenth century, Christians from the Coptic, Greek, Chaldean and Syrian Churches had settled in the region as merchants or employed by the government due to their educational level.

Sixth, missionary work in the Sudan started in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Catholic missionaries, especially D Comboni, were the pioneers of modern missionary efforts. Protestant initiatives began in 1899 by the CMS, in 1900 by the AM, and in 1904 by the SUM. As in Egypt, there is no evidence for either Catholic or Protestant work among the Nubian peoples in the Nile valley in the Sudan.

Seventh, in this context, it is of primary importance to note with great regret that the Anglo-Egyptian authorities did not allow any missionary activities north of Fashoda. They were in fear of unrest and rebellion of the Muslim population in the northern province however they gave every freedom to evangelize in the pagan and animistic south.

## **4. The development of the Sudan Pionier Mission towards a mission to the Nile-Nubians**

When the Sudan Pionier Mission (SPM) was started in Aswan in 1900 by H G Guinness and K Kumm, the new mission was meant to be another attempt to reach out to the unreached countries in the huge region of the *Sudan Belt*.<sup>69</sup> As various internal and external factors did not allow the extension of the work to the south beyond the borders of Egypt, the SPM developed its work gradually in the Aswan region, moving north of the center in Aswan to Gizaira, Daraw, Edfu and Cairo and south of Aswan into Egyptian Nubia. In this chapter, we will describe the different phases that led to the development of the SPM towards a mission to the Nile-Nubians. Further, we will examine the various factors that positively supported the pursuit of the vision and the factors that constituted restrictions to the initial vision of the founders.

### **4.1 The pre-founding phase – the vision of Guinness and Kumm**

#### **4.1.1 The founding of faith missions**

The Protestant missionary era of modern time can only be rightly understood when seen in relation with various revival movements that preceded it. K Fiedler has developed a convincing typology of the Protestant missionary movement (1992:12-35). He identifies three obvious lines and classifies them as pre-classical (eg Danish Hallish, Moravian); classical (eg Baptist Missionary Society, CMS, American Board), and post-classical missions (eg independent, Brethren, Pentecostal, Charismatic). Among the post-classical missions, the faith missions constitute the major sub-division. They were strongly influenced by the Holiness Movement in the second half of the nineteenth century (:207-246) that was greatly influenced by personalities such as D L Moody (1837-1899), C H Spurgeon (1834-1892) and H G Guinness (1835-1910), the well-known evangelists of that period. Beside their spiritual roots, Fiedler points out that they followed leading principles that were set up by H Taylor (1832-1905) and applied in the China Inland Mission (1994:11). The so-called faith missions can be particularly characterized by the following features (Sauer 2005:47-48): First, they did not

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<sup>69</sup> The nineteenth century is regarded as the great missionary century. The western church became aware of the yet unreached areas of this world. Special attention was given to the African continent. In 1875 there were still four extended regions in Africa unreached by meaningful Christian missionary efforts. Among these areas were Central Africa, the Congo basin, North Africa and the Sudan Belt, which was the largest and most inaccessible of all these regions (Fiedler 1992:104-107; Sauer 2005:48).

represent a certain denomination but displayed an interdenominational nature. Second, their major motive was to reach the unreached areas and people groups with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Third, they chose not to announce their financial needs but depended on God alone for the funding of their work.<sup>70</sup> Fourth, they recruited personnel and support from new strata of society. Fifth, they were motivated by basic spiritual truths that were partly neglected before. Sixth, they involved women as pioneer evangelists and thereby granted them equal opportunities to preach the gospel. Seventh, they considered their missionaries as members and not as employees of their organization. Eighth, although they promoted institutional work, they gave priority to evangelism. By setting up these principles, H Taylor directly or indirectly influenced the founding of a growing number of mission societies who followed his policy to various degrees (Bacon 1984). Next in importance for the promotion of new faith missions to Taylor and his wife Mary was the Guinness family: “They transferred the concept of faith missions, which Taylor had originally developed for China, to Africa” (Sauer 2005:48).

#### **4.1.2 The unreached Sudan Belt**

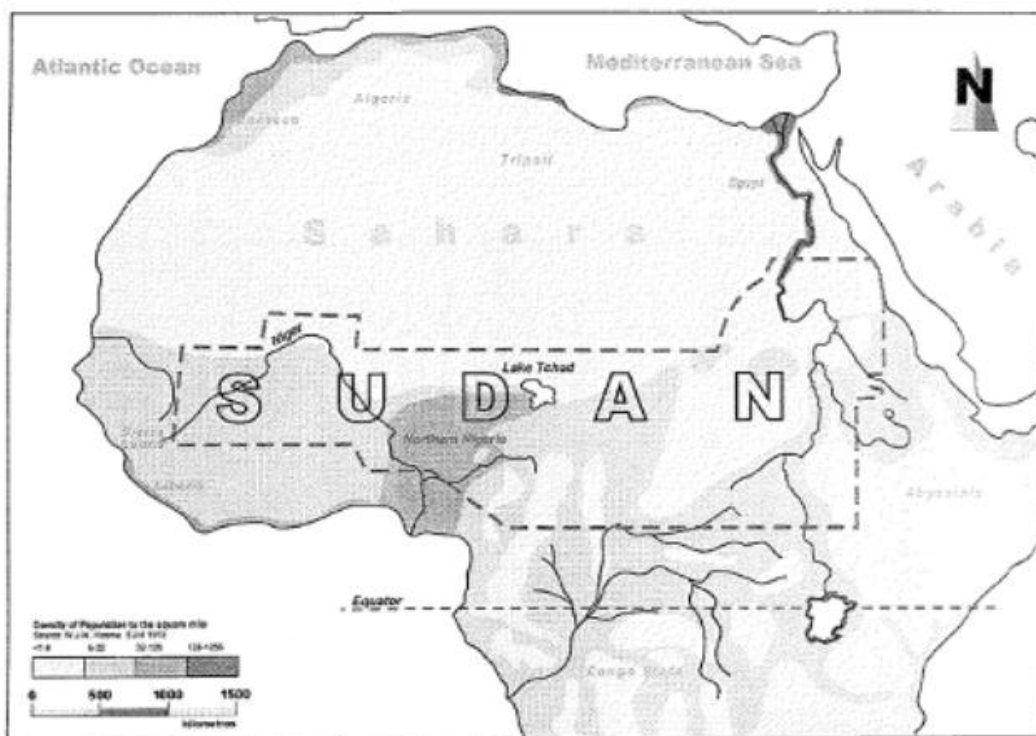
As the nineteenth century saw the founding of numerous new mission societies, missionary ventures and the advance of the gospel, it is regarded as the great missionary century. The western church developed a growing awareness of the yet unreached areas of this world. Special attention was given to the African continent. In 1875 there were still four extended regions in Africa unreached by meaningful Christian missionary efforts. Among these areas were Central Africa, the Congo Basin, North Africa and the Sudan Belt, which was the largest and most inaccessible of all these regions (Fiedler 1992:104-107; Sauer 2005:48). The inner African area that was at that time designated by the term “Sudan Belt” was surrounded by the Sahara desert in the north, the Congo Basin in the south, Ethiopia in the east and coastal areas in the west (Sauer 2005:22). The Sudan Belt was sub-divided in three main regions, the western Sudan, the area of Niger, the central Sudan, the area around Lake Chad, and the eastern Sudan, the area west of the Upper Nile (Sauer 2005:49). Previously different attempts had been made to reach this untouched area with the gospel by various classical and denominational missions, such as the CMS. But the advance of the gospel was significantly promoted for the first meaningful time by the endeavors of interdenominational faith missions. In a number of these attempts to reach the Sudan Belt, the Guinness family played a

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<sup>70</sup> It was this principle that led the supporters of classical missions to call the newly founded missions “faith missions” (Sauer 2005:47).

crucial role. As the Sudan Belt was still a *terra incognita* for the western world and neither thoroughly explored nor evangelized, H G Guinness, in 1887, started to draw the attention of the western church to this much neglected region (:49). C Sauer has thoroughly studied the role of the Guinness family in setting up various mission organizations to reach the Sudan Belt (:48-81).<sup>71</sup> He summarized the involvement of the family in these attempts as “reporting, supporting, and founding missions” (:78). H G Guinness acted primarily as a visionary and founder who helped to set up various missions only to withdraw himself at an initial stage (:78).

**Map 5: The Sudan Belt and the demography of Africa**



(Sauer 2005:42)

### 4.1.3 The role of Henry Grattan Guinness (1835-1910)

Although it was the whole Guinness family that played an outstanding role in reaching out to the unreached people groups, especially in the Sudan Belt, due to the confines of this study a special focus will be given to H G Guinness.<sup>72</sup> The huge Irish Guinness clan became well

<sup>71</sup> Among the missions founded to reach the Sudan Belt were Brooke’s Great Britain based Central Soudan Mission and the Sudan and Upper Niger Mission, the USA based Kansas Sudan Pioneer Mission, and the German based Sudan Pioneer Mission.

<sup>72</sup> For a summary on Guinness’ life cf Lamb (2000:420-421). A more detailed account on the wider Guinness clan was provided by Michele Guinness in 1990 (Guinness 1991). His wife Fanny (1832-1898) and his daughter Lucy (1865-1906) played an essential part through their extensive writings and editing the journal “The Regions Beyond.”

known by its banking, brewing and biblical activities. H G Guinness (1835-1910) was born in Cheltenham, England and grew up in the Congregational Church. Converted in 1853, he wanted to become a missionary in Argentina. In his late twenties he had already gained some popularity as an itinerant evangelist in Ireland, Great Britain, and North America. In 1860, he married Fanny Fitzgerald (1832-1898) and joined the Plymouth Brethren, the spiritual home of his wife. In 1866, H G Guinness invited H Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission (CIM), to speak at an evening class in Dublin. Although they felt the strong desire to join the CIM to serve in China, H Taylor proposed that they concentrate on training missionaries for the unreached regions instead. Thus, they set up, in 1873, the so called East London Training Institute for Home and Foreign Missions (ELTI), which became a model for the Bible School movement all over the world (Fiedler 1992:62-77). The institution enabled students without academic qualifications and from the lower social classes to receive missionary training. It also accepted students from outside Great Britain as well as from other continents.<sup>73</sup> When it closed down in 1915, about 1,500 students had been trained at ELTI, a majority of whom became missionaries. They were sent primarily to the unreached fields in Africa. The Guinneses travelled to Egypt in 1862. During their journey they employed a Nubian cook (Sauer 2005:51). They also had at least two students from the region: the Nubian SAH in 1879 and the Dinka Salim Wilson in 1882-1886 (:51). In addition to this, the Mahdist Rule in Egyptian Sudan (1881-1898) certainly drew the attention of Guinness to the region. Before the end of the Mahdist rule, the Sudan Belt had become part of his missionary agenda. Thus he became involved in supporting the founding of a number of missionary organizations beginning in 1887 (:51). One of the latest was the SPM that he founded together with K Kumm in 1900 in Aswan.

#### **4.1.4 Hermann Karl Wilhelm Kumm (1874-1930)**

K Kumm was the other key person in reaching out to the Sudan Belt and in setting up the SPM in Aswan (Sauer 2005:82-123).<sup>74</sup> Whereas H G Guinness was interested in many mission fields around the world, K Kumm's involvement was more focused on the Sudan Belt. K. Kumm was born in 1874 in Markoldendorf, Germany. He grew up in Osterode, Harz and finished High School there in 1894. Kumm was raised in the Lutheran tradition and experienced his personal conversion in 1894. In 1895 he received a call to missionary service

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<sup>73</sup> In 1879, the Nubian SAH, later one of the first workers of the SPM, became a student in the ELTI. The co-founder of the SPM, K Kumm, joined the institute in 1896.

<sup>74</sup> For a shorter summary on Kumm's life and work cf Fiedler (2000:548-549). Biographies were presented by Cleverdon (1936) and Spartalis (1994).

with the North Africa Mission (NAM), that H G Guinness had supported in its founding phase (:99-101). Subsequently, K Kumm started his missionary training at the ELTI in 1896 (:101-104). After having started studies in Arabic and being involved in evangelistic work on the Baltic coast (:104-105), he arrived in Alexandria in 1898 to work with the NAM. During his first two years, he did extensive travelling to the oases in the west of Egypt in Fayyum, Kharga, Dakhla and Baris (:108-123). In May 1899, H G Guinness and his daughter Lucy came to visit the NAM team in Alexandria. As they wanted to visit the Fayyum oasis, they were in need of a competent interpreter, guide and general protector (Cleverdon 1936:29). K Kumm seemed to be the appropriate person due to his previous experience in Fayyum. During this trip Lucy and Karl fell in love with each other (:30).<sup>75</sup> Before the Guinnesses departed to Europe, Karl and Lucy had agreed to meet again in Luxor in 1900. It seems that the defeat of the Mahdist movement in the eastern Sudan and the trip to the western desert had inspired H G Guinness to pursue his long standing vision for a missionary advance to the Sudan Belt. Although K Kumm was deeply interested in the desert people of western Egypt, it seems that Guinness' influence led to a shift in Kumm's focus to the people groups of the Sudan Belt (Sauer 2005:117). After his desert tour beginning at the end of October 1899, Kumm returned to Luxor in early January 1900 to meet H G Guinness and L Guinness as agreed before. K Kumm and L Guinness became engaged in Aswan on January 11, 1900 and committed their lives to ministry in Africa. Their wedding took place at the American Mission's church in Cairo on February 3, 1900 (:137-144).

#### **4.1.5 Summary**

Regarding the pre-founding phase, Guinness, his wife and his daughter played an essential role in setting up the SPM. Their action steps were directed by an intrinsic vision to reach out to the unreached Sudan Belt, which was, at the time, one of the least reached geographical areas in Africa. They were able to win K Kumm, a pioneer missionary of the NAM, for the same vision and get him deeply involved. Yet it was the political development in the Sudan that served as a strong signal to finally move ahead. The end of the Mahdiyya era was thought to have opened the Nile valley as a suitable avenue to advance the gospel to the Sudan Belt.

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<sup>75</sup> Kumm was 24 years old and thus nine years younger than Lucy Guinness.

## 4.2 Founding years, an indigenous beginning and crisis years – phase one (1900-1904)

Driven by their vision and motivated by the new political situation in the region, Guinness and Kumm began their new venture in Aswan which they saw as an ideal starting point for using the Nile route to advance the Gospel into the Sudan Belt. Without a functioning sending structure and a pre-arranged committed support base, they employed native Christians as they initiated the first steps. The founding of the SPM was a rather spontaneous initiative which took place in Aswan on January 11, 1900.

Why was there a need for the SPM? The SPM communicated a triple purpose with their supporters. First, they wanted to meet the needs of the neglected millions in Central Africa.<sup>76</sup> Second, they wanted to be obedient towards the Great Commission. Third, they aspired to share the gospel where others were not working (SP 1900:1-6; SP 1901:38). The geographical region that was to be reached was more closely defined as the Upper Nile region between Aswan and Khartoum and the kingdoms of Kordofan, Darfur and Wadai (Flyer SPM 1900:1). As they started in Aswan, very naturally the people groups in and around the city came into perspective: the Arabs, the nomadic Bisharin<sup>77</sup> and the Nubians.

It seems that the inherent strategy implied four circles. First, to work among the groups closest to Aswan. Second, to reach out to the people of the Nile valley between Aswan and Khartoum. Third, to move to the vast areas of Kordofan and Darfur. Fourth, to advance to the still unreached tribes of the Sudan Belt (Circular SPM 26.02.1901).

The original intent of the founders of the SPM was to spread the gospel in this basically animistic region. The spread of Islam was furthered by the technical and structural development of the colonial powers in the region. The missionary goal was to precede Islam and evangelize the peoples of the Sudan Belt before Islam would overrun the area (Held 1925:5; Drescher 1998:17-18). As the SPM, due to its geographical location, was in very natural contact with Muslim Arabs, Bishariyyin and Nubians, it inevitably became a mission to Muslims.

Regarding the advance of the gospel, the following avenues were considered: First, translation of scriptures and valuable books into the hundred unknown languages and dialects of the Sudan. Second, education and schools for children and adults. Third, evangelism.

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<sup>76</sup> Central Africa was used interchangeably with the Sudan. In this research in most of the references the region is defined as the Sudan Belt.

<sup>77</sup> For a concise description of the Bisharin cf Palmisano (1991:45-49).



Fourth, colportage work. Fifth, medical work. Among these missionary methods, evangelism was given a clear priority over the other supporting methods (SP 1900:7; Sauer 2005:136).

As Germans did not have colonies in Muslim regions and had not participated in the war against the Mahdists and thus had less historical “baggage” Guinness suggested looking for a support base and staff in Germany.

## **4.2.1 General developments**

In this section we will draw a clear picture of the general development of the SPM during the initial phase. Then, we will highlight the activities that were directed towards the Nile-Nubians.

### **4.2.1.1 The beginning years (1900-1902)**

The SPM started practically with the employment of the Coptic Christian teacher Girgis Ya’quub from Esna in January and the Kunuuzi Nubian convert SAH in February 1900. Guinness rented a house of an American lady for two years. Girgis, the Coptic teacher, started the SPM School in which he taught children from various backgrounds. The school quickly grew in attendance and needed additional staff (Unruh 1950:12-13).<sup>78</sup> In March, SAH was sent on a six-month exploration and colportage tour through Nubia all the way to Dongola (Hussein 1920:96-107). Kumm tried to win a support basis in Germany and Switzerland, since existing organizations did not show any interest to integrate the work in Aswan into their activities. G Warneck (1834-1910),<sup>79</sup> a leading missiologist in Germany, turned out to be the strongest critic of the SPM in its founding phase (Minutes SPM 25.10.1900:1-9). He openly opposed the initiative of Guinness and Kumm by raising three major points of criticism. First, he criticized the adventurous attempt to move into the Sudan region. Second, he opposed the alleged fragmentation of the mission supporters in Germany. Third, he expressed his reservations towards the foreign influence represented by Kumm.<sup>80</sup> As traveling secretary Kumm presented the vision of the SPM, he was well received in the mainline church oriented Fellowship Movement and was able to establish support associations in Kassel, Hersfeld, Eisenach and Switzerland. Rev J Dammann (1840-1908) in Eisenach was one of the

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<sup>78</sup> The SPM employed Girgis’ wife and her brother Habib with his wife.

<sup>79</sup> For biographical data about G Warneck cf Fiedler 2000:1006.

<sup>80</sup> During the first meeting of the SPM stakeholders on October 25, 1900 in Eisenach, Kumm responded convincingly to Warneck’s criticism (Minutes SPM 25.10.1900:3-9). For a comprehensive discussion of the points raised by Warneck cf Sauer (2005:204-212). For Warneck’s basic criticism of missionary work among Muslims cf Baumann (2007:264ff).

strongest supporters of the newly founded work.<sup>81</sup> In October 1900, the SPM was officially registered as a society in Eisenach and Rev Th Ziemendorff from Wiesbaden became the first chairman of the SPM (1900-1912). Ziemendorff supported the integration of women in missionary work and encouraged the founding of a women's branch of the SPM in 1900. In October 1900, the first issue of the SPM magazine *Die Sudan-Pionier-Mission*<sup>82</sup> was published and the first mission conference of the SPM took place in Eisenach (Minutes SPM 25.10.1900:1). On November 13, the SPM Board was constituted (Minutes SPM 15.11.1900:13) and on December 30, 1900 the first European missionaries of the SPM, Johannes and Martha Kupfernagel were sent from Kassel to Aswan (SP 1901:25-35). In January 1901, they arrived in Aswan. In March 1901, Kupfernagel was able to purchase the mission's property that was located in the city center at the main road along the Nile (Contract of Sale 18.03.1901). Kumm became the traveling secretary of the SPM in spring 1901 and visited Aswan again in March and April of the same year. Unfortunately, various problems on the field arose and led to a severe crisis. The SPM School had to be closed down due to the small number of pupils. Kumm was dismissed by the SPM board in 1902 since he had made a number of decisions and implemented them without proper communication with the board and without respecting the reporting line within the organization (Sauer 2005: 230-239). The initial plan of the mission included medical work as well, but during this phase no physician was available who could be sent by the SPM. Dr Schacht, a German physician who spent the winter season in Aswan, offered medical services to the Aswan population on the basis that the SPM provided accommodation and clinic facilities for him. Due to the fact that Kupfernagel reported only biased and negative information to the home office about SAH, the board did not come to a trusting relationship with SAH and took a critical stand against him. Due to the failures in Aswan, the question was raised whether the SPM should not look for a new location. Eventually, as the problems between the board and Kupfernagel could not be solved, the SPM and the missionary dissolved their relationship in August 1904 (:264-267). Although Eisenach was the initial center of the SPM, Wiesbaden had gradually become the administrative head office and the training place for new missionaries. Despite the disappointing developments in Aswan and in the home office, the board and the supporters continued to pursue the initial vision. As a late fruit of Guinness' and Kumm's efforts, new workers had applied to work with the SPM (SP 1903:90), L Zimmerlin and S J Enderlin had

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<sup>81</sup> Unfortunately, Dammann has not received adequate appreciation in the SPM publications. For a concise biographical description cf Gäckle (1992:402). The only comprehensive biography of Dammann was written bei Hasselmann (1930). Although Hasselmann extensively describes the life and ministry of Dammann, he unfortunately makes no mention of Dammann's important role in the founding phase of the SPM.

<sup>82</sup> The journal was called *Der Sudan-Pionier* from February 1901 until the end of 1928.

been roused by the vision to reach out to the Sudan Belt when both speakers had visited the Bible school St Chrischona in 1901 and presented the outline of the SPM work (Blum-Ernst 1951:13-14). To encourage the new missionaries during the restart of the SPM work in Aswan, Rev Th Ziemendorff, his wife Adelheid, his daughter Hanna, and volunteer Anita R uthnick accompanied E Gonnermann, L Zimmerlin, J Enderlin and SAH to Egypt (SP 1904:90-91). The journey was scheduled for November 18, 1904.

## **4.2.2 Work among Nubians**

Although the main purpose of the founding of the SPM was the preaching of the gospel in the unreached Sudan Belt (SP 1900:7), it was only natural that the newly founded work put its focus in the beginning on the Muslim people in and around Aswan and specifically on the unreached people groups of the Nubians (SP 1900:11) and Bejas (SP 1901:62).<sup>83</sup> The work among Nubians was regarded as the beginning of a greater work and a future expansion to the south. It started with the exciting fact that a Kunuuzi Nubian convert was available for missionary work in the Nile valley. His amazing life story, outstanding personality and appropriate training made SAH the most suitable person for the vision of the SPM. Through his educational and spiritual journey in Europe and his personal experience as a Christian in Cairo and Nubia, he was uniquely prepared and motivated for the work with the SPM.<sup>84</sup>

### **4.2.2.1 Exploration tours through Nubia**

Kumm had a clear understanding of the missionary zeal and potential of SAH. As his first major assignment, Kumm sent SAH on an exploration and colportage tour through Nubia up to Dongola al-Urdi. Equipped with Bible literature he was assigned to share the Gospel, find out the spiritual receptivity of the inhabitants in the Nile valley south of Aswan and collect geographical and economic data for Kumm's scholarly research. When Kumm came again to Aswan in spring 1901, he went on another exploration tour with SAH up to Wadi Halfa (SP 1901:81-87).<sup>85</sup>

### **4.2.2.2 Linguistic work and Bible translation**

During his six-month trip to the south, SAH started to compile a small word list of Kunuuzi Nubian words and also began with the translation of the Gospel of John into Kunuuzi. He

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<sup>83</sup> For a comprehensive description of the Beja people group cf Palmisano (1991).

<sup>84</sup> For the life story of SAH prior to 1900 and his suitability for the SPM cf 5, 6.1. and 8.1.

<sup>85</sup> For a fuller description cf 6.1.4 and 6.1.8.

completed the translation after his return to Aswan and started with the translation of the Gospel of Matthew while he was in Gizaira.<sup>86</sup>

#### **4.2.2.3 A new station in Gizaira and its failure (1901-1902)**

Due to the fact that the first missionary of the SPM sent from Germany, J Kupfernagel, and SAH experienced growing interpersonal conflicts, Kumm tried to solve the problem by asking SAH to start a new station in the Kunuuzi village of Gizaira, north of Aswan. Combined with renting agricultural land the new work was hoped to be financially self-sustaining. The plan was to start with an educational school program for the children of the region and to make Gizaira station a training center for missionaries and to share the Gospel with the Kunuuzi Nubians of the area (Sauer 2005:218-219). The project did not develop as expected and had to be closed down in the middle of 1902 (Minutes SPM 10.04.1902:44).<sup>87</sup> SAH returned with his children to the main station in Aswan.

#### **4.2.2.4 Evangelistic work among the Nubians (1902-1903)**

Back in Aswan SAH had to work together with Kupfernagel. Despite the increasing tensions between the two, they tried to visit some Nubian villages together and share the gospel. Since Kupfernagel was ill equipped for these visits and lacked language competency, SAH was the only evangelist who was able to explain the essence of the Christian message.<sup>88</sup>

#### **4.2.2.5 SAH leaving Egypt (1903-1904)**

Two critical developments brought SAH to the fringe of his ability of coping. The constant conflicts with Kupfernagel and his accusations about personal issues in the life of SAH burdened SAH to his limits (Sauer 2005:223, 255-256). Yet the major blow came when the relatives of SAH abducted his four children during the summer vacation in Aswan in 1903. Without support from the local authorities or foreign diplomatic representatives, SAH was left a broken man (Hussein 1920:108-116). Any of his activities towards the Nubians came to a standstill. The invitation to spend time in Germany was a timely way out of this most challenging crisis. During his time in Wiesbaden, SAH recovered emotionally and physically (Sauer 2005:269). Kupfernagel's campaign had negatively affected SAH's relationship with the SPM board but it could be restored and a new basis for a trust relationship was laid that remained unshaken since. SAH was extremely helpful in preparing the new missionaries

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<sup>86</sup> For a detailed account of his linguistic work, his contribution to Bible translation into Kunuuzi Nubian and the production of Christian and biographical material cf 8.2-8.10.

<sup>87</sup> For a detailed treatment of the Gizaira project cf 6.1.9.

<sup>88</sup> For a fuller description of SAH's evangelistic ministry throughout his work with the SPM cf 7.2.3.

Enderlin, Zimmerlin and Gonnermann for their ministry in Egypt. He trained them in Arabic, Egyptian and Nubian culture and history. In addition to this he visited the German supporters of the SPM as he accompanied Enderlin and Zimmerlin. He was part of the SPM delegation that travelled to Egypt to resume the work in Aswan after the years of crisis and separation (Hussein 1920:119). SAH can be considered the stakeholder of the first hour and the continuation of what had once started in 1900.<sup>89</sup>

### **4.2.3 Factors affecting the development**

There were a number of internal and external factors that effected the development of the SPM in a dramatic way. Interpersonal conflicts between SAH and the first German missionary J Kupfernagel hindered the evangelistic work. The second station of the SPM in Gizaira developed differently than initially expected and had to be closed down in summer 1902 (Minutes SPM 10.04.1902:43-44). Kumm, who had inspired, encouraged and instructed SAH in his ministry, was dismissed by the SPM in October 1902 (Minutes SPM 02.10.1902:47-48). Kupfernagel and SAH were not able to restore their relationship. Kupfernagel also suggested selling the house in Aswan and start a new work in Suakin in the Sudan (Minutes SPM 10.04.1902:44). He brought forward Fashoda and Berber as further options (Minutes SPM 26.03.1903:51). The board rejected this idea and suggested an exploration trip to Wadi Halfa instead (Minutes SPM 12.07.1902:47). As Kupfernagel's relationship with the SPM board deteriorated and no solution could be found, he left the SPM in mutual agreement in August 1904. In summer 1903, SAH was emotionally paralyzed by the abduction of his children. He arrived in Germany in November 1903. Regarding any expansion to the south, the British authorities did not allow for any such advance of missionary work in order to avoid any conflict in the northern Sudan. Yet they allowed missionary work south of Khartoum. The SPM board did not abandon Aswan but seriously considered starting work south of Khartoum in Gallaland in the Blue Nile region (Minutes SPM 01.03.1904:53; Ziemendorff 1903:15).

### **4.2.4 Summary**

The SPM was founded to reach out to the unreached Sudan Belt which was a predominantly animistic region. The geographical outlook was clearly expressed in its name *Sudan Pioneer Mission*. The initial intention was not to be a mission towards Muslims, but its beginning in a

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<sup>89</sup> For a description of the dramatic developments prior to his journey to Germany and an account of his activities during his stay in Germany cf 6.1.10-6.1.12.

Muslim area very naturally led to this shift in its initial development. Reaching the Nubians in the Nile valley was considered a first step in expanding the work towards the south. The letters that SAH wrote during his exploration tour were so encouraging that Kumm wondered whether the time of daybreak in Nubia had come (SP 1900:9). The above mentioned internal and external factors caused the young SPM work to slip into a deep crisis of irritation and disorientation.

### **4.3 New beginning, consolidation and development – phase two (1904-1914)**

Under the leadership of Th Ziemendorff, a new group of missionaries went out including SAH who was the only person that had remained from the beginning and constituted in his person the continuation of the SPM work. The plans to sell the compound in Aswan were abandoned and the plans to send Enderlin and Zimmerlin to southern Sudan (Ziemendorff 1903:12) were postponed.

#### **4.3.1 General developments**

Even before the SPM delegation arrived in Aswan, A Ziemendorff became sick and was treated in the Victoria Hospital in Cairo. Enderlin and Zimmerlin were the first to arrive in Aswan in the beginning of December 1904. Dr Schacht who was offering medical examinations for the poor was waiting for the nurse E Gonnermann who arrived in the beginning of 1905 in Aswan. On January 10, 1905, A Ziemendorff passed away in Alexandria. Th Ziemendorff and his daughter Hanna arrived in Aswan on January 19, 1905. He started German services and Bible studies for tourists. Ziemendorff laid the foundation for the spiritual life of the young and inexperienced team (Held 1925:47).<sup>90</sup> The missionaries put their primary focus on learning the Arabic language, enjoying the competent support of their teacher SAH (Blum-Ernst 1951:18; Unruh 1950:22). Ziemendorff invested part of his time into restoring the relationship between the other missions and the SPM since developments and tensions during the early years had led to mistrust and irritations (Unruh 1950:19).

In Germany, the relationship between the SPM and the other mission organizations improved. This can be seen as a result of Ziemendorff's participation in the Herrnhut Mission Week in 1906 and his establishing personal contacts with other mission representatives. The number of supporters in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary and other countries grew

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<sup>90</sup> Held pays tribute to the significant contribution of Ziemendorff to the development of the SPM especially during the crisis years (1925:47-62).

steadily (Unruh 1950:20). Young men and women applied for mission service with the SPM and were trained appropriately in Wiesbaden.

In October 1906, the SPM Girls' School in Aswan was re-opened with the native teacher Madame Lulu Girgis. When the ophthalmologist Dr W Fröhlich arrived in Aswan in November 1906, the SPM could begin its own medical work. The work in the outpatient clinic grew quickly and Fröhlich had to examine almost one hundred patients daily supported by the nurse E Gonnermann. The need for a hospital became more urgent. The evangelistic work among men, women and children was developed under the leadership of Enderlin. SAH, an all-round worker, helped in the polyclinic, translated for the missionaries, taught them Arabic, received visitors and took part of the village visits (Unruh 1944:7).

The contacts in the surrounding villages led to the beginning of a new station in Daraw in 1907, forty kilometers north of Aswan. A house in the vicinity of the train station was rented. Bible studies were offered and medical outreach visits were organized. Enderlin and SAH moved to Daraw and occupied the house. In 1910, the mission was able to buy a piece of land close to the east side of the Nile. A new house including an outpatient clinic was built in 1912.

In 1909, Enderlin supervised another building project in Aswan. A new building providing room for the church, the school and accommodation for missionaries was built and opened at Christmas 1909. In April 1910, a bookshop and reading room attached to the southern part of the church were opened and put under the administrative leadership of SAH.

The medical work was well received. In addition to the outpatient clinic, a small room was constructed to be able to admit a small number of patients after surgery. A long standing desire of Fröhlich's was the building of a new hospital. Eventually, in 1912, a new twenty-bed hospital was built and inaugurated on January 27, 1913. Beyond the work in Aswan, Fröhlich was eager to visit villages and to connect his medical service with the sharing of the Gospel.

Through contacts in 1910 and medical help for the wife of an influential Muslim in Edfu, the SPM was invited to start work among women in Edfu. In November 1911, L Götte and G Noack started their work among women and girls.<sup>91</sup> They opened a girls' school supported by Madame Luisa. Up to seventy children attended the school. Edfu was the station furthest in the north. Through negotiations with the AM, the SPM agreed not to move further to the north, but to concentrate on the Nubians in Aswan and south of it. The SPM was eager to reach a final comity agreement with the AM in order to establish and maintain a trusting

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<sup>91</sup> It is interesting to note that the three female missionaries in Edfu were asked to study Kunuuzi Nubian for three hours per day (Minutes SPM 12.03.1913:154). It is possible that they were in contact with Nubians who had settled to the Edfu region.

relationship with this leading organization. Therefore the SPM board decided to forward the following written statement to Dr C Watson of the AM (Minutes SPM 17.10.1913:185-186):

“The Committee of the Sudan-Pioneer-Mission has decided to give to the American board the following declaration:

1. The Sudan-Pioneer-Mission has no intention whatever to go further north from Assuan beyond Edfu, because that is the Northern limit of the Nuba population.
2. If at a later date the project of a new mission station at Cairo should be seriously discussed we pledge ourselves that we will restrict our sphere of work to the Nuba population of course not only to the Nuba speaking part of it. Yet at present the plan of such a station in Cairo is not under discussion at all.
3. It is the definite plan of the Sudan-Pioneer-Mission to advance into Dongola as soon as possible probably at the beginning of the next year. That is definitely regarded as the right line of expansion and the genuine work of that mission.
4. All members of the Board have the keenest wish to live on the friendliest terms with the members of the American-Mission.”<sup>92</sup>

### **4.3.2 Work among Nubians**

In this section we will investigate what changes may have occurred in this important phase of the restart. Did the SPM resume its connection with the Nubians? To what extent did it make use of the presence of SAH, the only Nubian believer and evangelist, in presenting the gospel to his people group?

#### **4.3.2.1 SAH's return to Aswan (1904)**

SAH was part of the group of missionaries that came to Egypt in November 1904 to implement the new beginning. As A Ziemendorff became ill in Cairo in the beginning of December, SAH supported the Ziemendorffs and delayed the continuation of his journey to Aswan. Eventually, SAH returned to Aswan before Christmas 1904 and was well received. SAH supported the new team in preparing the property for the new phase of work and continued teaching the new missionaries in Arabic. He also began sharing the Gospel with the waiting patients during the polyclinic hours of Dr Schacht in the beginning of 1905. It is assumed that SAH also had the opportunity to communicate the gospel with fellow Nubians.

#### **4.3.2.2 Maryam and Abbaas return to their father (1905)**

In the beginning of May 1905, Maryam and Abbaas returned to their father SAH. As they wanted to follow the way of their father, they were raised in the Christian faith by their father and the missionaries. Their baptism in the newly built mission church in Aswan on February 6, 1910 can be considered a highlight and great encouragement for the SPM team. The Christian confession of Maryam and Abbaas can be regarded as the continuation of the first

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<sup>92</sup> In the beginning of the twentieth century the term “Nuba” was used interchangeably with “Nubia” because it was derived from the Arabic designation for the region.



fruit which was their father (Hussein 1920:119-120). Both continued faithfully in their Christian life until their deaths.

#### **4.3.2.3 Exploration trips (1905, 1908, 1913)**

Despite all the positive developments in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu, the SPM had not given up plans to advance further south into the Nile valley. Ziemendorff and Enderlin made a trip in March 1905 to Wadi Halfa in order to explore the situation regarding an expansion to the south. The trip was made without SAH. Ziemendorff and Enderlin met K Giffen from the AM in Wadi Halfa to discuss the involvement of the SPM in the southern Sudan. The door still seemed to be closed. No agreement was reached with the other mission organizations that were active in Egypt, such as the CMS and the AM (SP 1905:34-38). The SPM board further considered sending Enderlin to Khartoum and possibly to the Blue Nile area in winter 1905/06 (Minutes SPM 09.10.1905:58; SP 1905:79).<sup>93</sup> In autumn 1908 Enderlin and SAH went to Nubia for seventeen days to explore the attitude of the Nubian people and the possibility to open a new work in Nubia proper. The most extensive exploration trip took place in autumn 1913. For thirty-four days Enderlin and SAH went via Wadi Halfa, Abu Hammed, and Merawi to Dongola. The result was that the beginning of the work in Wadi Halfa was planned for autumn and the purchase of a piece of land in Dongola was considered. E Schaefer and his wife were chosen to begin the work in Nubia proper. The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 did not allow the implementation of this venture (Unruh 1944:9-10).

#### **4.3.2.4 Request for work among Nubians in Cairo (1912)**

As the SPM had made a promising new start and developed in a healthy way, it increasingly gained the trust of the other missions that were active in Egypt. The SPM became known as the “Nubian Mission” (Unruh 1950:23). In 1912 the EGM workers Logan and Swan asked the SPM to consider starting work among the Nubian men that had come to Cairo as migrant workers and had settled there (Hohenlohe 1914:22; Held 1925:65). As they needed a special approach via the Nubian languages, the SPM was considered the most appropriate organization to address this need. For personnel and financial reasons the SPM had to decline this request. In addition, the SPM board wanted to finalize the comity agreement with the AM first.

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<sup>93</sup> This exploration trip did not take place.

#### **4.3.2.5 Bible translation and linguistic work (1908-1914)**

A major and essential contribution to the SPM's work towards the Nubians was SAH's effort to translate the Gospels and most of the New Testament books into Kunuuzi Nubian.<sup>94</sup> The four gospels were eventually published by the BFBS in Berlin in 1912. SAH also started to produce ethnographic texts that Schäfer included in his publications (1917, 1935). Together with Westermann and Enderlin he wrote a Kunuuzi Nubian primer which was published in 1913.

#### **4.2.2.6 Work in Daraw**

When Enderlin and SAH started the new work in Daraw, they discovered that their house that they had rented was close to a Kunuuzi Nubian settlement. Due to construction of the Aswan Dam that was completed in 1902, Nubians had left their home region completely and resettled in and near Daraw (SP 1907:66).

#### **4.2.2.7 Extending the work among Nubians in the Aswan region**

The SPM was constantly concerned with expanding the work among the Nubians, even though the doors to the south still seemed to be closed. Therefore, the SPM board decided to start new medical work in Elephantine Island and in Gharb Aswan in 1913 (Minutes SPM 05.08.1913:169). In addition, the SPM board gave their approval for the establishment of a Nubian school in Koroor, a Nubian village near Aswan Dam on the east side of the Nile on the condition that SAH would take the responsibility for this school (Minutes SPM 30.06.1914:237). Yet neither the medical work among Nubians nor the educational work was ever started.

#### **4.3.3 Factors affecting the development**

For many years the colonial policy in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan hindered any desired advance to the south (Trimingham 1948:29-30). When the permission to start in Wadi Halfa was given, the beginning of World War I thwarted this next step. Another issue that caused some inconvenience was the attempt to come to a comity agreement with the AM regarding the geographical area of ministry. The suggestion by the SPM was forwarded to the AM, but not answered and agreed upon before the beginning of the war. The expansion of the work to the north, the development of the medical work in Aswan, Daraw and the surrounding villages and in Nubia indicated that Aswan had become the center of the SPM work. The

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<sup>94</sup> For more details cf 8.3.2-8.3.12.

initial mobility had partly given way to mission stations that served as islands. The intensive building phase between 1909 and 1912 caused some re-arrangement of staff and bound considerable energy during the given time. Regarding the work among Kunuuzi Nubians, the most distinct progress was made due to the linguistic work of SAH, especially through the translation and publication of the four gospels and the Nubian primer.

#### **4.3.4 Summary**

After the chaotic crisis years of the beginning, the SPM saw a phase of healthy development that was brought to an end by the outbreak of World War I. The SPM had consolidated its work in Aswan and extended its ministries to Daraw and Edfu, north of Aswan. The work among Muslims involved activities among women and girls, educated men, visits in villages, literature, and educational and medical work. After April 1907, the SPM specified for its supporters “Aswan and surrounding and temporary Nubia” as their specific geographical area of work (SP 1907:inside). In its *Principles and Rules* (Grundsätze und Regeln) of 1908, the SPM stated that “its aim and mandate is the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God among Muslims, heathens and native Christians in the countries of the Upper Nile and the Sudan” (Grundsätze 1908:5). The exploration trips through this phase indicated that the hope to proceed to the south was still alive. The journey in autumn 1913 proved to be successful. The opening of a mission station in Wadi Halfa was seriously planned for autumn 1914. The invitation of the EGM to start a work among Nubian men in Cairo indicated that there was an external recognition of the SPM’s field of competence. Although the SPM missionaries had many contacts with Nubians in and around Aswan, Kunuuzi Scripture material had been produced, and Nubian villages had been visited, the focus of the SPM activities was still generally on the whole population of the region. Although the SPM was the only mission that was working among Nubians, it had a broad spectrum of ministries and contacts, so that it was not only working among them.

#### **4.4 The years of World I and beyond – phase three (1914-1924)**

The plans and aspirations of the SPM came to an abrupt halt when the war started in September 1914. The SPM work had developed well during the previous ten years and had received much sympathy and gratefulness from the local population.

#### **4.4.1 General developments**

When World War I began, none of the SPM workers was present in Aswan. Based on past experience, the work was closed during the extremely hot summer period. Thus all the workers were either in Europe, Palestine or Lebanon for holiday or language studies. They tried to negotiate their return to Aswan without success (Held 1925:69-70).

##### **4.4.1.1 Expulsion of missionaries from Egypt and repatriation to Germany**

The German missionaries who were on holiday or undertaking language studies in Lebanon, Karmel and Jerusalem returned to Egypt in the beginning days of World War I. When it became obvious that they would not be allowed to return to Aswan to resume their work, they went to Germany using an Italian cargo ship, escaping internment in Egypt. The missionaries became involved in the home office of the SPM in Wiesbaden or worked in medical and pastoral services in the war affected areas (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:26-27).

##### **4.4.1.2 Continuation of the work in Aswan (1914-1915)**

As Dr Fröhlich was Swiss, he was allowed to return with his family to Aswan on September 16, 1914. The hospital remained initially closed and could not be completely re-opened without nurses. Yet Fröhlich was able to admit a limited number of patients and care for them with the help of his wife. The work in Daraw and Edfu had to be closed and the Egyptian co-workers had to be dismissed. On September 20, 1914 the polyclinic work was restarted. The clinic had thirty to fifty patients daily, some operations weekly and ten patients admitted to hospital. Devotionals were offered for women by A Fröhlich and for men by SAH and Fröhlich in the hospital and polyclinic. Opposition was felt from the Copts as they sided with the British, but Muslims appreciated the services and the relationship with them grew. A Bible study group for men was started and the gospel of Mark was studied (:28).

In September 1915, Fröhlich was ordered by the British authorities to immediately leave Egypt. Fröhlich handed over the mission property to SAH and instructed him regarding his new responsibilities. Fröhlich went to Wiesbaden to work with the famous ophthalmologist Pagenstecher before he later started his own clinic in Herisau, Switzerland (:29).

##### **4.4.1.3 SAH solely responsible for the SPM property (1915-1924)**

SAH remained the only SPM worker for the next nine years and took care of the SPM property which remained unharmed until the return of the missionaries. SAH throughout these years continuously wrote letters in which he reported about his personal circumstances and

the developments and public opinions towards foreigners and the mission (cf SP and Unruh 1944). SAH proved to be a man of faith never giving up the hope for the return of the SPM workers.

Maryam continued the school until 1916 despite strong Coptic opposition. Then the school had to be closed down. Maryam continued as a teacher with the Egypt General Mission in Ismaelia (Unruh 1944:18). In November 1920, she married P A Hamilton and moved with him to Khartoum where he had been sent as the agent of the BFBS.

In 1914, Abbaas started his studies at the Theological Seminary of the AM in Cairo. He proved to be a promising student but due to health problems he was not able to continue. He died from tuberculosis in January 1918 and was buried in Aswan (Hussein 1932:158-163).

On May 21, 1916, SAH married a fourth time. With his wife Brinza who was the niece of Rizk Efendi, a former evangelist of the SPM, he had a number of children (Unruh 1944:18).

SAH's activities during the years of war were very limited. He continued the small bookshop which served as a meeting place leading to deep conversations on faith issues. On house visits he shared the gospel through evangelism and counseling (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:29). In 1919 SAH was appointed an elder of the Coptic Evangelical Church in Aswan and supported the ministry of the church until the work of the SPM started again. His allegiance with the SPM was never in question and had a high priority for him. Personally, SAH was challenged by personal and family health problems, death of family members, difficult economic situation, lack of finances and hunger.

In January 1921, much to his regret, the station in Edfu had to be closed due to the lack of finances. The SPM was not able to pay rent and the salary of the watchman. In an auction the property of the mission and the missionaries came under the hammer (Unruh 1944:37-38). The AM took over the former SPM station.

#### **4.4.1.4 Support of the Swiss friends**

There was a strong relationship between Swiss and German Christians in the work of the SPM. In 1901 Guinness and Kumm visited St Chrischona to recruit workers for the newly founded SPM. In 1904 L Zimmerlin and in 1906 Dr W Fröhlich and his wife joined the work of the SPM. The German missionaries frequently visited the Swiss supporters of the SPM and reported about the developments of the work. L Rubli, who was trained at St Chrischona and a friend and colleague of Zimmerlin and Enderlin, was extremely active in informing and motivating Swiss Christians to support the SPM. The financial support of SAH was

exclusively raised and transferred to Egypt by the Swiss friends of the SPM (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:30; Blum-Ernst 1950:69-70; 1955:48).

#### **4.4.1.5 Years of waiting after World War I (1918-1924)**

After World War I, SAH and the people in Aswan expected the SPM workers return as soon as possible (Unruh 1944:25). Yet there were still years of waiting lying ahead. In 1919, political unrest in Egypt resulted in an anti-western attitude of many Egyptians. In addition to these developments, the British did not consider allowing the SPM as a German mission to return to Aswan. They rather encouraged thoughts of the AM to take over the SPM property. In summer 1923, SAH initiated a petition from the people of Aswan which was addressed to the British government (Hussein 1932: 176-177).

In 1922, the Karmel Mission invited the SPM to send workers to Palestine. This request was initiated by L Rubli who was not only a board member of the SPM but also of the Karmel Mission. Therefore, the Enderlins and C Wolters started their journey to the Middle East on February 26, 1923. On their way to Palestine, they travelled via Port Said and were able to negotiate a visit to Aswan with the English authorities. In March 1923, they visited Aswan which brought sincere joy and much encouragement into the life of SAH who had faithfully guarded the place within the legal limitations. During their time in Aswan, three American missionaries and the public custodian came to inspect the mission's property for their future use. In April, the SPM missionaries went to Akko to start a new work among the population there. Until the middle of 1924, there was almost no hope for the continuation of the SPM work to Upper Egypt. The news from governmental authorities in Cairo and London and from the leaders of the American Mission in Cairo was rather depressing. The only encouraging sign was the petition that was signed by many Nubians requesting the return of the SPM workers. SAH, who led the campaign, most probably wrote the text of the petition himself and sent it to S Zwemer to ask him to translate it into proper English and forward it to the British authorities. Besides Zwemer, it was the CMS missionary Gairdner who probably, together with a fraction of the missionaries of the AM, was in favor of the return. Miraculously, through the intervention of Zwemer and Gairdner, a change of attitude among the missionaries of the AM and negotiations between some SPM board members and the British government in London led to a breakthrough and the SPM was granted the permission to return to Aswan and the property was given back to the mission. On July 19, 1924 the breaking news of the unconditional return of the mission's property to the SPM without any

conditions reached the SPM home office in Wiesbaden (SP 1924:2-6; Unruh 1944:51). The return of the first group of SPM workers was scheduled for November 1924.

## **4.4.2 Work among Nubians (1914-1924)**

During World War I and the years until 1924, the active outreach towards the Nubians came almost to a standstill. The primary stakeholder of the work among the Nubians, SAH, and his son Abbas, maintained some activities.

### **4.4.2.1 Abbaas ministering among Nubians in Cairo**

Abbaas had entered classes at the Theological Seminary of the AM during the years 1914-1917 and proved to be an intelligent student. Due to health reasons, he was not able to complete his studies and graduate from the seminary. Yet during his stay in Cairo, he started to work among his fellow Nubians in his spare time (Unruh 1944:11). He gathered up to 250 people and read the word of God in the Kunuuzi language to them using the gospel translations of his father (SP 1915:64). He visited Nubian doorkeepers and read to them from the gospels in their vernacular (SP 1916:19). He also passed on evangelistic tracts in Arabic that were published by the Nile Mission Press (NMP) (:20). Once he met a Nubian secret believer from the Sudan and encouraged him to openly confess his faith. This Nubian also shared with him that he knew a number of other secret Nubian believers (SP 1917:31). The deteriorating health condition and unexpected death of Abbaas brought this promising beginning to an abrupt end. Abbaas died on January 19, 1918 in Aswan much to the deep inner pain, bereavement and spiritual challenge of SAH.

### **4.4.2.3 SAH's activities among the Nubians**

During the war period SAH did not leave Aswan for other activities towards reaching the Nubians with the gospel. There are no records regarding visits to his home village Abu Hoor or other Nubian villages. It seems that his impact was reduced to contacts with Nubians who came to the bookshop or his home close to the mission's property. During these conversations, SAH, as a gifted evangelist, did not hesitate to argue for the importance and practical meaning of the gospel. SAH's main contribution during this period towards bringing the word of God to the Nubians was in writing tracts in Kunuuzi Nubian and in translating parts of the Old Testament into his mother tongue.

#### **4.4.2.4 New plans for work in Nubia**

After the good news about the permission for the SPM to return to Egypt arrived in Germany, the SPM board decided to resume its work in Upper Egypt and Nubia in its meeting on October 1, 1924. In confirming an earlier decision from March 25, 1914, the board still defined the regions around Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur as their mission field. Westermann was asked to prepare up-to-date information regarding these regions to gain a clear understanding of the field and the task. A merger with the Sudan United Mission that was suggested by Fröhlich was rejected. The SPM expressed a clear preference for cooperation with the AM and suggested that potential emerging churches would be placed under the organizational oversight of the Presbyterian Synod (Minutes SPM 1.10.1924:59-62).

#### **4.4.3 Factors affecting the development**

This phase was essentially influenced by World War I and its consequences. The foreign workers were deported and SAH and his daughter were left behind. Within certain limitations SAH was able to continue some ministry activities. The development of Abbaas during his theological studies at the seminary of the AM in Cairo and his activities among Nubian men in Cairo gave reason for a positive outlook. He was a promising candidate for the SPM, yet he died in January 1918. The Copts took sides with the British and opposed any continuing activities of the SPM. On November 11, 1918, World War I ended with a ceasefire agreement. This was followed by the Treaty of Versailles that terminated the state of war between Germany and the Allied Powers. The treaty was signed on June 28, 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference. Article 438 of the treaty dealt with the future use of the property of German missions.<sup>95</sup> It seemed that the British government was determined to prohibit the return of the SPM on the basis of this article. The AM was ready to take over the SPM property (Unruh 1944:48-49). The property of the SPM was officially placed under the legal responsibility of the Board of Trustees that acted on behalf of the British government. The board was chaired by the AM missionary Kenneth McClenahan. The SPM board declined to voluntarily hand

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<sup>95</sup> The text of Article 438 says: "The Allied and Associated Powers agree that where Christian religious missions were being maintained by German societies or persons in territory belonging to them, or of which the government is entrusted to them in accordance with the present Treaty, the property which these missions or missionary societies possessed, including that of trading societies whose profits were devoted to the support of missions, shall continue to be devoted to missionary purposes. In order to ensure the due execution of this undertaking the Allied and Associated Governments will hand over such property to boards of trustees appointed by or approved by the Governments and composed of persons holding the faith of the Mission whose property is involved. The Allied and Associated Governments, while continuing to maintain full control as to the individuals by whom the Missions are conducted, will safeguard the interests of such Missions. Germany, taking note of the above undertaking, agrees to accept all arrangements made or to be made by the Allied or Associated Government concerned for carrying on the work of the said missions or trading societies and waives all claims on their behalf."



over its property and rejected a suggestion by W Fröhlich to give the property to the AM (Minutes SPM 16.10.1919:272). As an expression of their faith, the board expected that God would provide a new access to the former fields of work in Egypt (Minutes SPM 14.04.1920:178). Nevertheless, the board considered new fields in order to not lose its supporters. Places such as Sumatra, south Russia, China, Indonesia and Eritrea were among those suggested (Minutes SPM 14.04.1920:278-279; 18.05.1921:1-2). Yet a dramatic change of opinion resulted in an unexpected return of the SPM. It proved to be of great benefit that the SPM was closely connected with the missionary community in Egypt and could count on friends such as Zwemer and Gairdner.

#### **4.4.4 Summary**

After years of extensive development in various directions, World War I brought the ministry work to a complete standstill. The work among Nubians was limited to the activities of Abbaas and the ongoing translation work of SAH as he continued the literature ministry in the bookshop. Since the SPM work was dependent on the presence of foreign missionaries, the only native evangelist remained part of the work and acted as steward of the SPM property. After the end of World War I, the inhabitants of Aswan asked for the return of the SPM workers. The years of utter uncertainty and even hopelessness regarding the return of the SPM put an extreme burden on SAH who was already suffering from multiple health problems and death in his family. The unconditional permission to restart the work in Aswan can be regarded as *the* milestone in the history of the SPM during this period. When the SPM board decided on the resumption of the work in Egypt in October 1924, Nubia and the regions around Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur were immediately on the agenda. The initial vision to reach the Nile valley and parts of the Sudan Belt was still alive.

### **4.5 New beginning, consolidation and development of the work – phase four (1924-1939)**

Having been absent for ten years, the SPM was allowed to return to its original field of ministry. After a time of hopelessness and despair, a new beginning was granted. Shortly after the news from London arrived in July 1924, the SPM started to arrange the new start.

#### **4.5.1 General developments**

In June 1924, the SPM, based on the decision in London, considered the resumption of its work and discussed the available personnel (Minutes SPM 23.06.1924:49-50). Already in this

preparatory phase the SPM board had the continuation of the work among Nubians in mind. G von Massenbach, who first joined the SPM in Egypt in 1909, was sent to Berlin to consolidate her Nubian knowledge under the guidance of D Westermann during summer 1924 (:50). Her departure was planned for October, whereas S J and E Enderlin and C Wolters would go from Palestine directly to Egypt. When Enderlin suggested renting the bookshop to an external party, the board refused such an undertaking, considering the literature ministry as a basic part of the missionary work among Muslims. In addition to this, the board suggested re-opening the bookshop, equipping it with literature, and making SAH responsible for it as he was prior to and during World War I (Minutes SPM 23.03.1926:119). This was regarded as the only suitable and meaningful work for him, since his health had suffered severely during the past years (Minutes SPM 15.09.1924:55). When all legal matters regarding the return of the SPM workers and the re-occupation of the stations were settled, the SPM board decided in its meeting on October 1, 1924 to resume the SPM work in Upper Egypt and Nubia (Minutes SPM 01.10.1924:59-60). G von Massenbach boarded an Italian ship from Genua on October 30, 1924 and the Enderlins and C Wolter handed over their work in Akko, Palestine and came to Cairo. Together the four arrived in Aswan on November 4, 1924, a memorable day in the history of the SPM (SP 1925:2-5; Unruh 1944:61-63). In a letter to Enderlin in June 1924, SAH wrote regarding the perspective of a new beginning:

“Do not we have to say, dear brother, that the SPM is about to experience its resurrection? What a victory is this! But it had to be like this! Ten long years was it in the throat of the terrible enemy. But because a living shoot was in it, the enemy was not able to crush it with his teeth and to swallow it. Only in its appearance it seemed fallen into ruin and buried. Now, there is no doubt that the doors that were locked for so long and behind which was great silence will be opened soon and praise and thanks to our Saviour will come out from it and the wonderful Gospel will be preached loudly inside these walls and will be carried throughout the whole of Nubia and beyond (Unruh 1944:58-59).”

#### **4.5.1.1 Consolidation of the work**

The primary task of the missionaries was to prepare the places that had been left unused for many years and to re-build the relationships with locals. Despite the economic crisis in Europe, the SPM was able to continuously send new workers to Upper Egypt. In February 1925, Jakob Rippert came to Aswan as a practical missionary to supervise building projects and maintenance. In November 1925, Hermann Schönberger, Lina Götte and Gertrud Noack followed. The coming of Dr Alfred Kallenbach and Dr Elisabeth Herzfeld in 1926 enabled the SPM to reopen the medical work that was once started by the Swiss Dr W G Fröhlich in 1906 but had to be abandoned in summer 1915. The two teachers, Frieda Pohl (1926) and Christa

Farradsch (1927)<sup>96</sup> restarted the educational work of the SPM on a small scale (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:34-35). In 1928, J and E Enderlin and L Götte went to Daraw to open the work again after it had to be closed down in 1914. For the medical work a doctor from Aswan came once a week (:37). In 1932, the Enderlins left for Cairo to resume a teaching position at the SOS. Between 1930 and 1938, the SPM was able to send fourteen new missionaries to Egypt (:39). In 1933, Rafla Juwakim was employed as an evangelist and continued his work with the mission until 1956 (Juwakim 1955).

#### **4.5.1.2 The expansion of the medical work**

When Dr Kallenbach came to Aswan, he became the director of the hospital. Dr Herzfeld was able to start the medical work in Koschtamne in 1927. Regrettably, Kallenbach had to terminate his work with the mission in 1930 due to health reasons of his wife, and therefore E Herzfeld was called back to Aswan to lead the hospital. During the years 1930-1932, an extension of the hospital in Aswan was built, hosting a new pharmacy, clinic and patient rooms (:34-35, 37).

#### **4.5.1.3 Plans for work among the Kurds in Persia**

An interesting development was introduced by the decision of the SPM board in October 1928 to integrate the proposed work of Dr Schalk among the Kurds in Persia into the mission's work (Minutes SPM 03.10.1928:346-352; Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:35). A supporter of these plans was the evangelist Dr Berg who was employed by the SPM. These considerations meant that the SPM would go beyond its clearly defined traditional geographical boundaries. In an overly-hasty move the name of the mission was changed into Evangelische Muhammedaner-Mission Wiesbaden (EMM) at the end of 1928<sup>97</sup>, since the old name had become inappropriate. The development in Persia and the financial situation in Germany led the board to abandon the premature plans and the organization separated from Dr Berg amicably (Minutes SPM 27.-28.12.1929:95-110).

#### **4.5.1.4 Administrative developments in Germany**

J Held, who had been the home office inspector of the SPM since 1913, handed over his post to George Feller in 1931, who continued until 1936. Margarete Unruh became the home inspector of the SPM in 1937 and held this office until 1959. In 1920, the SPM was able to

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<sup>96</sup> C Farradsch was of Nubian descent and was recommended to the SPM by D Westermann. She was trained as a teacher in Wiesbaden and in contact with the SPM starting in 1915 (Minutes SPM 16.10.1919:263).

<sup>97</sup> The change of name from SPM to EMM was followed by a change of the name for the magazine. After the beginning of 1929 it was called "Der Pionier" (The Pioneer).

buy a spacious house in Walkmühlstraße 8 in Wiesbaden, Germany, to serve as the home office of the mission.

#### **4.5.1.5 Organizational developments in Switzerland**

L Rubli was active in motivating the Swiss supporters for the work of the SPM. In 1923 he created a Swiss branch of the SPM and became a board member of the SPM. In 1928, L Rubli became inspector of the Swiss Branch of the SPM. After 1933, the financial support of the work in Egypt could only be guaranteed via the Swiss branch. The political situation in Germany caused some rupture of the good relationship between the two branches. In October 1935, the Swiss branch became an independent organization and called itself Schweizer Verein für Evangelische Muhammedaner-Mission (SVEMM). This development led to an agreement of cooperation between the Basler Mission, the SVEMM and the SPM in Wiesbaden. Emmanuel Kellerhals acted as field inspector and supervised the work in Egypt with much vision and wisdom. Due to the beginning of World War II, the agreement was terminated on November 10, 1939 and replaced by a new agreement (Blum-Ernst 1950:69-71; Moor 1933).<sup>98</sup>

#### **4.5.2 Work among Nubians (1924-1939)**

On October 1, 1924, the board of the SPM decided to resume the work in Upper Egypt and Nubia (Minutes SPM 01.10.1924:59-60). At the same time, the field that the SPM should occupy was reconsidered. In the meeting, the SPM board followed the suggestion of D Westermann to regard the area of Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur in addition to Upper Egypt and Nubia as the normal field of the SPM which is essentially equivalent to the Nubian language area. By doing so the SPM board confirmed its prior decision of March 25, 1914 (Minutes SPM 25.3.1914:206). At the same time, the Board rejected the suggestion of Fröhlich to merge with the SUM. The reasons for declining this request are historical, geographical, ethnic and religious diversity of the fields. The Board suggested rather a closer cooperation with the American Mission and its Synod of the Nile, since SAH was part of it and future churches that were expected as the result of the SPM work would most probably become part of it (Minutes SPM 01.10.1924:61). D Westermann was asked to survey the literature that was available on Upper Egypt, Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur, in order to produce a map regarding the geographical area and to present his findings so that this may have led to more clarification regarding the extent of the SPM work (:62). The SPM board

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<sup>98</sup> This agreement excluded the EMM completely and lasted until 1947 when Kellerhals resigned from his responsibility (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:36-37).

was also convinced about the importance of Nubian language studies of the missionaries that were to be sent to Upper Egypt and Nubia. As the study of the Nubian language was given a high priority, it was suggested that M Unruh, who was involved in the preparation of the candidates, go for one semester to Berlin to study Nubian with D Westermann. The same was requested of H Schönberger and G Noack (Minutes SPM 15.03.1925:79-81; 17.04.1925:89). D Westermann was asked to suggest guidelines for the study of the Nubian language and reach an agreement with J Enderlin (Minutes SPM 17.04.1925:87).

#### **4.5.2.1 The last years with SAH (1924-1927)**

When the SPM missionaries arrived to Aswan in November 1924, they were met by SAH, the primary stakeholder of the ministry to the Nubians. He was overwhelmed with joy about the return of the missionaries and the new beginning of the work. He was revitalized as he participated in the preparation of the mission property for the work. Nevertheless, SAH had become an old and weak man over the years as he had suffered from various health problems and challenging family situations (SP 1925:2-5; Unruh 1944:60-61). His heart's desire was that he might see some Nubians become followers of Christ before he died (:60-61). In his remaining time, SAH enjoyed a time of unclouded and warm fellowship with the SPM workers. Due to his diminishing strength, his participation in the work became distinctly limited. Nevertheless, he was eager to teach Arabic as well as Nubian to the new staff, like Rippert and Schönberger, the old staff, like Enderlin and Massenbach (:64-65). The SPM workers were convinced that the Nubian language was an essential part of their equipment for the future extension of the work to the south (:64; Held 1925:62-63). SAH also followed carefully the developments of the work. His fellow Nubians increasingly came to visit him in Aswan expressing their trust in him as they asked for advice and support and enjoyed his hospitality. When the polyclinic was restarted again, SAH held devotionals for the patients. In summer 1925, he enjoyed working with G von Massenbach on the Kunuuzi language. In the same year Schäfer came for a visit to Aswan and revised some ethnographic texts with him and Massenbach. When the SPM board in spring 1925 decided to extend the work to the south, SAH participated in an exploration trip with Enderlin in autumn 1925 (Unruh 1944:66). This first attempt to find an appropriate place in which the Nubians would receive the mission without severe reservations was doomed to fail. But he was glad to hear that Enderlin and Rippert were successful in January 1926 when they managed to rent a house in Koshtamne. The work in Koshtamne began with three female missionaries in March 1926. Their focus was on the women and girls as most of the men were working in the cities of Lower Egypt.

SAH himself continued giving language lessons and was busy in dictating the second part of his life story to Schönberger whom he also taught Nubian. In October 1926 his health was further weakened by a dysentery epidemic that circulated in Aswan. Further, SAH suffered from chronic tuberculosis which reduced his strength. In the last weeks of his life, he was eagerly awaiting the arrival of *aleen ishinbul* (the messenger of truth), the motorboat that Rippert had constructed and built in Haifa, Palestine. SAH had given the boat a Nubian name and wanted to include some comments on the boat in his biography after its arrival. When the boat finally reached Aswan on March 5, 1927, SAH was too weak to look at it. He passed away on March 8, 1927.

#### **4.5.2.2 Work in Koshtamne (1926-1934)**

Although the work in Aswan had just begun, in autumn 1925, the SPM board encouraged the establishment of a new station south of Aswan with a focus on work among women. Dakke was considered as a possible location, but this suggestion was met with reservation (Minutes SPM 17.04.1925:87). The board suggested C Wolter and G von Massenbach for work among women, and G Noack as a teacher to establish a school with the support of Massenbach (:88). The board also recognized the need for male missionaries (:89). Enderlin was to be asked to search in Dakke or any other village in the area for an appropriate place and organize the living and work conditions for the female mission station by November 15, 1925 and report immediately to the SPM Board (Minutes SPM 22.08.1925:96; 30.09.1925:100-101). In December 1925 the board discussed the report sent by Enderlin and SAH regarding their exploration trip to the south. Enderlin was asked to deal with the issue of establishing a new station in a quick manner in order to provide information for a decision whether and where the new work could be started (Minutes SPM 10.12.1925:108-109). In the same meeting the board expressed their doubts that the suggestion to start in Allaqi was a wise step. Its geographical location alongside the caravan route to the gold mines was thought to contribute to a certain insecurity of the place (:109). In the meantime Enderlin had found a suitable place in Koshtamne and signed the rental contract on January 21, 1926 (SP 1926:63-64). The board was quite irritated about the fact that Enderlin did not provide the required necessary information beforehand and that he had created facts without the consent of the board. Nevertheless, they approved this step in hindsight (Minutes SPM 09.02.1926:116). In the meeting on April 12, 1926, the SPM Board discussed a memorandum presented by J Held regarding the work in Nubia south of Aswan. The board expressed its opinion that every missionary in Nubia needed to study and master Arabic, as well as Nubian, but time priority

should be given to Arabic. Nevertheless, Nubian was needed for the teaching of children and the preaching, since it was the language of the heart, whereas Arabic was the language of the head. The SPM board decided also to start a station in Wadi Halfa next (Minutes SPM 12.04.1926:123). Regarding the establishment of the station in Koshtamne, the focus was supposed to be on ministry to women and children (:123). It was expected that G Noack would start a small elementary school in Koshtamne and C Wolter would start medical work in the polyclinic supported by the other female missionaries. G von Massenbach was the team leader and would primarily conduct house visits and meetings for women (:124-125). The work in Koshtamne began in March 1926. The availability of the motorboat “aleen ishinbul” made the trips to and from Koshtamne much easier. The beginning in Koshtamne marked the first step of the extension of the SPM work among Nubians to the south. After initial hesitation, the trust of the population in the missionaries grew. E Herzfeld was able to establish the medical work in Koshtamne in 1927. The work in Koshtamne was characterized by constant personnel vacancies therefore the station was only temporarily occupied. In 1930 Herzfeld had to return to Aswan to take over the lead of the medical work, since Kallenbach was leaving for Europe. When the news began to spread that the government had planned a second heightening of the Aswan Dam, the Nubians became insecure regarding their future location. The station Koshtamne was occupied for the last time from the beginning of the year 1934 until Easter by Ch Weinmann and G von Massenbach. People were open to hearing the Christian message and trusted in their medical service. People came from near and far and brought their sick, sometimes fully occupying the boats with those seeking medical service. The missionaries were also called to visit the sick in various villages, such as Jebel Hayati, Kubbaan, Girsche, Dakke and Hanjari. The visits were combined with a polyclinic and sharing simple Jesus stories (P 1935:91-92). Following the completion of the second heightening of the Aswan Dam, the house in which the mission’s clinic was located, was flooded by the rising waters. The house had to be vacated in April 1934. With the leaving of the rented house in Koshtamne, the first period of a missionary presence in Nubia between 1926 and 1934 came to an end.

#### **4.5.2.3 Work in Gerf Hiseen (1935-1939)**

On January 11, 1935, according to the mandate of the EMM board, G Noack and H Gerhardt travelled to Nubia by sailing boat in order to explore the region and look for a new suitable place for the work in Nubia. They visited many places and were received with a positive attitude, reflecting the trust that the female missionaries were able to build during their

ministry in Koshtamne. A government regulation forbade the settlement of non-Nubians in Nubia, even of Egyptians under the slogan “Nubia for the Nubians”. Although a contract for a new house in Koshtamne had already been signed, the mayor intervened and cancelled it due to a rebuke he had received about allowing an Egyptian miller to settle in Koshtamne. He tore up the contract and the door in Koshtamne was closed, although the people wanted the new mission station in their village as they regarded the missionaries as part of their community. On their way back, the two women stopped at Gerf Hiseen where they had been warmly welcomed at the beginning of their exploration trip. Nasr Mahmuud Awwadallah, who had built some buildings in Gerf Hiseen, was willing to rent out his “men’s room”, which had to be modified in order to be used as polyclinic, to the missionaries. The room was rented on January 20, 1935. Although the place was not well equipped, the work started well with many people coming from Girsche and Koshtamne. After H Gerhardt returned to Aswan, M Bühler came to join G Noack in Gerf Hiseen (P 1935:47-48). With the outbreak of World War II, the promising work among the Kunuuzi in Gerf Hiseen had to be closed.

#### **4.5.2.4 Work among Nubians in Cairo (1932-1939)**

In this post war phase, the SPM consolidated its work in Aswan and Daraw, opened a missionary station in Koshtamne, and began a ministry among Nubian men in Cairo. In 1912, the SPM had already been invited by the EGM to start a ministry among the Nubians in Cairo (Hohenlohe 1914:22), but due to different plans, lack of personnel and finances the SPM had to decline this invitation.

During World War I, Abbaas, the son of SAH, started a promising ministry among Nubians in Cairo which could not be continued because of his poor health condition followed by his unexpected early death. Although SAH died in March 1927, the SPM remained fully committed to their work among Nile-Nubians.

S J Enderlin (1878-1940), the senior missionary of the SPM, had been invited by McClenahan (AM) to join the staff at the SOS in 1926 (Minutes SPM 22.09.1926:167-168). However, the SPM board declined the request of the SOS due to the need for Enderlin in the consolidation phase of the SPM after the long years of the mission’s absence. In May 1928, Enderlin and his wife were to Daraw to restart the work that had been discontinued for fourteen years.

After the SPM work in Aswan was blossoming, the first mission station in Nubia proper was started and the station in Daraw had been consolidated. the Enderlins were free to move to Cairo. Enderlin was appointed by the Intermission Council as lecturer for Arabic and



Nubian language and Nubian history at the SOS. In addition, the EMM had asked him to start a club for Nubian men that had settled as migrant laborers in the capital. After their furlough beginning in summer 1931, the Enderlins returned to Upper Egypt and moved to Cairo in May 1932, which had apparently been the twenty-third move in their eventful life (Unruh 1942:71-72).

Enderlin, who was used to living and working in a rural context, experienced the challenge of missionary work in an urban environment. As SPM country director, Enderlin remained responsible for the work in Egypt and Nubia which involved a lot of administrative work. He only occasionally visited Aswan during his years in Cairo. The work among the Nubian men started slowly as a number of administrative problems and finding the right location had to be solved. After the summer break, Enderlin rented a flat and opened the club ministry at Christmas 1932. Yuhanna Shakir, a baptized convert who had come from Aswan to Cairo was given the administrative responsibility for the flat (P 1936:81-93). Enderlin taught at the SOS during daytime and in the late afternoon or evening he was involved in conversations with the Nubians that were coming to the club. Regarding the various responsibilities, soon it became obvious that Enderlin was overburdened. In November 1933, W Höpfner came to Cairo to help Enderlin in the club ministry, although he was still studying Arabic. He had the privilege to be introduced by Enderlin into the work and shared the apartment with Yuhanna Shakir who was working during daytime at the NMP. In the evening, together with Höpfner, he was involved in the work among Nubians (Annual Report EMM 1933:5). In 1934 the club ministry was done by Enderlin and Yuhanna as Höpfner had been given a grant and was sent to the Newman Mission School in Jerusalem to study Arabic. The Nubian club was located on a busy street, next to the Ministry of Islamic Endowment and surrounded by a number of schools and educational institutions. To attract more Nubians, language lessons in French, English, German and Arabic were offered and used as an indirect evangelistic approach as they were able to conduct many religious conversations during these language classes. Young bank employees, Azhar Sheikhs, teachers, and government officials all attended the club in the evening hours and discussing religious issues with Enderlin (P 1935:46-47). Interestingly, the majority of Nubians that took part in these language classes were Fadija Nubians and not Kunuuzi speaking Nubians (P 1935:84-86). In January 1935, W Müller came to help out for some weeks in the club ministry until W Höpfner returned from his language studies in Jerusalem. Müller summarized in the annual SPM report of 1935 that after three years of club ministry, it seemed that the cinema and coffee house were more attractive for Nubians than

the club program (P 1936:81-93). Enderlin expressed repeatedly his request that SPM should purchase a home for a “Nicodemus type of Muslim” (:83).

In 1937, it became obvious that Enderlin was overburdened due to his work at SOS, the cooperation with the different mission agencies, involvement in the German Church in which he had become a board member and being the SPM leader for Egypt and Nubia. The club work was continuously done but it was not able to attract more Nubians than Egyptians. W Müller had developed good contacts with Nubians, but he also saw the urgent need of the street children and expressed the desire to have facilities to take them in (P 1938:66). In 1937, Enderlin spent his summer holiday in Germany at the request of the SPM board. Enderlin was asked to represent the opinion of the field workers during the discussion on the agreement for setting up a working group between the SPM in Wiesbaden, the SPM in Konolfingen and the Basler Mission. The agreement was reached on November 10, 1937 and Emmanuel Kellerhals became the field inspector for the work in Egypt (Unruh 1942:74). In his new responsibility, Kellerhals visited Egypt in the beginning of 1938 where he led the field meeting of all sent workers from the German and Swiss EMM (Unruh 1942:74; P 1939:65-74). Enderlin accompanied Kellerhals for a trip through Nubia up to Wadi Halfa and as they returned they spent one day in Gerf Hiseen (P 1939:65-74). The year 1938 was characterized by a high work load for Enderlin. At the SOS, Enderlin had to step in for two absent professors. In addition to this, he had to continue the club ministry in Abdiin, Cairo, during the summer on his own. His weak health suffered further and his acute heart disease became obvious in autumn 1938. He had to withdraw from his teaching duties at the SOS and terminated his work relationship with the AUC. Müller had supported Enderlin in the club ministry at the beginning of 1938 until Höpfner came to help later that year.

The Enderlins moved to the vicarage of the German Church which became the mission’s center in Cairo. G Noack and M Bühler came from Nubia to visit Nubian women in the capital city whom they knew from Nubia. A highlight was the Christmas celebration in 1938 that was attended by about fifty participants (P 1939:65-74). In 1939, the club ministry had to be closed down due to the beginning of World War II as all missionaries were deported.

#### **4.5.2.5 Linguistic work on the Kunuuzi language (1924-1939)**

The SPM leadership had rightly put an emphasis on the study of the Nubian language. The missionaries were either sent to Berlin to D Westermann or spent time together with SAH to analyze and learn the language from this excellent mother tongue speaker and teacher. G von

Massenbach, who came to Aswan in 1909, became the most prominent student of SAH. After his death, she produced a number of Christian tracts in Kunuuzi (Lauche 2010:10) and published a collection of Kunuuzi folk tales (1931) and a Kunuuzi dictionary with a grammatical introduction (1933) (:8-9). In addition to this, she wrote some articles and books on Nubia and its Christian history (:8).<sup>99</sup> Above all, she was a missionary who did not spare any trouble to visit people and share the good news about Jesus Christ to Nubian girls and women.

Another valuable contribution during this period was produced by G Noack, a teacher, who came to Aswan in 1911 and joined the team that started the work among women and girls in Edfu. While she was in Edfu, she studied Kunuuzi and after her return to Egypt in 1925, she was part of the team that started the work in Koshtamne in 1926. While she was in Germany for her home leave in 1933-1934, she typed the revised handwritten manuscripts of all New Testament books that SAH had translated and that he had left behind (Noack 1934).

### **4.5.3 Factors affecting the development**

The peaceful years from 1924 to 1939 allowed a strong restart and a healthy growth of the work. The SPM board played a distinct role in promoting the study of the Nubian language and the advance of the work into Nubia and to Cairo. The deteriorating health and the subsequent death of SAH meant a great loss for the SPM team. The acceptance and the appreciation of the SPM by the AM and the CMS led to fruitful cooperation in Cairo. This is evidenced by Enderlin's contribution at the SOS. Although financial shortage caused a delay in sending the Enderlins to Cairo and hindered the set up a new station in Wadi Halfa, the SPM saw the biggest number of missionaries sent to Egypt and Nubia ever.

### **4.5.4 Summary**

The SPM was able to uninterruptedly work for fifteen years. The medical, educational and evangelistic work in Aswan developed well. SAH, who had been the only continuum during the whole history of the SPM until his death, left a legacy that was continued by a good number of senior and new missionaries. The outstanding development during this phase was the implementation of two longstanding *desiderata*. First, there was the opening of the first SPM station in the Kunuuzi village Koshtamne and later in Gerf Hiseen. Second, there was the beginning of a ministry among Nubian men in Cairo through the club work. Yet the personnel needs in Aswan and Daraw prevented a more regular and effective occupation of

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<sup>99</sup> For a detailed description cf 9.5.2.

the new stations. Finally, it stands out that for the first time, SPM workers other than SAH produced Bible literature and scholarly publications in the Kunuuzi vernacular.

## **4.6 Years during World War II and beyond – phase five (1939-1947)**

With the beginning of World War II, the stations of the mission were closed and the keys were handed over by Lily Gsell to the Swedish Consul in Cairo in September 1939. The property was faithfully administered by Rafla Juawakim<sup>100</sup>, the last remaining national co-worker and evangelist of the SPM (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:43). In 1942, he was even officially appointed as the legal trustee of the mission's property by the Egyptian authorities (:43). After September 1939 there was no connection and communication between the German mission office and Rafla. Yet the SVEMM was constantly able to resume the contact and communication with Rafla during the absence of expatriate workers and care for his financial support. The agreement between the EMM, the SVEMM and the Basler Mission (BM) expired on November 10, 1939 with the outbreak of World War II. Subsequently, it was replaced by a new agreement between the SVEMM in Konolfingen and the BM excluding the EMM.<sup>101</sup> The SVEMM took over the full missionary and financial responsibility for the work in Egypt and Nubia with the advisory and administrative support of the BM. This agreement remained valid until the resignation of E Kellerhals, the mission director of the BM and field inspector for the work in Egypt in November 1947 (Blum-Ernst 1950:71). In 1940, the board of the SVEMM elected Rev Alfred Blum-Ernst as new home inspector. With the resignation of Kellerhals, he also took over the responsibility as field inspector in Egypt. Blum-Ernst saw his priorities in encouraging the Swiss friends of the mission to continue their support, to reopen the work in Upper Egypt and Nubia and to re-establish the relationship with the EMM as soon as possible. The relationship between Konolfingen and Wiesbaden had never been totally disrupted even during the hardest war time. There was cooperation through mutual literary work and personal visits of former workers who had relatives in Switzerland. Despite the end of the war in 1945, the continued occupation of Germany did not allow the expected mutual visits and the resumption of a working relationship until 1949 (:72). Regarding the communication with the supporters the EMM had to terminate the publication of their magazines. Due to paper rationing, the EMM was obliged to stop the *Wasserquellen* (Springs of water) and the children's publication *Aus dem Lande der Moscheen* (From the land of

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<sup>100</sup> According to the Egyptian culture Rafla Juwakim was respectfully addressed as Rafla Efendi. Efendi is a Turkish title that followed the first name of a person.

<sup>101</sup> The agreement was signed by the SVEMM on March 27, 1940 and by the BM on August 30, 1940.

mosques) in the year 1939. *Der Pionier* (The Pioneer) was stopped by the end of 1939. Four different mission agencies that were working among Muslims cooperated and together issued a journal under the title *Der Mittlere Osten* (The Middle East). After the fourth issue the journal was forbidden in autumn 1940. The communication was reduced to personal communication and a small report that was printed once a year (Unruh 1950:44). Despite the reduced communication in Germany, the SVEMM was able to continue the publication of *Der Pionier* in Switzerland uninterrupted.

#### **4.6.1 Summary**

Unfortunately, the beginning of World War II terminated a blossoming work in progress. The only representative remaining in Egypt of the EMM and the SVEMM was the Egyptian evangelist Rafla Juwakim. He served, as a trustee of the mission's property as SAH did during World War I. He was able to hold public evangelistic meetings and Bible study groups. Occasionally, he visited Nubian contacts in their villages supported them in their various needs and distributed Christian tracts (Rafla 1955:12-13). In the cooperation with the Basler Mission, the SVEMM had become the sole representative of the mission work in Egypt, excluding the EMM. The agreement was terminated in 1947 when E Kellerhals resigned as inspector of the BM.

### **4.7 New era after World War II – phase six (1948-present)**

During the first years after World War II, Egypt was closed for the resumption of the work by the SVEMM and the EMM. The SVEMM therefore took the initiative and instead sent one couple and three female missionaries to North Africa, to Tunis and Algeria.

#### **4.7.1 Recommencing the work in Egypt – initial phase (1948-1950)**

At the end December 1947, the Swiss home and field inspector Rev A Blum-Ernst travelled to Egypt to meet Rafla and to explore the possibility of the SVEMM commencing the mission work in Upper Egypt again. Initially, the problems seemed to be insurmountable. When Blum-Ernst and Rafla arrived in the beginning of January 1948 to start the negotiations about the resumption of the work via the SVEMM, the situation did not look promising. The Egyptian authorities had confiscated the mission's property as reparation payment and assured the Swiss inspector that the property would never again be released for missionary work. In an unexpected change of their initial opinion, the Egyptian authorities agreed to rent the property in Aswan to the SVEMM for one year (Unruh 1950:46).

Due to this surprising turn of events, the SVEMM ordered the missionary Lily Gsell<sup>102</sup> and Katharina Nigg to leave Tunis and travel to Aswan. At the end of January 1948, the two female missionaries arrived in Aswan, occupied the mission house again, cleaned the property and established the first contacts (Blum-Ernst 1950:73). Twice a week they offered needlework classes for girls and told them Bible stories. Through the classes they reached about seventy girls weekly (Newsletter EMM March 1949). Even before the first year of the lease had expired, all of a sudden, all property of the mission was left to the SVEMM for free use, on the condition that they occupy the stations and resume the missionary work as soon as possible (Unruh 1950:46). However, the work in Daraw and Gerf Hiseen was not included in the agreement (Newsletter EMM July 1948).

In March 1949, Erich Schaffner, an engineer<sup>103</sup>, and his wife Gretli, a pharmacist, arrived in Aswan to join the two nurses. In September Gsell and Nigg moved to Daraw to resume the work there after almost ten years of standstill. At the end of 1949, Rösli Kirchhofer<sup>104</sup> and in the beginning of 1950 Olga Brunner came to Aswan to enlarge the team. At this point, all six missionaries were Swiss since it was not yet possible to obtain entry visas for German citizens (Blum-Ernst 1950:73). In autumn 1949, Blum-Ernst and Müller from the SVEMM came to Wiesbaden to reconnect with the EMM, asking for personnel and expressing their hope of a renewed trustful relationship and cooperation between the two organizations as existed prior to the war (Newsletter EMM November 1949:6-7).

As the Swiss physician, Dr Sigrist had withdrawn his application, the mission hospital was in need of a doctor who could resume the medical work and restart the hospital. Eventually, through the intense efforts of the SVEMM, it became possible to obtain an entrance visa for E Herzfeld.<sup>105</sup> When the sixty year old physician was informed that she was allowed to return to Egypt, she did not hesitate to follow the call to Aswan. Working in the Martin-Luther Hospital in Berlin-Zehlendorf, she was able to hand over her work within eight days and travelled to Wiesbaden, ready to return to her former field of ministry (Unruh 1966:4). The new beginning was arduous since it meant restoring and renovating the rooms and purchasing new instruments, which was difficult and took a lot of time, energy and money. As the EMM was not yet in the position to transfer foreign currency to Egypt, the

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<sup>102</sup> Lily Gsell had already been working with the SPM in Aswan prior to World War II from 1936-1939.

<sup>103</sup> Erich Schaffner studied for two years at the Bible School in Beatenberg, Switzerland and became the team leader of the team in Aswan until he left in 1962 when he was called by the SVENM to establish a new work in Eritrea.

<sup>104</sup> Kirchhofer returned to Switzerland in 1952. She wrote a small booklet describing Egypt and the places of ministry in Upper Egypt and Nubia (1953).

<sup>105</sup> Herzfeld had been invited by the AM to join their medical work in Assiut already in 1949, but they were not able to provide her with a visa (Newsletter EMM March 1949:6).

whole burden lay on the SVEMM. But in terms of personnel, the EMM was able at the end of 1950 and in the beginning of 1951 to send the experienced nurses M Bühler and H Gerhardt to Aswan (Unruh 1955:39-40). In the same year C Peters was seconded from the EGM to join the work in Aswan.

In Germany, M Unruh had been the home inspector of the EMM since 1937. She held the office until 1959, when she was able to hand over the responsibility to Rev W Höpfner, who had been a missionary of the EMM from 1933 to 1939 and pastor of the German Protestant Church in Cairo from 1951 to 1959. In 1948, Rev W Ziemendorff was succeeded by Rev R Bars as chairman of the EMM and held the office until 1970. In Switzerland the SVEMM appointed H Merklin, who formerly was an EMM missionary in Aswan from 1930 to 1939, as home inspector on April 1, 1950 (Blum-Ernst 1950:73). In 1951 he also became the field inspector for the work in Egypt (1955:51).

The work in Aswan and Daraw could be re-established and developed unhindered in this initial phase after World War II, although the question of the mission's property had not yet been solved. Even the military revolution in 1952, did not affect the missionary work. Since 1952 the work of the mission was firmly established in Aswan, Daraw and Dakke, similar to the extent prior to World War II. Only the club work among Nubians in Cairo could not be resumed. H Merklin led the work on the field until his death in 1969 when he was succeeded by W Höpfner. It needs to be recognized that without the leadership of the SVEMM through the critical years during and after World War II, the work would have come to an end. The Swiss friends had sacrificed a lot financially to maintain and rebuild the work. Only gradually the German supporters were able to increasingly share the financial burden with them and send new workers to Egypt (Unruh 1955:40). Since the name *Evangelische Mohammedaner-Mission* caused considerable annoyance in Egypt and was misleading in Germany as if the organization would invite people to Islam, the SVEMM and the EMM agreed together at the end of 1953 to choose a new name that could be used without sensitivities in Egypt, Switzerland and Germany from January 1954 (:41-42; Newsletter EMM December 1953:2). The two organizations were called *Evangelische Mission in Oberägypten* (Evangelical Mission in Upper Egypt). At the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the SPM and its successor organizations in Switzerland and Germany, Unruh states very boldly that despite all the uncertainties of the future the mandate to reach out to the "neglected millions in the Sudan" has not yet been fulfilled nor taken away from the mission (1950:47). She soberly recognized the fact that after eighty years of extensive missionary work by various mission agencies in Egypt no more than 300 Muslims had become

Christians. She continued in highlighting the challenge of 315 million Muslims that constituted one eighth of the world population and still needed to hear the gospel. According to her, the EMM was still committed to its work among Muslims (:47-48).

#### **4.7.2 New developments – consolidation phase (1948-1950)**

During the next fifteen years the work in Aswan developed well. The staff in the hospital was increased and the facilities, especially for the medical service, were improved. Dr Georg Trüb, who was working in Aswan from 1952-1954, was denied his work permit and had to leave Egypt. He continued his ministry with the Swiss mission in Omdurman, the Sudan, until 1979 (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:47). In 1956, Dr E Schmitt came to Egypt and took over the responsibility for the hospital after she had passed the Egyptian medical exam in summer 1957 (:47). From 1959-1960 a new home for the missionaries and a new hospital were built (:55). The hospital met governmental requirements and could host fifty inpatients. The laboratory and the pharmacy complemented the service of the physicians. An increasing number of auxiliary nurses was employed. Annually, more than 2,000 patients were admitted to the hospital, and in the polyclinic of the hospital more than a hundred patients were examined daily. More than 90% of the people that were looking for medical help were Muslims. The Gospel was verbally shared with the waiting patients and visitors in front of the clinics and the patients that were admitted to the hospital. In personal conversations or with slide presentations, they were introduced to the Biblical stories. Bible tracts or parts of the Bible were offered to the patients that were literate. An extensive lending library was available for the interested reader and the small bookshop of the mission offered the latest Christian literature in Arabic (ZuD 1975:18-19).

In Daraw the two nurses, L Gsell and K Nigg, offered a polyclinic for four days every week that was usually overcrowded. The word of God was shared with the waiting patients and through visits in the homes of the villages around Daraw. Once a week, a doctor from the Aswan hospital came to examine the patients. In 1973 L Gsell and K Nigg ended their faithful ministry after almost twenty-five years and returned to Switzerland. The work in Daraw was continued by staff coming from Aswan.

#### **4.7.3 Nubia in focus again – exploration (1949-1952)**

Although the concentration during the initial phase of the mission work after World War II was clearly on the re-establishment of the ministry in Aswan and Daraw, Nubia was soon in the focus again. The vision and responsibility for this yet unreached people group was still



alive. Already in March 1949, the two nurses L Gsell and K Nigg travelled with the evangelist Rafla Juwakim for ten days to Nubia. They reconnected with the Nubians as they visited Gerf Hiseen and Koshtamne. They were well received and much encouraged to stay on, but the arrival of E and G Schaffner in Aswan obliged them to return (Newsletter EMM November 1949:5-6). On August 28, 1952 H Merklin started his first trip as new field inspector to Egypt. It proved to be of great benefit that Merklin had already been a missionary with the EMM from 1930-1939. He had a sincere concern for the Nubians since he had been familiar with the work in Koshtamne and Gerf Hiseen. In 1931 he had become the team leader for the team in Upper Egypt and Nubia. During the years prior to World War II, he had the privilege to take part in the field conferences under the leadership of the field inspector E Kellerhals. Kellerhals was familiar with the Nubian history (Kellerhals 1941) and church history and with great wisdom and competency he led the team in Upper Egypt and Cairo to keep their focus on reaching the Nubians. In autumn 1952, Merklin accompanied the missionaries A Nuesch, E Behnke and Dr G Trüb to Egypt. After visiting churches and individuals in Lower Egypt, he arrived in Aswan at the end of September spending one month there. Between October 30 and November 12, he travelled together with Schaffner to the Sudan to explore the possibility of future advance of the mission to the south (Newsletter EMM January 1953:5). In Khartoum they met Maryam Hamilton, the daughter of SAH, and her husband Hamilton, who was the director of the Bible Society. The attempt to briefly visit Dongola failed as the English did not grant them travel permit (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:46). As a result of this trip, Merklin suggested the opening of an additional station between Dakke and Dongola. With regret he stated that the mission has been waiting for fifty years in front of the doors of Dongola, and with sober self-criticism he asked whether the mission had kept this goal firmly in focus in all the years past (:5).

#### **4.7.4 Continuation of the linguistic work by Gertrud von Massenbach (1952-1975)**

G von Massenbach was one of the outstanding career missionaries of the SPM. She was a learned woman and came to Aswan first in 1909. Due to World War I, she had to leave Egypt in 1914. When she returned to Aswan after the war at the end of 1924, she immediately resumed her work on the language and worked on a sketch of the Kunuuzi grammar, a dictionary and a collection of Nubian tales. With the beginning of World War II in 1939, G von Massenbach terminated her involvement with the mission. She went back to Posen and

started working with the Protestant Church. In 1945 she had to escape from the advancing Russian troops and settled in Löhne in Westfalia (Lauche 2010:7).

Even in her active retirement she never lost her passion and interest for the Nile-Nubians and their language. Through the mediation of D Westermann, she was given a research grant by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Fellowship). During her six-week research trip in spring 1952, she was asked to travel to Dongola to investigate the relationship between the Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi dialects and to explore whether the Gospel translations of SAH were intelligible and could be used for missionary work in the Dongola region (Massenbach 1952). As for the scholarly outcome of the research trip, Massenbach published a grammatical sketch of the Dongolaawi dialect in 1961, in which she covered the phonology, morphology, syntax, and dialectal differences (Massenbach 1961). One year later, in 1962, another valuable scholarly contribution was published. Massenbach collected forty-three Kunuuzi and forty-three Dongolaawi texts, including a glossary of all words used in the respective texts (1962).

In addition to the Christian tracts that were published prior to World War II,<sup>106</sup> Massenbach was asked by the Scripture Gift Mission to prepare another Bible leaflet in Kunuuzi Nubian which was printed in 1954 by the Nile Mission Press (Lauche 2010:10).

In 1964, she moved to Espelkamp, Westphalia where she spent her twilight years in an old people's home. Yet, she did not retire from her linguistic work on the Kunuuzi language. Whenever her former colleagues had questions regarding the language, she happily served as their reference person. She also produced tape recordings with Kunuuzi Bible stories to support the missionaries in Nubia (:8). It remained her delight to help anyone interested in the language to provide adequate insight and support.<sup>107</sup> G von Massenbach passed away after a rich and fulfilling life of ministry on March 5, 1975 at the age of ninety-two.<sup>108</sup>

#### **4.7.5 Restart of the work among Nubians in Dakke (1951-1963)**

Through various exploration trips to Nubia it became obvious that Gerf Hiseen would not be a suitable location anymore for the resumption of the work in Nubia (Newsletter EMM January 1951:6-7). The situation of the Nubians in this region had changed severely due to consequences of the second heightening of the Aswan Dam in 1933. The water level of the

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<sup>106</sup> For more details of 9.5.2.

<sup>107</sup> This information was obtained from a conversation with Armgard Goo-Grauer who as a student of Ethnology at Freiburg University in the 1960s went several times to Espelkamp to meet with and learn from G von Massenbach.

<sup>108</sup> Biographical data was obtained from the Personnel File of G von Massenbach kept in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden, Germany.

increased lake had forced most of the inhabitants of Gerf Hiseen to move. Through setting up pumping stations the government had provided the means to reclaim and cultivate new land for them in the Dakke region. Therefore the majority of Nubians from Gerf Hiseen remained close to their original home place and settled in Dakke. Interestingly, the village elder of Gerf Hiseen had already secured a house for the “sitaat” (women) in Dakke even before they had arrived, which reflects the positive attitude of the Nubians towards the work of the mission (Unruh 1955:41). This new receptivity was certainly the positive outcome of the sacrificial ministry of the missionaries in Koshtamne and Gerf Hiseen prior to World War II when they were still met with much apprehension, hesitation and inner reservation. The years of absence during World War II have shown that the work of the past was not in vain and that trust was being established in the mission’s work. The Kunuuzi Nubians of the region, as they were much neglected, were longing for the return of the nurses and rejoiced when they finally arrived (Unruh 1955:41). M Bühler, who had been already a missionary with the EMM since 1934, was able to return to Egypt in autumn of 1950. Due to her experience in Gerf Hiseen (1934-1939), she was the most suitable person to prepare the work in Dakke. She had gained a profound insight into the Nubian culture and language and established many contacts with Nubian women and children in the region. Dakke was chosen as suitable for the new station. The village was located on the west side of the Nile, south of Gerf Hiseen and opposite Koshtamne about 125 kilometers south of Aswan. Dakke could be reached with the post steamer that traveled between Shellaal, the harbor of Aswan, and Wadi Halfa. Because it was almost impossible to buy food in Dakke, one had to take food along. From the steamer station, the workers had to take a feluuka (sailing boat) to reach the place of the clinic which is located half way to the next village. The house that was secured for the mission was owned by Hilaal Abu Bakr who was responsible for the distribution of food for the children that attended school in Dakke. The rental contract was signed on November 16, 1951 by Hilaal Abu Bakr and E Schaffner representing the SVEMM and valid from December 1, 1951.<sup>109</sup> In the beginning of December 1951, Schaffner, Rafla, Brunner and Bühler went to Gerf Hiseen to move all belongings of the mission to Dakke and to prepare the new house so that the work could start in January 1952 (Newsletter EMM January 1952:7). Due to personnel needs in

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<sup>109</sup> The property was 400 sqm big and contained a house with six rooms and a big inner yard. In addition to this the mission rented a piece of land (175 sqm) for a clinic and living space for the nurses and their helpers, and to plant vegetables. It was Hilaal's duty to care daily for fresh water and water the plants. The mission was allowed to use the house for the needs of the work and to admit patients. The tenant was allowed to fix sun shades and sanitary facilities and repair the house. The mission had the right to build inside and on top of the house and subtract the costs in equal instalments from the rent. The contract was agreed on for two years with the possibility of extension if not given any notice three months prior to the end of the contract. The monthly rent was 250 Piasters (Property file EMO in Aswan).

Aswan, M Bühler had to start the work on her own with the occasional support of Egyptian auxiliary staff and European nurses who came for a limited period. In October 1952, Merklin visited Dakke for some days. The few days were sufficient for him to understand the challenges of the work situation and the needs regarding the living conditions (Newsletter EMM January 1953:3.5). In the beginning of the work in Dakke, M Bühler was alone most of the time with sometimes an overwhelming work load, all while bearing the scorching heat of the summer months. Patients even from the neighboring villages were brought to her by boat. The station in Dakke was the only mission place on a stretch within 320 kilometers. Therefore it was of importance to strengthen this post. M Bühler and later Maja von Salis and others lived there in the heart of the Nubian population to proclaim the gospel through word and life. As the sick often came from far away, they could be taken up in some of the rooms, which was helpful for sharing the word of God with them in private. Daily, Nubian and Arab children were coming for knitting and some for literacy classes. Evangelism took place through the telling of simple Bible stories, the teaching of children songs, and the listening to Bible stories via grammophone in Arabic. The missionaries tried to use the Kunuuzi language as much as possible when telling them the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son (Newsletter EMM September 1952:7; January 1953:5). The work of the mission was motivated by the love of God for the unreached Nubians and can be regarded as a careful move into the Nubian society that lives in primitive conditions. Although the people expressed their gratefulness for the medical work from time to time, a noticeable resistance against the gospel arose, because the Nubians wanted to be faithful and pious Muslims (Kirchhofer [s n]:31-32). E Herzfeld tried to come as much as possible to Dakke to support M Bühler in her lonely and demanding work. Eventually, Herzfeld was able to hand over the responsibility of the hospital in Aswan to Dr E Schmitt in 1957. After her furlough in 1958, being at the age of sixty-eight, Schmitt was able to join M Bühler leading the medical work until 1964. In the beginning of 1960, they succeeded in renting additional rooms to improve their facilities and medical services (Nachrichten EMO 1960:4-7). When the construction of the High Dam at Aswan was announced and commenced in the late fifties, the Nubians became increasingly aware that their homeland would finally be submerged by the waters of the Nile and thereby lost forever. The irreversible relocation of the Nubians began in October 1963, thus indicating the termination of the work of the mission. E Herzfeld described the last phase during which the news of the relocation filled the old people with fear and was happily welcomed by the youth. Big steamers were pulling barges carrying baggage, cattle and people. One village after the other was evacuated. It was remarkable and noteworthy that a

woman from Abu Hoor, the home village of SAH, was the last patient that was treated by Herzfeld. She was introduced to the missionaries by her father as relative of Girem, the byname of SAH, who had written down the gospels in Nubian. As she stayed for five days in the clinic, parts of the gospel were read to her and she was taught a Nubian prayer song (Herzfeld 1966:28). In December the evacuation of Dakke was scheduled. E von Dessien, D Giese and H Gerhardt and other helpers came to Dakke to help with packing the belongings of the mission. On December 3, the first sailing boat left fully packed for Aswan. The missionaries gathered, celebrated the Lord's Supper and committed the house and ministry to the all-encompassing grace of God. Dessien and Herzfeld visited the mayor in the southern part of Dakke, expressed their gratitude and bade farewell before they returned to Aswan the next day (:28). Another era had come to an end, especially for M Bühler and E Herzfeld who felt obliged to continue the legacy of SAH and who had fully committed their lives to the service of Nubia.

#### **4.7.6 Closed doors in New Nubia (1964)**

After the Nubians had been resettled from Nubia proper south of Aswan to New Nubia around the city of Kom Ombo in 1963-1964, the mission tried to establish a new medical work in the resettlement region. But the local authorities refused the request on the basis that there was no longer any need for medical assistance since the government would establish health units for every three villages in the resettlement scheme in Wadi Kom Ombo. In the meantime Herzfeld went to Daraw to support Gsell and Nigg in their medical and missionary work (Höpfner 1966:1; ZuD 1975:7-8).

#### **4.7.7 Work in Gharb Seheel (1965-1966)**

While the doors in New Nubia among the resettled Nubians remained closed, Herzfeld never stopped serving the Nubians. Although back again in Aswan she started to offer her medical service in Gharb Seheel twice a week. Gharb Seheel was a growing Kunuuzi village which had become the home of Nubians that originated mainly from Bigga and Awwaad Islands and other Nubian villages that were affected by the construction of the Aswan Dam and the High Dam. The village was located on the west side of the Nile, north of the Aswan Dam, west of Seheel Island, which is reflected by its name. The growing relationship with the Nubians in the village and the mutual trust led the mission to rent a house in the village to start permanent work there. Up to five different parties offered their buildings to be used for the health unit which reflected the strong desire to invite the mission into the village. Eventually, the house

owned by Mekki Hasan Ali Awees, a merchant from Koroor on the east side of the Nile, was rented by Rev E von Dessien<sup>110</sup>, representing the mission, on January 1, 1965.<sup>111</sup> In January and February, with the help of Swiss and German volunteers, the place was renovated and modified to serve as polyclinic and home for the missionaries (Herzfeld 1966:29). The new station was to be occupied by Herzfeld and Bühler who had served for many years together in Dakke and who were fully committed to the Nubian people. Already during the renovation process a large number of patients were brought to the new place to be treated. Positive memories regarding former successful treatment in the Aswan mission hospital contributed to a spirit of joy, kindness and expectation. The neighbors willingly organized the much needed natural stones for the generator room which otherwise could not have been obtained from the quarries during the Ramadan season. The missionaries were able to connect easily with children and women. The former liked the Nubian songs they were taught and the latter asked for more Bible stories (:30). After the renovation of the place was completed, one day before the seventy-fifth birthday of E Herzfeld, on March 1, 1965, the polyclinic in Gharb Seheel was inaugurated. For Herzfeld, it was not the inauguration of the new hospital in Aswan in 1961 which had brought much honor and recognition for her ongoing work from the Egyptian government, but the opening of the work in Gharb Seheel that marked the nicest day of her work after World War II (Unruh 1966:4-5). The opening ceremony was attended by E von Dessien, the Swiss and German volunteers and visitors and a good number of the Nubian village community. The festive programme contained a performance of the parable of the Good Samaritan prepared by M Bühler in Kunuuzi Nubian. The work in Gharb Seheel developed in a positive way and was well received by the local population. Due to health restraints that had affected the two missionaries, E Herzfeld<sup>112</sup> and M Bühler<sup>113</sup>, the promising work was only granted to continue for fourteen months. Despite her severe pain Herzfeld did not stop sharing the gospel in love, dedication and with patience (Bienert 1966:30). May 4, 1966 marked the last day of work in Gharb Seheel. On this day, Herzfeld examined her last patients who came in great numbers expressing their irritation about her early departure to

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<sup>110</sup> E von Dessien was sent by the EMO to Aswan to succeed Erich Schaffner who was asked by the SENM to start a new ministry in Eritrea. Dessien assumed responsibility, became the team leader in Aswan and the EMO field leader for Egypt. He served in Aswan from 1959-1966 and cared also for the German expatriate community that was involved in the construction of the High Dam and the fertilizer company "Kima".

<sup>111</sup> The original copy of the rental contract is still preserved in the EMO Property File in Aswan. The monthly rent was five Egyptian pounds.

<sup>112</sup> According to D Bachhuber, E Herzfeld suffered from a malignant Grawitz tumor in her kidneys (2002:77 fn 398).

<sup>113</sup> M Bühler had persevered during many years in the heat and loneliness of Old Nubia and was suffering from depression (The information was obtained through a personal conversation of the author with Maja Trüb on November 26, 2014 in Kirchhofen, Switzerland).

Germany and their curiosity regarding her return (:30).<sup>114</sup> Marked by her deteriorating health caused by the severe illness of her kidneys, but with an inner hope to be able to return, Herzfeld together with Bühler left Aswan in May 1966. Herzfeld was admitted to the Alfred-Lechler Hospital in Tübingen. After some improvement and even a short visit to Weildorf, Sieg at the Grauers, she was again admitted to a hospital in Tübingen where she passed away on September 15, 1966.<sup>115</sup> The death of Herzfeld brought an end to a long era. Herzfeld had shaped the medical and missionary work of the SPM (EMM and EMO) during the years 1926 to 1939 and from 1950 until 1966. E Brunner-Traut wrote regarding Herzfeld:

„Alle menschliche Begierde sublimierte Elisabeth Herzfeld zu dem einen Verlangen, ihren Schwestern in Nubien die Frohe Botschaft wiederzuverkünden. In das Land, das Christi Namen vergessen hatte, trug sie – und an ihrer Seite lange Jahre hindurch helfend Schwester Marianne Bühler – in Wort und Liedern aufs neue die biblischen Geschichten. Nicht lehrend und streitend im theologischen Gespräch, sondern schlicht und bildhaft, wie es ihre Hörer zu fassen vermochten. Einer ungezählten Schar half sie unbeirrt und sonder Schwanken dem Leib durch ihre ärztliche Hand, der Seele durch ihren Glauben. ... Mit ihr verliert die Welt nicht nur eine tapfere Frau, nicht allein eine unverdrossene Helferin für die Armen und Kranken in Nubien, mit ihr verlöscht ein fleischgewordenes Zeichen menschlicher Liebe“ (1966:13-14).

With the permanent departure of E Herzfeld and M Bühler from Gharb Seheel in May 1966, the Mission's physical presence inside the Nubian community that once started in Gizaira, Koshtamne, Gerf Hiseen and Dakke came to a close. Nevertheless, the close relationship with the Nubians did not stop since they continued to come to the Aswan hospital and were visited by the missionaries in their villages around Aswan and in their new locations in New Nubia.

## 4.8 Summary

The SPM became, through its founders Guinness and Kumm, part of the interdenominational faith missions that were driven by the desire to reach the unreached areas of this world. The Sudan Belt was one of the least reached regions in Africa. As the political situation in northern Sudan improved at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, there were high hopes to reach the sub-Saharan Sudan Belt via the Nile route. Aswan was chosen as a starting location. The target region of the SPM was the eastern Sudan with its hundreds of unreached tribal groups. It was only natural that the Arabs, Bishariyyiin and Nubians in the immediate vicinity in and around Aswan came into view.

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<sup>114</sup> Due to the sickness of M Bühler, Anneliese Bienert went for the two last days to Gharb Seheel to support Herzfeld in arranging the house and the clinic for the holiday period. She vividly describes the last clinic day in Gharb Seheel (1966:30-32).

<sup>115</sup> The EMO journal number 5, 1966 was completely dedicated to her life and work and then published as a separate booklet by the EMO under the title: *Dr med Elisabeth Herzfeld. Das Kreuz am Rande der Wüste* in 1966 and 1972.

The exploration trip that immediately followed the founding of the SPM in 1900 served the primary purpose to receive precise information if and how the Nile valley between Aswan and Dongola could be reached with the gospel. Due to the fact that the British did not allow the opening of mission stations in the Nile valley north of Khartoum, all attempts in the beginning phase to advance to the south failed. Another obstacle was that no comity agreement with the AM could be reached. When during the exploration trip of Enderlin and SAH in autumn 1913, the SPM was given the perspective to start a mission station in Wadi Halfa and later also in Dongola the advance of the SPM to the south seemed imminent. Unfortunately, these plans were thwarted by the beginning of World War I.

During the war the work was basically on a hold and only minimally maintained by SAH. Although the SPM board did not give up its hope to return to Egypt after the war, it began to consider alternative mission fields in Muslim areas in Asia and Africa.

After ten years of involuntary absence from Egypt, the SPM was allowed to return at the end of 1924. Through the friendly intervention of Zwemer and Gairdner, the Board of Trustees in Egypt and the British government finally applied Article 438 of the Treaty of Versailles in favour of the SPM. In addition, the AM eventually abstained from its plan to take over the complete property of the German mission and warmly received the SPM into the international body of mission organizations.

After the first news about a possible return of the SPM to Egypt reached Germany, the SPM board confirmed the Nile valley from Aswan to Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur as its mission field. Nubian language studies were given a high priority. Church planting among Nubians was considered. For the first time in its history, the SPM began missionary work among Kunuuzi Nubians south of Aswan through its presence in Koshtamne (1926-1934) and later Gerf Hiseen (1935-1939). Due to personnel and financial reasons, the work did not advance beyond the Egyptian border into the Sudan. In the same phase, work among Nubian men in Cairo was started (1932-1939). It was again a war that interrupted the growing work of the SPM.

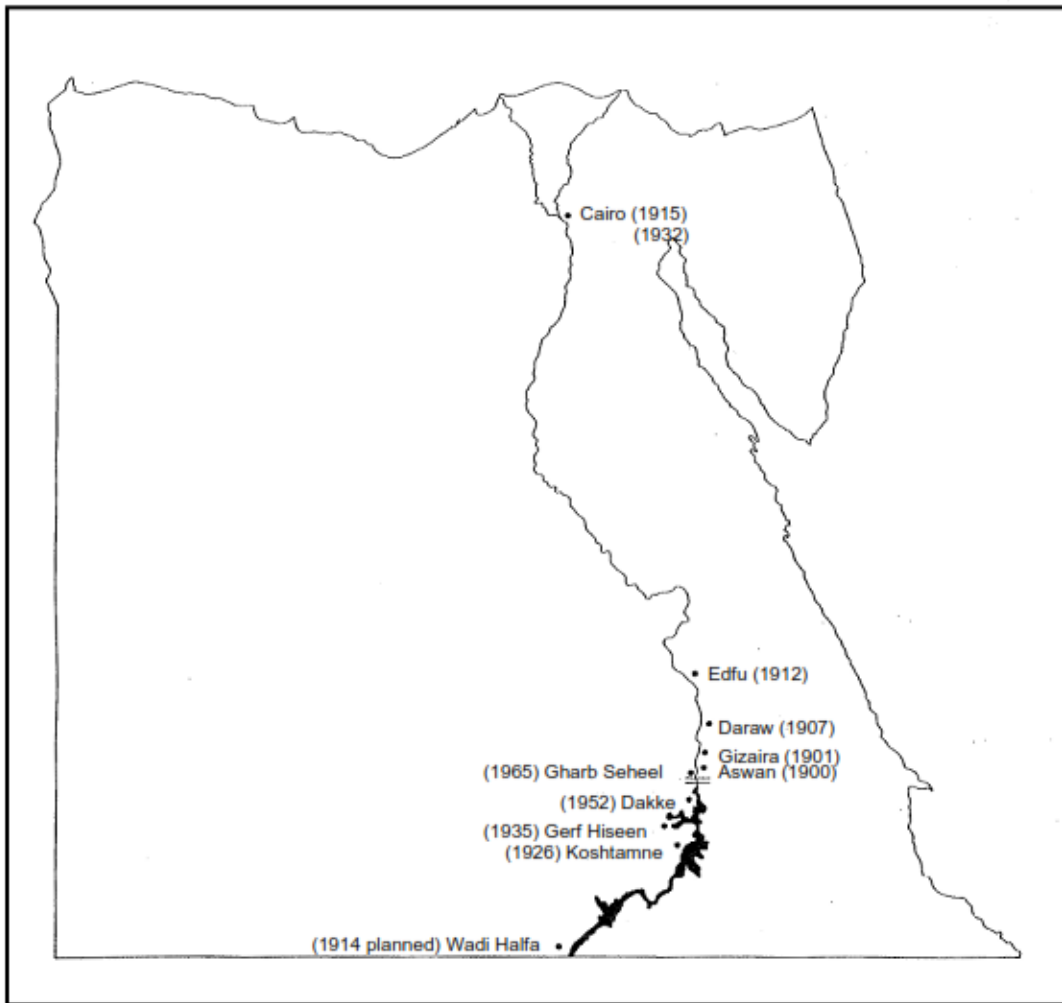
A distinct contribution was made by SAH and G von Massenbach in the linguistic field. Evangelistic material for distribution and diverse tools for language studies were produced.

When in 1935, the Swiss branch of the EMM became independent from the German EMM, the foundation was laid for maintaining the work through the evangelist Rafla Juwakim during World War II and the resumption of the work after the war.



After World War II, the emphasis lay on recommencing the work in Aswan and Daraw first. But soon the EMM started another mission station in the Kunuuzi village of Dakke (1952-1963). Before the rising waters of Lake Nasser reached Dakke, the inhabitants of the region were resettled and the mission station had to be abandoned. G von Massenbach continued her linguistic work and produced scholarly material in the Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi languages. Although the mission tried to start a new station in New Nubia after the completed resettlement of the Nubians, they failed. But through their continuous contacts with Kunuuzi Nubians in Gharb Seheel near the Aswan Dam, Herzfeld and Bühler were able to open another clinic in the village in March 1965. Due to health reasons, they had to terminate their work in May 1966. It seems that with their departure the stakeholders of the Nubian vision had left the field. The work of the EMO in Aswan and Daraw was consolidated and developed. Nubians were still reached with the gospel, but the continuous presence in Nubia had come to an end.

**Map 6: Topography of the SPM ministry among Nubians in Egypt (1900-1966)**



(Lauche 2014)

## 5. The life story of Samu'iil Ali Hiseen prior to his work with the SPM (1863-1900)

In the process of the SPM's development into a mission to the Nile-Nubians, we must pay ample attention to the man who, along with a Coptic couple, became one of the first co-workers of the newly founded work in Aswan: Samu'iil Ali Hiseen (SAH).<sup>116</sup> He developed into a reliable pillar and a strategic key person for the SPM. He played a decisive role in the development and growth of the mission. He became an indispensable motivator and continuous visionary for the work among his own ethnic group, the Kunuuzi Nubians. Without his manifold contributions, the SPM would not have developed its profile and direction with respect to its outreach to the Kunuuzi Nubians. His unusual life story provides clear evidence for his diverse abilities and gifts as well as for his appropriate preparation for the prime calling of his life, which materialized through his work with the SPM. The thirty-seven years prior to his joining the SPM in 1900 were the most unusual years of preparation for his vocation. His upbringing in Nubia, Upper and Lower Egypt, school education in Switzerland, decision for Christ, theological training in England, studies in Beirut, interim period in England and Switzerland, return to Cairo, quiet life in the context of his Nubian family and society, participation in the war against the Mahdis, and work with the Egyptian Postal Service in the Aswan region prepared him in a unique way for becoming a main stakeholder in the work of the early SPM.

H G Guinness, the founder of the East London Training Institute (ELTI), a great visionary for the unreached Sudan Belt and a former teacher of SAH, saw the potential in him when he wrote, after meeting his former student in Aswan in 1900, "Only Ali Hiseen answered to the sort of man we needed" (Guinness 1900:2). In his booklet on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the SPM, Held commented that the beginnings of the SPM could be compared with a typical African birth, since the exact date of birth was not known.<sup>117</sup> SAH was described as a gift that was given to the newly born child and put in its cradle. He was truly a gift that other agencies could have been jealous of (Held 1925:6).<sup>118</sup> SAH's

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<sup>116</sup> The spelling of Samu'iil's full name represents the Nubianized version, i.e. the way it was actually pronounced. In the text of this research his name is represented simply by the initials of his first three names: SAH.

<sup>117</sup> „..., aber nach Gottes Führung sollte es die Geburtsstunde der ersten deutschen Muhammedanermision werden, eine echt afrikanische Geburt, bei der man das Datum nicht anzugeben vermag“ (Held 1925:6).

<sup>118</sup> „Eine Gabe freilich legte Gott dem neugeborenen Kindlein mit in die Wiege, um die manche andre Missionsgesellschaft es hätte beneiden können, das war ein eingeborener Gehilfe, Samuel Ali Hussein, ...“ (:6).

preparation for his ministry with the SPM can be well explained as “God’s long-hidden work” (Unruh 1950:11; 1955:6).<sup>119</sup>

The life and work of SAH will be dealt with in four separate but related chapters. First, we will present his complete life story and survey the various phases of his life prior to his becoming an evangelist with the SPM (1863-1900). Second, we will continue to describe his biography that is shaped by his long-lasting involvement with the SPM until his death (1900-1927). Third, we will highlight his manifold contributions within the framework of the overall ministry of the SPM and his distinct contribution to its development. Fourth, SAH's outstanding achievement in the linguistic field will be comprehensively presented for the first time.

In this chapter we will first describe the available and accessible source material and then present the various phases of SAH’s biography prior to his joining the SPM (1863-1900). The detailed analysis of these stages is intended to increase our understanding of this pre-ministry period and how it affected and shaped his manifold activities and work with the SPM until his death in 1927.

## **5.1 Source material on SAH’s life**

We are in the fortunate position that SAH left us with a satisfactory source basis, which was complemented by SPM workers and scholars who were closely related to him.

### **5.1.1 Primary sources**

SAH wrote a good number of letters and accounts in English to the home office of the SPM in Wiesbaden, Germany. The original manuscripts are kept in the EMO archive. Selectively, the material has been published in the magazine of the SPM, *Der Sudan Pionier* (1900-1927) and by Unruh (1944:11-63).

The minutes of the SPM board meetings provide useful, however sporadic, information about the life and work of SAH. The original minutes are handwritten and preserved in continuous order in three separate minute’s books in the EMO archive.<sup>120</sup>

Another valuable source regarding the life and activities of SAH are the annual reports of the SPM that were published in *Der Sudan Pionier*, the mission's magazine.

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<sup>119</sup> „Folge eines langjährigen, verborgenen Handelns Gottes.“ (Unruh 1950:11; 1955:6).

<sup>120</sup> The minutes of the SPM board and the executive group (German: Arbeitsausschuss) are now available in digital form for the years 1900-1928 thanks to the untiring efforts of Ms Evmarie Hoppe, secretary of the EMO since 1989.

SAH was repeatedly asked to provide a written account of his life story.<sup>121</sup> The readers he had in mind were the friends and supporters of the SPM. He wrote the original manuscript of part one of his autobiography in English, most likely in 1910 (Hussein 1910). This version was translated by A von Zitzewitz into German prior to World War I, but eventually published only in 1920 (Hussein 1920), republished in 1932 (Hussein 1932), together with part two of his biography as well as in 1942 (Hussein 1942).<sup>122</sup> Part two of his biography was written in 1926 in Kunuuzi Nubian<sup>123</sup>, translated into German by H Schönberger in 1927<sup>124</sup> and published in 1932 (Hussein 1932) together with part one. The German Egyptologist H Schäfer began his cooperation with SAH during the first Berlin Expedition in 1908-09. After his return to Germany in 1909, he asked SAH to correspond with him in the Kunuuzi Nubian vernacular. SAH agreed to this request and wrote a good number of letters and post cards, starting in May 1909 until January 1912. Schäfer included these letters in his collection of Kunuuzi texts (Schäfer 1917:238-267).<sup>125</sup> In 1944, M Unruh published a collection of SAH's letters to Enderlin, Fröhlich and the SPM during the years 1915-1924 (Unruh 1944:11-63).<sup>126</sup>

### 5.1.2. Secondary sources – popular publications

Guinness had written a story about SAH's youth with the title *Ali's adventure* while SAH was a student at the ELTI in London or at Cliff College in Sheffield (Guinness 1900:1). Unfortunately, the publication is not traceable (Sauer 2005:152 fn 117).

In his visionary article about the ministry in Nubia, Guinness explained and argued why SAH was the right man to evangelize Nubia and that he was the sort of man who was needed by the SPM (Guinness 1900:1-5). This unpublished and undated paper was certainly

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<sup>121</sup> He did not explicitly relate who encouraged him to write his life story. Most likely he was stimulated by his SPM fellow workers, especially Enderlin, or by the SPM leadership. It is also possible it was a result of a request by the friends and supporters of the SPM.

<sup>122</sup> Feller points us to an interesting piece of information, namely that part one of SAH's autobiography had been translated into Swahili and was distributed in East Africa prior to the end of 1931 (Feller 1932:4). It is E Dammann (1980:12 fn 19) who provides the publication details without giving the exact year of publication. According to his information, the life story of SAH was summarized and published as no 12 in a series of biographies in Swahili under the title *Vitabu vya Barazani* by the Usambara Agentur, Lwandai. Jared Oginga adds that the title of the series "Vitabu vya Barazani" literally means "Books of the public places". "Baraza" is a public gathering where matters of public interest regarding the community are discussed. I am indebted to Jared Oginga for this information (Email to the author on 14.05.2014).

<sup>123</sup> The Nubian manuscript was written by SAH in six copy books and comprised of 360 pages (book 1: p 1-60; book 2: p 61-120; book 3: 121-180; book 4: 181-242; book 5: 243-302; book 6: 303-360). The typed Nubian script of this text was produced by H Schönberger or G Noack and comprised of 86 pages.

<sup>124</sup> The typed German manuscript is dated October 28, 1927. It is possible that this is the date on which H Schönberger finished this manuscript in Aswan.

<sup>125</sup> The original letters are preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden, Germany.

<sup>126</sup> The original letters are preserved in the EMO archive.

written in 1900 since Guinness referred to an earlier visit to Aswan in the same year (:1). It seems that the paper is not complete and part of it has been lost.

Beginning in October 1900 the newly founded SPM issued its own magazine under the title *Sudan-Pionier-Mission*. The theme of its second issue in November 1900 was “Tagesanbruch in Nubien” (Daybreak in Nubia). Almost the entire issue was based on Guinness’ article mentioned above and translated into German for the friends of the SPM (SPM 1900:9-17). It is likely that Kumm, who had received SAH’s reports with the news of his colportage and exploration journey to Nubia in 1900 (Guinness 1900:2), had made them available to Guinness. Then, based on Guinness’ article, Kumm wrote the German text for the SPM magazine. This would explain why Guinness had access to the letters. It would further explain why the author of the article used SAH’s name as Guinness had done it in his article. Instead of using the name that SAH had chosen at his baptism, which is Samuel, only his father’s and grandfather’s name were used to refer to him. This is another proof of the dependency of the author on Guinness’ text.<sup>127</sup>

J Held (1925:3) acknowledged the great value of a document from Princess Anna-Luise zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen which summarizes the early SPM history (Hohenlohe 1914). The Princess made ample reference to SAH as she drew her knowledge heavily from the minutes of the SPM board and filled in from her memory as she was an eyewitness of the early years of the SPM.<sup>128</sup>

The German Egyptologist, H Schäfer, started to work with SAH in 1908 and developed a scholarly and personal work relationship that was characterized by mutual trust, respect and appreciation. In 1911, Schäfer invited SAH for the final revision of the translated gospel texts into Kunuuzi to Berlin. The relationship suffered through World War I as communication was interrupted. In spring 1925 Schäfer came to visit Aswan for the last time prior to SAH’s death. Schäfer’s contribution to making the amazing life story of SAH publicly known was possible through his access to three sources. First, the SPM provided Schäfer with a summary of the then still unpublished manuscript of the first part of SAH’s biography, which was fully published in 1920 (Schäfer 1917:17). Thus, Schäfer included a summary of SAH’s life in his *Nubische Texte* (:32-37), which amounted to the first published biographical sketch of SAH’s life. Second, thanks to his cooperation with SAH, Schäfer was in a position to provide additional and valuable complementary information on SAH’s life (:11-19,268; 1918/19:256-264). Third, as Schäfer was collecting language data from SAH, he

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<sup>127</sup> The name should have been at least Muhammed Ali Hiseen, but even more preferable Samuel Ali Hiseen.

<sup>128</sup> The unpublished manuscript, which comprises twenty-six pages (1900-1904: p 1-15 and 1904-1914: p 16-26), is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden, Germany.

also included biographical details regarding his Nubian origin and the translation process (1917:38-46,208-267).

In his collection of articles under the title *Missionsbilder* published in 1926, Fröhlich included one account of SAH, which was originally written in autumn 1922. In the first part of his article, Fröhlich summarizes the life of SAH prior to his first encounter with him. The second part is a summary of their collaboration between 1906 and 1915 (Fröhlich 1926).

References to the life of SAH have been made by a number of his co-workers and students, such as S J Enderlin, G von Massenbach, J Rippert, M Unruh, and E Herzfeld in the publications of the SPM.

Over the last century, the SPM and later the EMM and the EMO produced a few booklets to commemorate various jubilees of the mission. In each of these small historical publications, reference is made to the importance of the life and ministry of SAH by Held (1925:6-7), Unruh (1950:11-13); Unruh (1955:11-13); Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger (1985:9,12,22-23). On the occasion of the centenary of the EMO in 2000, G Lauche wrote a four page leaflet on the life of SAH (Lauche 2000). The leaflet was part of a series of six pamphlets on the history of the mission.

E Troeger, a former EMO missionary in Aswan (1966-1975) and General Secretary of the EMO (1975-1998), is presently working on an account of one hundred years of SPM/EMO history. He will also devote part of his research to the life of SAH, based on the above sources.

Popular versions have been published by W Oehler (1953), H Merklin (1955), U Ehrbeck (1984), E Porret (1985), and EMO (1997).

The SPM was very much neglected in the missiological literature of the twentieth century. Even less mention was made of the prominent role of SAH in the early development of the SPM and its work among the Nubians. It was the great German historiographer of Protestant missions, J Richter, who referred to the SPM as an agency that was exclusively devoted to the Nubians from its beginning (Richter 1908, 1910, 1930). In this context he also mentioned SAH (Richter 1930:251-252). In his ground-breaking research in 1992 into the history of faith missions, K Fiedler referred to the SPM and mentioned SAH as well (Fiedler 1992:183.293.328). In an unpublished thesis in 1993, P Moor dealt with the process of the Swiss branch of the SPM becoming independent in 1937 and presented a short summary of SAH's life story (1993:34-35). In his biography of the SPM's co-founder, K Kumm, P J Spartalis referred to SAH in passing (1994:17-19). In his doctoral dissertation, Christof Sauer researched the pre-founding phase and early years of the SPM. So far, Sauer's research is the

only scholarly work that highlights the role of SAH in the founding years of the SPM (2005:147-162) and makes ample reference to SAH regarding other topics under research.

Other short descriptions of SAH's life and linguistic work are given by I Hoffmann (1986) and G Lauche (2002a, 2002b).

The only contribution regarding the biography of SAH in Arabic was provided by the Kunuuzi Nubian Muhammad Mahgoub in his book *Abu Hoor baladna* (Abu Hoor, our village). Mahgoub belongs to the Abu Hoor community that lives in Suez, is interested in Nubian history and has collected a version of SAH's life story based on oral history. His presentation contradicts considerably with SAH's own account (Mahgoub 2000:107-108).

## **5.2 SAH's life story prior to work with the SPM**

In this section the unusual and exciting life story of SAH will be presented on the basis of SAH's own recollections (Hussein 1910; 1920; 1932).

### **5.2.1 Childhood in Egypt**

SAH was born in Nubia, spent his early years in his home villages, moved with his grandmother to Upper Egypt and then escaped to Lower Egypt where he spent several years in different locations.

#### **5.2.1.1 Names used during his lifetime**

In his autobiography, SAH calls himself Muhammed ibn Ali ibn Hussein ibn Hassan ibn Nassar referring to his male ancestors (Hussein 1920:7).<sup>129</sup> But it seems that he gives the full and correct version of his name in the text that he wrote for Schäfer in which he explains the Nubian land and its tribal divisions. In this version he gives the following sequence of ancestors: Ali, Hiseen, Himmed, Hasan, Nassar (Schäfer 1917:42). According to this sequence of names, SAH has skipped his great grandfather's name in his published autobiography.

SAH was also called Himmed by his close Nubian relatives, which is the Nubianized version of the full Arabic name Muhammed. It is also possible that this name was used in memory of his great grandfather.

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<sup>129</sup> Schäfer obviously had received a draft of SAH's autobiography in which the latter had linked the proper names with the Arabic word "ben" for son, which in the Classical Arabic is "ibn" (Schäfer 1917:32 fn1). "Ben" is the spoken version of "ibn", but neither form is usually used in Egypt or Nubia when a reference to a person's proper name is made. In this draft version SAH had skipped his grandfather's and his great grandfather's name.



On the occasion of his baptism in Switzerland in 1875, SAH chose to replace his first name Muhammed with Samuel, which remained his first name in his Christian work context until he died<sup>130</sup>. His Muslim name Muhammed remained in use officially as well as by his relatives.

Additionally, SAH was later called Girem or Himméd Girem by his Kunuuzi Nubian compatriots (Mahgoub 2000:107), which might have been derived from the English adjective “German” since he was associated and working with the German SPM and the medical work that became to be known as “al-Germaniyya” among the Nubians and people of Aswan.<sup>131</sup>

### **5.2.1.2 Place of birth and origins**

SAH was born in 1863 in the small Kunuuzi Nubian hamlet of Fichchikol in Lower Nubia (Hussein 1920:8). Fichchikol was part of a larger unit, the district or village of Abu Hoor, the fifth village south of Shellal, the harbour village at Aswan. Abu Hoor was comprised of twenty-three hamlets<sup>132</sup> on the west and on the east side of the Nile. Fichchikol was located at the southern end of Abu Hoor on the east bank of the river (:8). The inhabitants belonged to six different tribal families. SAH was part of the Nassar family (Schäfer 1917:41-42,45).<sup>133</sup> The agricultural land covered some seventeen square kilometers (400 Feddan), which were irrigated with the help of thirty-three waterwheels (Arab: saqiya; Kunuuzi: kole) and had about 2,500 date palm trees. The number of inhabitants was 2,030. Abu Hoor was situated about eighty kilometers to the south of Aswan. In referring to the Christian past of Nubia, SAH expressed his regret that the northern part of Nubia embraced Islam at an early stage. Yet he was glad that he grew up in Christian countries before he became immersed in the Islamic religion of his community (Hussein 1910:1; Hussein 1920:8).

### **5.2.1.3 Family and early upbringing**

His recollections of his mother, Amne Hasan Auwad, were rather disappointing. She was already divorced once before she married his father. Being a simple and easy-going man, he was not able to cope with her personality and divorced her during the first six months after SAH's birth. In accordance with oriental habits, Amne returned with Muhammad to her

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<sup>130</sup> The name Samuel was also kept as his proper name on his tombstone, which reads: “Here rests in the Lord the late Samuel Ali Hiseen from Abu Hoor the first-fruit of those that have returned to the Christian religion of his forefathers...”

<sup>131</sup> Mahgoub (2000:107) explains the name as being derived from a German baron by the name Grimm who had allegedly adopted him. Then Mahgoub goes on to explain that the name *al-Germaniyya* for the hospital was allegedly derived from SAH's nickname Gireem in honor of him.

<sup>132</sup> In his biography SAH mentions only twenty-two hamlets (Hussein 1920:8).

<sup>133</sup> It is possible that the name Nassar refers to the Christian past of the Nubians and is derived from the Arabic nassarani or nassara, which means “Christians”.

father's house. Since her father and brother had already died, she had to work very hard to raise her infant son. From his grandmother he later must have learned that Amne was not able to produce enough milk for him due her hard work and, perhaps even worse that, she left him to get married for a third time (:7). His father, Ali Hiseen Hasan, had gone to Cairo and other places in Lower Egypt to earn a living, as many Nubian men of his day did (Schäfer 1917:32). SAH is full of praise for his grandmother, Maryam, whom he describes as loving, tender and kind. As she was able to breastfeed him, he regarded her as his true mother and admired her until her death which occurred only after his return from Europe (Hussein 1910:1; Hussein 1920:7).

#### **5.2.1.4 Childhood in Nubia (Abu Hoor)**

SAH remembered his involvement in agricultural work in order to earn his daily bread during his early childhood. Since he was too young, he did not work at night, but during daytime he sat on a waterwheel and drove the cow that moved the irrigation device. He also guided the water through the small irrigation channels to the various plots of land. Being naked, he enjoyed the warming bosom of his grandmother after sunset and being covered by her garment at night. At the end of the four-month harvest season, he could expect some barley at the value of ten Piasters, but only if the owner of the field was a God-fearing man. SAH referred to a devastating locust plague in the Abu Hoor valley that left the fields without anything green and made the palm trees look like trees during the winter season in Europe (Hussein 1910:2; Hussein 1920:8). It seems that this event took place in 1869, when SAH was six years old (Schäfer 1917:32).<sup>134</sup>

#### **5.2.1.5 Childhood in Upper Egypt (Edfu)**

In order to escape death by starvation, his grandmother felt obliged to leave Abu Hoor in 1869 and move with SAH to Edfu, about 180 kilometers north of his home place and 105 kilometers north of Aswan. In Edfu he was sent to a *kuttaab* (Quran School) to learn the basics of Islam. Maryam, his grandmother, was a good, pious and wise woman and was regarded as a *sheikha*, a holy woman with magic power (Schäfer 1917:33). People came to her for consultation and to receive Islamic folk practices relating to personal or family problems and health issues. After a severe beating by a Quran teacher, SAH refused to continue taking classes. By no means would he continue in the *kuttaab*, but rather preferred to

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<sup>134</sup> In his text for Schäfer (1917:33,139) SAH refers to this event and dates it in the year 1873. This reference contradicts the statement in his biography that at the age of six he had left Nubia for Edfu due to a drought caused by locusts.

commit to hard work. His grandmother agreed and sent him to a farmer. He employed him to frighten the birds away from his fields and drive the cows of his waterwheel (Hussein 1920:9).

#### **5.2.1.6 Childhood in Lower Egypt (Benha, Cairo, Suez, Cairo)**

SAH remained working with the farmer until one of his relatives came from the Sudan, bringing with him a large number of the Sudanese slaves to be sold in Cairo. Slave trade had been allowed and supported since the rule of Muhammad Ali. While the boat known as a *dahabiyya* anchored at Edfu, SAH befriended the Sudanese who were hidden and imprisoned at the bottom of the boat. When he realized that they were willing to hide him among them, he joined them and escaped with them to Cairo without telling his grandmother. Leaving her behind with the worries of a caring woman, he was only concerned with his desire for freedom. When he was discovered as a stowaway, the boat had already reached the final districts before Cairo. The merchants agreed to take him to Cairo and hand him over to his father (:9-10). In joyful anticipation the young boy was looking forward to seeing Cairo and his father, both for the first time. As SAH arrived in Old Cairo he connected with his relatives who helped finding his father. When they learned that he was in Benha, in the Zaqaziq district, about twenty kilometers north of Cairo, one of his close relatives took him by train to Benha. The reunion was an exciting event for the little boy and his father likewise. After an almost sleepless night due to his happiness and joy, Ali Hiseen bought new clothes and red shoes for his only son. But the sweet and happy days soon came to an end. Since his father was busy working in a lemon orchard, SAH was employed by the same landowner to operate the waterwheel for irrigating the trees (:10-12). After a short period, SAH was so bored by his work that he escaped by train to Cairo in order to be free from any limitations. In the capital he was exposed to the “licentiousness, depravity, and immoral amusement of the city life” (:12-14). Through the mediation of an uncle, he found work with a well-off Egyptian family taking care of their three-year-old boy. They fed and clothed him and paid him five Piasters monthly. But after he was severely punished and beaten by the father of the family for neglecting their little son, he escaped the next day (:14-16). As he found other Nubian countrymen that were on their way to Suez on foot, he urgently asked them to allow him to join them. They finally agreed and it took them six days to make their way through the desert to Suez. This took place in 1869, the year when the construction of the Suez Canal was completed (:16). After some relaxing days and meeting one of his uncles for the first time, SAH and a friend were sent to work in an Italian inn to clean and run errands for the owner.

During this time, he very much adopted the Italian way of life and learned their vernacular. “Surrounded by immorality and ungodliness” he was drawn into this destructive pattern of life. He later commented on these days, that “Satan was training and forming us for his army, the army of iniquity” (:17). One day, he and his friend, Abdallah, planned to take some money from the cash box. When the chance came, they took a handful of silver coins each and hid them in their pockets in order to travel by train to Cairo the next day. But they did not know that the Italian owner of the inn had discovered the theft and had called in SAH’s uncle. When the two boys denied the theft after some interrogation, they were dismissed from their job and handed over to SAH’s uncle. His punishment was so severe that the boys made plans to return to Cairo. The lesson learned was summarised by SAH with the saying: “Dishonest gain destroys what is honestly acquired.” Then he continued with Psalm 1:1: “The way of the wicked is perdition” (:18). Without money they were able to make their way by train and boat to Zaqaziq and then by train via Qalyub back to the capital (:18-21). After almost one year of absence from the hated city (:21), he was back again and went to the stables of Muski where some of his fellow Nubians lived. In these days, there were rather few carriages. SAH remembers twelve of them and was attracted by a small carriage drawn by a small, but pretty black pony. With the deep desire to become the *saayis* (groom) for this nice pony, he talked to the slightly older Nubian coachman about being employed. After talking to the owner of the pony, a French lady who was an ophthalmologist working at Qasr al-‘Aini Hospital, he was employed and did his utmost to please her and the coachman. SAH later saw in this new situation as the hidden work of God to prepare him for something that was still to come (:22). He developed a growing love for France and the French language, which he passionately began to learn. His dream to one day visit Paris was substantially nurtured by the promise of the ophthalmologist to take him with her if he would be a good boy. His aspirations and passionate desire could not be shaken by the strong objections of his Nubian friends. He longed for an end to his four years of erratic life (1869-1873) on the streets of Cairo and other cities in the Nile Delta. He was ready to leave for Europe at the first opportunity that would pass his way, and thus he intentionally sought the company of Europeans (:22-23).

There are some biographical components that contributed or even created such an unusual desire in the young SAH to seek proximity to Europeans and a passion to go to Europe. There was his difficult family situation; his mother divorced twice, and his father had left him when he was still a toddler. He grew up with his grandmother, but without siblings. His disappointing experience in the *kuttaab* (Quran School) did not encourage him to be closely attached to Islam and become a serious follower of this religion. Life in Lower Egypt,

Cairo, Benha and Suez had a rather disillusioning impact on his life including the introduction into an immoral and unethical life style. It seems that the value system and the respectful behaviour between the foreigners and from the foreigners towards the nationals created first a hidden and later an open desire to be close to the Europeans. His personal circumstances, challenging childhood and hard and erratic life in the streets of Lower Egypt created his readiness for a new and unusual adventure.

#### **5.2.1.7 Invitation to Paris**

At the age of ten, in April 1873, the turning point in SAH's life had come. He was playing with some boys in a Muski street, when two foreigners approached them around 10 am. When one of the two asked the boys if they wanted to go to Paris<sup>135</sup>, only SAH answered in the affirmative (:24). Since he had happily responded and accepted the offer, he was invited to meet one of the foreigners the next day to discuss the details. The ten year old was unable to sleep the following night because he was so excited and overwhelmed with joy. Early in the morning, he went to the foreigner's home, as agreed. The person he met was the Swiss evangelist Lavanchy from Morges, in the Department Vaud, Switzerland.<sup>136</sup> Lavanchy asked SAH for his father whom SAH had not seen since he had left him in Benha four years before. It required the father's permission to apply for the necessary passport to travel to Europe. SAH asked his friend, the coachman, to pose as his father, offering him money for this support. Since the new passport was only issued in Alexandria, the three travelled together to the Mediterranean city. After many difficulties, they were able to obtain the necessary papers that allowed them to travel (:25-32).

#### **5.2.1.8 Journey to France and Switzerland**

When SAH finally arrived at the steamer, the Messageries Maritimes, he was filled with fear of the unknown future that lay ahead of him. He felt pain when Alexandria disappeared from his sight and became seasick (:32). After some days, Lavanchy and SAH arrived safely in Marseille after having passed Naples, Italy (:32-36). In the French city of Marseille by the

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<sup>135</sup> Theodor Necker (ca. 1830-1881), a Swiss industrialist from Geneva, had commissioned the evangelist Lavanchy to bring a Muslim boy from Egypt to Switzerland. The hope was that in due course through Christian education he would become a Christian and later on serve as a missionary to his people. Interestingly, none of the many letters written by Necker and kept in the family archives in Satigny make mention of SAH. Necker was involved in the revival movement in Geneva and was a co-founder of the Société Évangélique. According to a speech on the oneness of the human race that he delivered in England it is obvious that Necker strongly repudiated any superiority of the white race. He fought for justice and fairness towards other people (Sauer 2005:148, fn 98 based on his correspondence with Catherine Schneider).

<sup>136</sup> Sauer (2005:148, fn 99) makes reference that Lavanchy, a French Swiss evangelist, had asked the pastor of the German church, Rev Trautvetter, for permission to officiate services in the French language in the German church. In December 1872 the first service in French was held by the evangelist.

Mediterranean Sea, they spent about five days (:37) before they took a train to Cannes in the south of France.<sup>137</sup> Lavanchy was concerned that the weather in Switzerland might still be too cold for SAH. After some weeks in Cannes where SAH spent a pleasant time playing with the children of a rich friend of Lavanchy (:40), they moved on to Geneva, Switzerland. In Geneva they visited Rev Dardier with his many children<sup>138</sup> and Mr Necker. As SAH met his sponsor for the first time, he was afraid of the big man who appeared to him like a giant (:41-42).<sup>139</sup> Before they finally moved to Peseux, they spent a few weeks in Morges, the home place of Lavanchy in the department of Waadt at Lake Geneva. The family of Lavanchy received them very warmly (:42-43).

### 5.2.2 Education in Switzerland (1873)

Th Necker, who was the mastermind behind the plan to bring someone like SAH to Europe, had chosen a renowned boarding school for the young Nubian boy. The *Ecole Normale Evangelique* had obviously gained a certain degree of fame in Peseux. The school was a training place for teachers and a boarding school at the same time.<sup>140</sup> It was founded in 1866 by the prominent educator Jules Paroz and first established in Grandchamp. But since the number of students increased, it was moved to Peseux in 1873 and found a new home in the Rue du Chateau near a small castle. The school entrance shows a Latin inscription saying “ora et labora”.<sup>141</sup> In autumn 1873, Lavanchy brought SAH to this well-known school that had just been moved to its new location in the same year (:43). SAH had to go through a period of intense cultural adaptation and experienced an extreme cold winter season (:43-47). The teachers of the school were unable to cope with SAH. As they were about to write to Lavanchy to take the boy from the school, the daughter of the director, Lea Parouz, prevented this from happening. She declared her readiness to be fully responsible for SAH and succeeded in teaching SAH to read French within six months. At the same time, she studied Arabic in order to better communicate with SAH (:48). SAH’s motivation to learn increased to such a degree that he stayed at the school during the winter holiday although he could have

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<sup>137</sup> SAH vividly remembers this train ride, since he, for the first time, experienced a hail storm and went through a tunnel. His friends in Cairo had tried to prevent SAH from going to Europe by saying that the Europeans lived underground. When the train entered the tunnel he thought their word to be true (Hussein 1920:38-39).

<sup>138</sup> SAH recalls that the children in the streets would discriminate against him because of his dark skin. They would laugh about him and make jokes about him provoking aggressive reactions in him (Hussein 1920:41).

<sup>139</sup> SAH was puzzled by his huge feet and his high pitch voice that sounded to him like that of a child (Hussein 1920:41-42).

<sup>140</sup> Ecole normale indicates that the school was a teachers’ training institution.

<sup>141</sup> The school had to be closed down in 1907 due to the strong school competition in the city and declining number of students. The building is now privately owned and was converted into apartments. This information was provided to the author by Annemarie Galey and Jeannine Clomb during his private visit in Peseux on September 4, 2013.

gone to Geneva. SAH clearly remembered Lea's spiritual impact on him. She sang songs and prayed for SAH and encouraged him to continue in Switzerland until he would return as an evangelist to his people. She was eager to lead him to the truth in Christ and succeeded in this (:48-49). After a three-year course in Christian teaching SAH asked for his baptism. On August 15, 1876 he was baptized by Rev O Stockmeyer and took on the Christian name Samuel.<sup>142</sup> The baptism took place in the Free Church in St Croix in the Waadt department (:49) and marks the beginning of SAH's calling into Christian ministry. His school education ended after six years in 1879.<sup>143</sup>

### 5.2.3 Training in England

In 1879, when he was sixteen years old, his sponsor sent him to the East London Training Institute (ELTI), the missionary training college of Grattan Guinness (:50-52). At the ELTI workers from different agencies were trained for cross-cultural ministry. First, he learned English and studied some Greek and Latin at Harley House in London's East End. Then he was sent to the country branch, Cliff College, near Sheffield in Derbyshire. Partly, it was for the milder weather, and partly to give him some experience in manual work in the fields. Cliff College specialised in training students for Africa, where some agricultural experience was considered useful. Thus, the afternoons were spent in gardening and agriculture. On Sundays, students preached in the villages, in Sunday schools and once a month on the streets of Sheffield. SAH was strengthened in his faith by these exercises and gained some valuable experience in preaching (:51; Schäfer 1917:34). Sometime after the summer break he was called back to Harley House, where he attended lectures and took part in Christian work among the poor in the East End. Most of his courses were focused on the Bible but he also attended some general college classes "because a missionary should know something about everything." Guinness commented very favourably on his progress in his studies and his "growth in grace" (Guinness 1900:2). During his summer vacation, SAH was invited by the Ansteys to come for two months to Devizes in Wiltshire.<sup>144</sup> SAH participated in evangelistic work with the Plymouth Brethren, helped in teaching their seven children and spent one

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<sup>142</sup> The date of SAH's baptism is under discussion. SAH states August 15, 1875 as the date for his baptism, but explains that he asked for his baptism after a three-year course, which could only have begun in 1873. In case the 1875 date is correct, the three-year course could have been a three-part course of shorter duration.

<sup>143</sup> SAH speaks twice of five years (Hussein 1920:50). On the basis that SAH left Egypt in 1873, that the school in Peseux started in the new location in 1873, and that SAH participated in a three-year Christian education program prior to his baptism we suggest a school period from 1873-1879.

<sup>144</sup> The sister of Mr Necker was married to the rich industrialist Mr Anstey and lived in Devizes.

month with them for a holiday in Weymouth at the south coast of England. After this time, SAH returned to the ELTI (Hussein 1920:52).<sup>145</sup>

#### **5.2.4 Interlude in Switzerland (1880)**

SAH's life journey was about to enter a new phase after summer 1880. He was called for a short interlude to Switzerland to be introduced to the plans of his generous sponsor Th Necker. Necker wanted SAH to go to Beirut to continue his studies at the institute of the American Mission (:52). SAH was supposed to become a physician to serve his people after the completion of his studies. The length of his stay in Switzerland and his activities during his visit remain unspecified. It is highly likely that he left Harley House after the end of the academic term during summer 1880 and spent some weeks enjoying the fellowship with his friends in Switzerland and receiving detailed instructions about his training in Beirut.

#### **5.2.5 Training in Beirut**

In Beirut, American Presbyterian missionaries had founded the Syrian Protestant College for higher education in 1866, which later became the American University in Beirut. Necker wanted SAH to receive the best education available in the region.

##### **5.2.5.1 Journey to Beirut**

In October 1880, SAH travelled from Geneva via Bern to Marseille. In Marseille he boarded the steamer of the *Messageries Maritimes* that was to bring him to Beirut.<sup>146</sup> The liner passed by Alexandria and stopped there for a few hours. This was enough time for SAH to briefly visit the city that he had left seven years earlier as a young boy (:53). With no memories of what the city looked like in 1873, he ran through the streets as a complete stranger and was unable to notice any changes in the city or progress in its development. The change that he clearly was able to state was the development in his personal spiritual journey and that, by the grace of God, Muhammed had become Samuel (:53). After this short stop in the famous Mediterranean metropolis, he continued his journey on the steamer via Port Said and Yaffa to Beirut. SAH was impressed by the view of the city and the Lebanon mountain range. Many small boats moved from the shore towards the steamer to take all the passengers. Someone from the Institute was waiting for SAH, which saved him all the hassle with the boatmen,

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<sup>145</sup> According to SAH's memory he studied only for one year at the ELTI. Schäfer (1917:34) allows for three years without giving any reason for this assumption. Based on SAH's statement that he was going back to the Middle East after he had left the region seven years earlier (Hussein 1920:53), we support the version that SAH studied only one year at the ELTI and went to Switzerland in 1880.

<sup>146</sup> From 1860-1916 Lebanon was an autonomous province in the Ottoman Empire.



other helpers and porters on the shore. Since the compound of the American Mission was a twenty-minute walk from the harbour area, they took a carriage to arrive at the American College. A servant carried his entire luggage to his assigned room. Finally, SAH was back in the Orient to continue his education and training in a Christian institute (:53).

#### **5.2.5.2 Training in Beirut (1880-1882)**

SAH was impressed by the large and spacious mission compound situated east of the city of Beirut. He explains in detail the arrangement of the huge buildings and their uses (:53-54). Since he had left Egypt as a ten year old, he had forgotten his Arabic. Therefore, his first year was occupied with intense studies in Arabic and preparations for starting his studies in medical school (:54). During the summer vacations in 1881, the college was closed and SAH had to look for lodging in the city. He took a private teacher to continue his preparatory studies, although he very clearly expressed his dissatisfaction with the quality of the Syrian teachers (:54). After the summer break in 1881, SAH began his medical studies in the big building next to the huge entrance gate. He completed two terms in medical school (:54).

#### **5.2.5.3 Evangelism among the Druze (1882)**

During his second summer break in 1882, he was given the opportunity to participate in evangelistic outreach meetings among the Druze in the Lebanese mountains. He had made the acquaintance of a Scottish female missionary and agreed to join her on an evangelistic campaign among the Druze.<sup>147</sup> For meetings on Sundays and twice on weekdays they rented a room. The two were surprised by the high turnout at their meetings in which they sang hymns in Arabic. The lady's nice voice and SAH's accompaniment on his violin attracted many people. Those who were literate participated in the singing, though unfortunately the majority of the attendants were illiterate. The two were encouraged when the room in which they were meeting was no longer big enough, causing them to change to open-air meetings (:54). In addition to their regular evangelistic meetings, they visited the Druze in their villages to access them and distribute Christian literature. During their visits to the villages, they learned a lot about the culture and beliefs of this special religious group. There was one fact that stood out and was worth being mentioned by SAH. They felt that the Druze had an ambiguous and opportunistic attitude towards Islam and Christianity. In the case that the political rulers were

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<sup>147</sup> The Druze are a distinct religious community that developed out of the Ismailiyya branch of the Shiites. Their central belief is the divine nature of the Fatimid Khalif al-Hakim (996-1021). The Druze community is divided between the wise ('aqiil) and the ignorant (jahiil). The Druze were basically settled in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon around Damascus and in the mountains of Hawran. As they were very special in their beliefs, they also were granted special administrative arrangements within the Ottoman Empire. Today, Druze communities are found in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the USA (Heine 1991:183-187; Gibb & Kramers (ed) 1974:94-95).

Muslims, they would lean towards Islam. When the country was under Christian rule, they would sympathize with the Christians. Especially this ambiguous attitude led the Scottish missionary and SAH to feel sorry for them (:54). The participation in ministering to the Druze was SAH's first cross-cultural missionary experience in the Middle East.

#### **5.2.5.4 A sudden change of plans (1882)**

In the midst of his "blessed" summer activity among the Druze, he was informed by a telegram from Europe that his sponsor, Th Necker, had suddenly passed away. In addition to this sad news, he not only had to interrupt his missionary activities but was also requested to return to Europe as soon as possible. Although he perceived the message as a "dreadful blow" to his dreams and aspirations, he submitted his plans to the will of God (:54). He returned to Beirut, sold everything that was not urgently needed, and waited for the steamer that was to bring him to England. Eighteen promising months had come to a sudden end and led to a total change of plans (:54-55).

#### **5.2.6 Interlude in England (1882)**

In obedience to the order from Europe, he started his tiresome journey. In Beirut he boarded an Austrian Lloyd steamer, which brought him to Brindisi, Italy.<sup>148</sup> From there he took the train to Paris. SAH found it tiring but interesting to get to know different regions, cities and people. Beyond all, he perceived this journey as a beneficial addition to his experience of travel by land and sea. Finally, he arrived safely at his destination in Devizes, Wiltshire (:55). In 1880, SAH had spent his holidays with them while he was still a student at the ELTI (:55). Although they were pious Plymouth Brethren, they did not encourage SAH in his life's calling nor support the vision of Th Necker who had started the whole venture. Nevertheless, SAH kept firm to his calling that he had sensed so clearly during his baptism, namely to bring the Good News to his fellow Kunuuzi Nubians. SAH missed the strategic guidance of his mentor Th Necker regarding further steps in his training, the kind and understanding exchange concerning his experience and thoughts, the necessary advice and counsel as he was facing various challenges, and his sacrificial giving that had covered all expenses up to that point (Schäfer 1917:34).<sup>149</sup> SAH sought an open discussion with Mr Anstey after some weeks

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<sup>148</sup> The Italian city of Brindisi is the capital of the province of Brindisi and located in the Apulia region off the coast of the Adriatic Sea. Historically, Brindisi was a centre of commerce and culture due to its geographical position on the Italian Peninsula and its natural port on the Adriatic Sea.

<sup>149</sup> „Von nun an fehlt die zielbewusste Leitung seiner Ausbildung und das opferwillige Tragen der notwendigen Kosten, das freundliche, verständnisvolle Eingehen auf sein Erleben und Planen, der weise Rat in allen Schwierigkeiten“ (Schäfer 1917:34).

had passed without any clear communication regarding the continuation of his education and his personal future. After asking as to why he was brought back to England, why he was kept with the family and for how long this was going to last, Anstey disclosed to him that their intention was to keep him forever with them. They were convinced that this would be the best for him. Although SAH reminded them of Mr Necker's original plan to educate him in order to send him back to his homeland, Mr Anstey remained firm in his intention to have him work as a private teacher for his children and to ask him to help out in preaching in the different villages of their county. SAH was ready to submit to the will of Mr Anstey for some time and used his stay in England to continue his studies privately. Although SAH acknowledged his privileged life style and the comfort of his daily life, he did not find fulfilment in it. He felt called to a higher and nobler work. He did not cling to his personal pleasure, leisure and comfort but had a deep desire to proclaim the name of Jesus through teaching, preaching and witnessing to his "spiritually hungry and thirsty" Nubian people. SAH saw only one purpose for his whole adventure of coming to Europe for training, which was to bring the knowledge of Jesus to the Kunuuzi Nubians who were so much deprived of it, whereas Europeans had plenty of opportunities to hear the gospel (:56).<sup>150</sup> After having submitted to the will of Mr Anstey for almost a year, SAH seriously requested that he be allowed to move on. He was no longer willing to continue with the family and his pleasant and luxurious life. In 1883, Mr Anstey gave in to SAH's determination and contacted his brother-in-law, F Necker, in Geneva. The brother of the late Th Necker sent him a letter and invited him to finally come to Geneva. Not without expressing his sincere gratitude to the Ansteys, SAH left them in perfect peace and harmony (:56).

### **5.2.7 Ophthalmological training in Geneva (1883-1884)**

Without a doubt, SAH arrived in Geneva relieved that he was finally back on the track that would lead him to the fulfilment of his life's calling. It was his dream to serve his Nubian people in the medical field as an ambassador of Christ. His expectations were met in so far that F Necker was able to recommend him for a place at the Rotschild Eye Hospital, which was managed by Dr A Bard. For some months SAH observed on a daily basis the ophthalmological treatment of the patients there (:56). A sudden and unexpected change was introduced through the visit of Miss M L Whately (1824-1889), the daughter of the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin who was running a private independent mission work in Cairo. She had

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<sup>150</sup> "Yes, the cause of all my adventure was to bring the good tidings to Nubians and not to Europeans who have in stores, in and out, the knowledge of Jesus" (Hussein 1910:35).

first visited Egypt for health reasons. In 1861 she opened a girls' school in Faggala, Cairo that remained her best-known work. Later she started a school for boys, a medical ministry and also itinerated intensively among villagers (Watson 1907:203-204).<sup>151</sup> Necker and Whately discussed the future of SAH without him being present or involved in the considerations (Hussein 1920:56; Schäfer 1917:34). Thus, yet again, he experienced the exclusion from major decision making regarding his future, with Europeans deciding about him and not with him. The decision was made to employ SAH at M L Whately's School in Faggala, Cairo. He was informed about the decision and had to get ready for his new destination. He sadly had only the choice to obey and go. Like the Ansteys, F Necker did not share the vision of his late brother and did not feel obliged to continue the promising adventure that the latter had begun more than ten years earlier. He obviously did not recognize the potential of SAH nor was he inspired by the vision to see SAH as a useful tool in bringing the gospel to his fellow Kunuuzi. Convinced by the obvious need of M L Whately for a teacher in Cairo, F Necker may have seen SAH as a perfect fit for the task. At the same time, F Necker had found an acceptable way to withdraw from his responsibility for SAH. Thus, SAH was prematurely sent to Egypt (Hussein 1920:56).

## **5.2.8 Return to Egypt**

In 1884, SAH returned back to Egypt as a young adult. Historically, he relates his return to Egypt to the Orabi Revolt. In 1879-1882, Colonel Ahmed Orabi led a national uprising against the Egyptian viceroy, Khedive Tawfik, who had allowed extensive European influence in the country. In June 1882, the political turmoil led to severe violence on the streets of Alexandria with a death toll of about 300 persons. This led to a British intervention with the British forces defeating Orabi's army in September 1882.<sup>152</sup>

### **5.2.8.1 Teaching in Cairo – first attempt (1884-1885)**

All of a sudden, the young, well-educated Nubian from Abu Hoor found himself back in the streets of Cairo which he had left eleven years earlier in 1873. Although he originated from Nubia, Egypt, and had spent some years in Upper and Lower Egypt, he was overwhelmed by

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<sup>151</sup> When M L Whately died in 1899 her school came under the care of the American Mission after the CMS had declined her earlier request for a takeover.

<sup>152</sup> "In the year 1884 after the disturbance of Arabi Pasha, I came back to Cairo" (Hussein 1910:35). This reference to the Orabi Revolt in his English manuscript suggests a closer timely relationship and sequence of the events. This may be explained by the fact that SAH wrote his life account almost twenty-seven years after the events. It is also remains open in what month in 1884 SAH arrived in Cairo.

the situation in which he felt like a total stranger, lacking any sort of cultural orientation.<sup>153</sup> He commented “everything was new, strange, even amazing” (Hussein 1910:36). In addition to the cultural alienation, he realized his lingual incompetence. He had forgotten his Nubian Kunuuzi dialect and felt that his Arabic was insufficient, although he had studied Arabic for about eighteen months in Beirut (Hussein 1920:57). In addition to this, SAH was disappointed by his poor welcome. Nobody met him at the train station so that he himself had to organize a carriage to bring him to Whately’s school on Faggala Street. He arrived there around 3 pm. Although M L Whately had received him in a friendly way, contrary to the customs of the country and all he had experienced so far, she did not ask him whether he needed anything and did not offer him anything to drink or to eat.<sup>154</sup> Since he had some money with him, he cared for himself in a spirit of thankfulness and “asked the Lord in an earnest prayer for his guidance since he had brought him to this field.” After being granted some time to rest and recover from the tiring journey from Switzerland to Egypt, he was appointed as a teacher of French, English, geography, arithmetic and religion. The teaching schedule was tight, daily from 8-12 am and from 2-4 pm, and with only Saturday afternoons and Sundays off. On Sunday mornings there was a church service and Sunday school in the afternoon. SAH tried to fulfil his duties to the satisfaction of his superiors. Nevertheless, he could not hide his utter amazement about his superiors' total neglect of his well-being, health and needs. His time went by quickly<sup>155</sup>, yet he did not receive the expected professional evaluation and feedback. After about half a year of working as a teacher at the school, SAH approached Miss Whately and asked her whether she and the pupils were satisfied with his performance. When she answered in the affirmative, he was glad to receive this positive feedback despite his limited competency. In the same conversation, SAH addressed the issue of salary, reminding her that he had not received any financial support during the past six months. After being confronted with this gross neglect, she gave him three Napoleons<sup>156</sup> and promised to pay him three Napoleons at the end of every month. Owing to the fact that Whately was unable or unwilling to pay the full amount of the requested sum, SAH terminated the work relationship and threw himself into “the wide sea of Cairo” (Hussein 1910:36-37; Hussein 1920:57-58).

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<sup>153</sup> “No doubt I was quite a stranger, although native, but I was an infant, had no judgement whatever” (Hussein 1910:35). It seems that SAH was not well prepared for this step as all may have thought that he was just going back to his original culture without paying attention to the fact that SAH had been socialized in Europe during the formative stages of his childhood and youth.

<sup>154</sup> He remarks on this occasion that he supposes that missionaries have to be able to cope with such behaviour (Hussein 1910:36).

<sup>155</sup> SAH is using another of his expressive metaphors comparing the time that is passing with a rolling egg (Hussein 1910:36; Hussein 1920:57).

<sup>156</sup> At this time one Napoleon was equal to about twenty German Marks.

Unfortunately, SAH's first encounter and experience with missionary work in Egypt turned out to be a great disappointment for this well-educated indigenous worker due to social and financial neglect by a European missionary. Being a stranger in his country of origin it remains an open question whether, during his time at the Whately School, he became acquainted with other missionaries and their institutions or organisations, such as the Church Missionary Society or the American Mission. Yet his disorientation after leaving Whately's School suggests that he did not know any other missionary organisations or institutions to which he might apply for work (:58).

#### **5.2.8.2 Teaching in Cairo – second attempt (1885)**

It seems that it did not take long for SAH to find another opportunity to work as a teacher. He was approached by a Syrian gentleman called Amin who was responsible for a Catholic school. They were working together in mutual contentment for a few months when he was asked in addition to his other classes to teach religious lessons according to Roman Catholic doctrine. He refused and left the Catholic school, too. His conscience and belief did not allow him to comply with their request. He was not ready to give up his Protestant doctrinal integrity (:58).

#### **5.2.8.3 Reflecting his disappointing situation**

Before SAH continued to tell his life story, he inserted a revealing section in which he reflected on his own situation and the different issues he had to face (:59-60).

First, he addressed the mystery of why he was unable to connect with other organizations that were active in different parts of the city. He was puzzled by the question of why he did not hear about them and why he did not see them during his time in the capital (:58-59). This fact suggests that the schools where SAH was working were not well connected with other institutions, at least not at the level of the teaching staff. In addition to this, it is likely that the demanding teaching work did not leave him much time to connect much with others. Finally, SAH was certainly a stranger in the growing and changing city and lacked the social network he used to be part of when he left Cairo years before.

Secondly, SAH tried to come to grips with the fact that he was once taken from the streets of Cairo, raised and educated in Christian values, only to find himself thrown back again “into the mouth of every evil” in Cairo. As a twenty-two-year-old, he struggled with the specific challenges of this phase of personal development in which he was exposed to countless moral temptations. Referring to John 10:27-28 and the story of Lot and his daughters, he highlighted the biblical truth that God takes care of his people, protects his

sheep despite the influence of the world, Satan and the flesh, and leads his followers out of the perishing world, like the angels led Lot and his daughters out of the perishing city. In retrospect, he gratefully remembered that he was kept safe in all temptations and that God fulfilled his purposes with him (:59).

Thirdly, SAH was deeply struggling with the fact that the people who had brought him to Europe did not care about him any longer. As a native back in his home country, he felt utterly alone and was struggling with the ups and downs of acquiring cultural competency.<sup>157</sup> In addition to this, he felt abandoned by his European friends, especially the Necker family and the support base around them. He regretted that they no longer cared for his body, soul, spirit and the Nubian people. But the question that puzzled him most was the investment of all the money during the years of training.<sup>158</sup> Had it all been spent in vain and fruitlessly? They did not care about their reputation and even more they had forgotten the main purpose, the overall vision of the whole plan to bring him to Europe and Beirut for training. It could have been all in vain if the Almighty God in his wisdom had not kept and protected him (:59-60).

Fourthly, before he continued to narrate his story, he was drawn back to compare his situation with that of the younger son in the parable of Jesus recorded in Luke 15. His focus was on the differences between the younger son and himself. In the beginning, he noticed that he had not received an earthly heritage from his father. Nevertheless, he was granted a much more valuable spiritual heritage. Then he referred to the younger son who had left his father's house of his own will and compared this with his present situation. He had no choice about coming back to Cairo or not. He was sent into a dangerous city full of perdition, ungodliness, pretence, fraud, hypocrisy, emptiness, cunning and deceit, which could have easily tempted him and drawn him away from the right path. SAH continued by highlighting God's faithfulness and protection although human beings may be unfaithful. He testified to God's protective concern, which he summarised with the following divine actions: counsel, protection, help, relief and comfort. In closing his reflection, he referred to Isaiah 43:2 praising God who had not allowed the rocky mountains to crush him and the deep waters to swallow him (:59-60).

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<sup>157</sup> SAH was certainly going through the phases of adapting to new culture and language. He looked like a native, yet he had been socialized in Europe.

<sup>158</sup> SAH speaks of twelve years (Hussein 1920:59) whereas in fact it may have been a period of eleven years (1873-1884).

## **5.2.9 Return to Nubia (1885-1900)**

After his two attempts to work in Christian institutions in Cairo as a teacher, he became unemployed, disoriented and without a home and financial means (Schäfer 1917:35). He described himself like a bird without a nest in the huge city of Cairo. The young, instable, disappointed SAH was in danger of getting drawn into the restless and immoral life of that city (:60).

### **5.2.9.1 Disclosing his identity to his kinsmen in Cairo (1885)**

In the midst of his state of disorientation, he was approached by two Nubians, who turned out to be his close relatives from Abu Hoor and who introduced themselves to SAH.<sup>159</sup> They had heard a rumour that Muhammed Ali Hiseen was alive and back in Cairo. As they had given up all hope for years, the news appeared to them like a dream. In their understanding, SAH was a source of precise information about their relative who had disappeared many years ago and was even thought to be dead. SAH was astonished about the genuineness of their search and the affection and concern his kinsmen showed for each other. Although he started to recognize his relatives, he still concealed his identity from them. He started to ask them questions about the village of Abu Hoor, about his father, mother, grandmother and if they were still alive. He learned that his father had passed away a year ago and had always mourned the loss of his son. Telling his relatives that they had provided sufficient information about Muhammed Ali Hiseen, he assured them that he knew the lost person and that he would lead them to him the next day, since he was in the city. By their desire to see “Muhammed” immediately, SAH was convinced that they truly loved the person they were so eagerly looking for. SAH dismissed them dissatisfied but promised to lead them to Muhammed the next day. At the agreed time they came and were eager for more information and filled with the strong desire to meet their relative. SAH, like Joseph in Genesis 49, was still hiding his identity and taking on the role of the interrogator and mediator. After testing their genuine sincerity, love and their patience through an on-going exchange of questions and answers, he gradually disclosed his identity. SAH compared them with the nation of Israel that was described in the Old Testament as people that had ears and did not understand and that had eyes and did not see. Finally, he told them that the person that was speaking to them was exactly the person they were looking for (:60-61). Amazed that they had been talking with him for two days without having the slightest idea that he could be Muhammed Ali, the two

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<sup>159</sup> The relatives, maybe uncles or cousins, had obviously come from Abu Hoor to Cairo to find out whether there was any substance to the rumour about the return of SAH that had even reached Abu Hoor in Lower Nubia.



were overwhelmed by joy and greeted, kissed and smelt him like “thirsty animals” (Hussein 1920:62). Finally, they had discovered SAH and were reconnected with their relative. They spent the whole evening sharing all the news about their tribe, their homeland and the people who had died and those who were still alive. The news of his return reached the whole Nile valley and the Delta and within a few days his entire tribe knew about it. Many of his kinsmen from Alexandria, Suez, Port Said and many other close cities came to greet him and verify his identity. Letters were sent to his mother, grandmother, brother, sister, uncle and so on. They spent some weeks rejoicing that the one they had believed dead was still alive and back in Egypt (:62). In a lengthy discussion, his relatives tried to persuade him to return to his birthplace, Abu Hoor, in order to quench the “burning thirst,” not only of his mother and close relatives, but of the whole Wadi al-Kunuuz. SAH asked for some time to seriously consider their proposal. There were a number of aspects that did not allow his quick assent. First, he was no longer used to the scorching heat of the Nubian summers that could reach more than 50° C in the shade.<sup>160</sup> Second, he was afraid of the traditional obligation to bring presents not only to the close family but also to the extended family living in the Abu Hoor village. This ruinous habit was beyond his financial means. Third, SAH recognized that he had received a Christian socialization and was not familiar with the Islamic religion and practices, just as his Nubian relatives did not know the Christian faith. He had a sober perception of the challenge that he would have to face regarding their superstitious practices, and the fact that he would be the only Christian among the Kunuuzi people. Fourth, he had totally lost the ability to communicate in his Kunuuzi vernacular (:62-63). Due to these and other reasons he postponed his return to Abu Hoor, indicating that a later point in time, in line with God’s will, would be more appropriate. His relatives did not give in easily, but tried to persuade him through daily discussions. Finally, he agreed and, accompanied by one of his uncles, began the necessary shopping tour through the bazaars. Following his uncle’s advice, he bought clothes, jewellery, coffee, tea, rice, sweets, perfume, sugar, cups and cans – with the result that he had almost used up all of his financial means (:63).

#### **5.2.9.2 Journey to Aswan (1885)**

As the day of their journey to Nubia drew close, they had to solve the problem of transportation. The railway line, at that time, went only as far as Assiut. Nile steamers did not take ordinary passengers like them and could not go beyond Baliana, near Assiut. The only boats that went right to Aswan were those of the very rich Sudanese merchants who

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<sup>160</sup> The discussion about his return to Nubia took place most likely at the beginning of the summer season 1885 (Hussein 1920:62).

controlled the trade between Egypt and the Sudan in those days. They traded with great quantities of goods, like ivory, feathers, rubber and animal skins, but also with slaves.<sup>161</sup> They usually took passengers as well as cargo in order to protect their boats from thieves and robbers (:64).<sup>162</sup> SAH's uncle had arranged a cabin for him on one of the bigger Nile boats (*dahabiyya*) that started its journey from Old Cairo. The fare from Cairo to Aswan was fifteen Piasters, which was the equivalent of three German marks. In the afternoon, the journey started with about one hundred persons on board and enjoyed pleasant wind.<sup>163</sup> As they approached Assiut, at the mountain range of Gabal Abu Foda, a sudden burst of wind tore the biggest sail apart, but it was repaired and fixed the next morning. During the night, they were attacked by robbers, but were able to put them to flight using rifles that had been given to the passengers by the merchants the evening before. As they continued their journey to Assiut the next morning, SAH noticed the many fertile fields and great herds of cattle. The boat reached the capital city of Upper Egypt in the afternoon. SAH described the city, with its 40,000 inhabitants, as a flourishing trading city. Assiut marked the beginning point of the *darb al-arba'iin*, the caravan route to Kordofan. It was further known for many years as a centre of the slave trade, which was officially abolished some years before, but still continued. SAH referred as well to the extended work of the American Mission that had established its centre in the city of Assiut.<sup>164</sup> After two days in Assiut<sup>165</sup>, they continued their journey and reached the city of Esna, 150 kilometers north of Aswan, after nine days. In Esna, the merchants and passengers bought all the food they needed for the rest of their journey as Aswan was not able to provide this. The shore between Esna and Aswan was picturesque with palm groves, water wheels and *shawadiif*.<sup>166</sup> After another three days, they arrived safely in Aswan, the famous city at the First Cataract. They had completed the distance of 889 kilometers between Old Cairo and Aswan in twelve days thanks to almost continuously favourable winds (:64-67).

### 5.2.9.3 Description of Aswan

SAH felt obliged to describe the Aswan of 1885 in some detail since it was the capital of the Wadi al-Kunuuz or Lower Nubia. He explained the geography of the east and west side of the

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<sup>161</sup> SAH himself had escaped from Edfu to Cairo with a boat trading slaves in 1869.

<sup>162</sup> SAH remarked that he was ashamed of their few clothes, since they were almost naked, and that even the Khedive did not intervene (Hussein 1920:64).

<sup>163</sup> SAH recalls how the whole crew and all passengers, except him, gathered for the Islamic prayer citing Sura 1 for protection against the evil spirits in the water and the air (Hussein 1920:64-65).

<sup>164</sup> The work of the AM started in 1854 in Cairo and was soon expanded to Assiut, which became the centre of the work in Middle and Upper Egypt.

<sup>165</sup> SAH explained the habit that the sailing crew slaughtered two sheep at the beginning of every quarter of the journey, i e in Old Cairo, Assiut, Esna and Aswan. The meal was called "the present of the safe arrival." (Hussein 1920:66).

<sup>166</sup> A counterpoised implement for raising irrigation water.

Nile in the Cataract region and highlighted both the Elephantine Island and the Kitchener Island. To the north Aswan bordered the village of Gizaira and in the south it bordered Shadijaab and Jebel Tagoog. Aswan had only around a hundred inhabitants who were living in simple mud-brick houses. The bazaar of the city was rather miserable and close to the small and simple port that was located at the northern end of Aswan. The beach was used as a storehouse and trading place for the goods. Nevertheless, Aswan was the corridor to Africa and an important economic link between Egypt and the Sudan, Ethiopia and Inner Africa. Aswan was famous for its antiquity sites, such as Qubbat al-Hawwa, the tombs of the nobles, St Simeon's monastery, the ruins at the southern end of the Elephantine Island and the unfinished obelisk in an ancient granite quarry. The population in Aswan was basically made up of Nubians, Ababda<sup>167</sup>, and people from the Sudan (:67-68). As SAH wrote his description about twenty-five years after his return to Aswan, he specifically pointed out that the beautiful Aswan of 1910 was the result of the investment by the Anglo-Egyptian administration in the development of the city. He also believed that Aswan would enjoy a prosperous future on the condition that the Gospel would cover the region. He asked all friends of Egypt to pray for the fulfillment of the promises given through the prophet Isaiah in chapter 18 (:69).

#### **5.2.9.4 Journey to Abu Hoor (1885)**

After having bought food and other items for daily use, they moved everything by camels to Shellal, the port of Aswan. From here SAH's uncle arranged a Nile boat that would bring them to Abu Hoor quite quickly. They loaded the boat and started the final part of their journey, first passing the Dabood area. To reach Abu Hoor they had to pass by five long-stretched villages. At 9 pm they finally arrived in Abu Hoor. Nobody had expected them. Four men left the boat and moved towards the hamlet Fichchikol. As they entered the hamlet, they met many people gathered for a celebration. Thinking they were soldiers, the people ran away in fear until SAH's uncle introduced SAH by the name of Muhammed Girem to the fearful people.<sup>168</sup> SAH was met with an overwhelmingly enthusiastic welcome that brought him close to exhaustion. His mother Amne danced on a spear as though she were on a horse to express her joy about the return of her son.<sup>169</sup> After she had calmed down, she greeted SAH and hugged him with tears of utter joy. SAH suffered from a headache because many women

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<sup>167</sup> The Ababda are a tribal subgroup of the Beja people who had partly settled in Aswan. For more information on the Beja cf Palmisano (1991) and Hadaway (2010).

<sup>168</sup> Nubians very often have an additional Nubian name besides their Arabic name. SAH was called Girem as well, even before he started to work with the German mission. It seems that this name is not derived from "German". In addition to calling SAH Muhammed, they were also using the Nubianized form Himmed.

<sup>169</sup> SAH explained her joy by comparing himself to the lost son of Lk 15 who was considered lost but was found, and was considered dead but was alive (Hussein 1920:71).

and young girls showered him with plates full of dates. The festive welcome celebrations continued for a month, in which time he was given all sorts of presents, such as grapes, chickens, eggs, lambs, sheep, nuts, different kind of dates, flour and dried bread. The day after his homecoming, SAH had to return their generosity with a present twice as big as theirs. He did this in form of coffee, perfume, soap, headscarves, sugar, tea, turbans, wheat, sorghum, lentils, salt, paper and envelopes for letters – all the things that he had bought in Cairo and Aswan. That was the ruinous obligatory habit that had to be followed in the Wadi al-Kunuuz. The visiting carried on for a month and his kinsmen asked questions and listened to his stories. They were eager to hear the interesting details of life in “the Wadi of Darkness”, as Europe was called (:75). But SAH was astonished about their negative verdict on Europe. Those that were living in real darkness and ignorance declared the civilized and educated Christians of Europe as unbelievers and uneducated.<sup>170</sup>

Then, it was SAH’s turn to revisit his people in the village of Abu Hoor. He was honoured to stay overnight with whomever he was staying with at the time of sunset. It was customary that the host would offer the best he could provide for the guest.<sup>171</sup> After he had finished all the obligatory visits, he was asked by his relatives to visit the tombs of all those who had passed away to receive their blessings. But SAH asked for some rest since the two months had been very demanding. He also had the desire to spend some time with his closest relatives, like his mother and grandmother (:76).

#### **5.2.9.5 Life in Abu Hoor (1885-1898)**

SAH felt the urgent need to withdraw from the intense and tiring public exposure in order to consider in quietness his future plans. As a result of his reflection, he came up with the following road map:

First, he felt a great need to immerse himself into Nubian life in order to become familiar with their habits and customs. He wanted to understand the worldview that was the basis for their behaviour, shaping the reality of their daily life. He wanted to understand their religious life and feelings.

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<sup>170</sup> SAH commented on their spiritual state by saying that their whole being was soaked in Islam like a well-kneaded piece of clay with water. The biggest sin was disbelief in Muhammed, the prophet of God. In this fact SAH saw a big hindrance for all missionary work (Hussein 1920:75).

<sup>171</sup> SAH referred to the Nubian custom of serving two evening meals. The first meal is served to all that belong to the household; the second is only for the head of the family. His wife then was allowed to eat the rest of the special meal (Hussein 1920:75-76).

Second, he realized that only on the basis of a growing insight and understanding would he be able to define his own role among them and reach a standpoint as to what degree he was able to adapt to their customs and religion and what aspects he had to reject.

Third, he felt obliged to share the truth of the Gospel with his kinsmen in love and clarity and with patience. At the same time he had to acknowledge how limited his knowledge of Islam was. During his studies in Europe he had read about Islam, but he still felt ill equipped. In addition to this, he considered personal experience much more valuable and preferable to lectures and studies (:77).

With this road map in mind, SAH started his adventurous adaptation process, which he described in retrospect. His inductive approach enabled him to hide his Christian identity. He was living among them *inognito*, as if he was a Muslim.<sup>172</sup> For SAH, this had nothing to do with denying his Christian faith or even having become an apostate. He genuinely wanted to reach a verdict based on observation and personal experience. In order to start this process, he had to lay aside his European socialization and openly approach the world of the Kunuuzi Nubians in Abu Hoor. Practically, his first step was to adopt the Nubian dress code. From then on, his clothing consisted of trousers, a shirt, a white or colourful cotton turban, and a scarf thrown around the shoulders for going out or during the night. In addition to these, they wore a woolen robe during the cooler weather. The majority of people did not wear shoes. Therefore the soles of their feet became hard and thick, “like camel feet.”<sup>173</sup> Yet some of the Kunuuzi people wore red bill-shaped shoes, which looked funny to SAH (:78). In a second step, he adopted the simple lifestyle of the people of the Wadi al-Kunuuz, explaining that it could not have been simpler. The three meals consisted of bread only. The main occupation of the people was related to their agricultural work. As the Nile was not inundating the shores of the Wadi al-Kunuuz, they had to use the water wheel and the *shaduuf*, a mechanical hand-operated device for lifting water, to irrigate their fields. The fertile land yielded four harvest seasons a year and it took only three and a half months from sowing to harvest. Growing date palms was an important source of income. SAH explained the spectrum of the many hard duties the women had since they were supposed to care for their husband, children, household and animals as well as equip and decorate their houses. Thus, SAH participated in their modest way of life and became a simple peasant by sharing in the irrigation of the fields, planting palm trees, building houses and taking part in their communal life and festive events

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<sup>172</sup> SAH was aware of the fact that Christian friends might consider this approach to be dishonest and offensive (Hussein 1920:77).

<sup>173</sup> SAH described very impressively how his feet had become hard like wood and were covered with painful fissures that he tried to cure with the oil of resinous seeds. He compared his feet with the cracks of the glacier of Mont Blanc (Hussein 1920:79).

(:83-84). He was very careful to win their trust and to avoid any reaction that could thwart this intent. As SAH put much effort into adapting to his new life, his relatives were concerned with providing a spouse for him. In their understanding, it was best to marry their children at a young age. By doing so, they became deeply rooted in their native place and strongly linked to their families and relatives.<sup>174</sup>

#### **5.2.9.6 First and second marriage**

In order to tie him strongly to his tribal group, his relatives arranged an illegal marriage with his ten to twelve year-old paternal cousin. They agreed on a bridal price of ten Egyptian pounds, which equalled about 200 German marks. On the wedding day two and a half Egyptian pounds had to be paid. Then, the next two and a half were to be paid after six months and the rest in case of divorce. In order to increase the pressure on SAH and to win his consent, his family expressed their readiness to pay the expenses for the wedding. Although SAH tried to delay his marriage, he realized that he could not escape the hidden arrangements of his family. His mother and grandmother had opened up the subject as they were sitting in front of their house on an evening in the moonlight (:81). Eventually, without any one to advise him and with only little experience in living among this “ignorant, superstitious and wicked people”, he gave his consent to their undertaking (:82). He felt pressured into marrying the daughter of his uncle who had not even reached the age of twelve. Her parents had forced her to prematurely become his wife. The legal signs were practised on the first day of the wedding ceremony by SAH sprinkling her face with milk and using a razor blade to make four small cuts in her left leg. From the running blood he was to paint first her forehead and then his own. After this ceremony she was guided outside and kept in hiding for seven days. On the evening of the seventh day, she entered SAH's room and sat silently in a corner of the room waiting for SAH to take the initiative to provoke her to speak. SAH did not know that this would not happen before he had paid to her the agreed amount of money. SAH fell asleep and when he woke up the next day, she had left him and had returned to her home. After the villagers had heard the story SAH became the object of their laughter. Nevertheless, he was pleased, although the people around him were gossiping and he was ridiculed. The result was that the mother of the girl did not allow him to see her again and his mother was ashamed because of his behaviour (:82-83). During the following two years, SAH got to know another girl who later would become the mother of his children. She was a mature person, suitable for running a household and caring for children. He knew her well before he

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<sup>174</sup> To promote this ethnic identification, the parents continued the habit of letting their toddlers eat from the mud of the floor of their houses (Hussein 1920:80).

proposed to her. Her relatives agreed happily on her becoming his wife in 1887. SAH characterized his nine-year marriage as a happy one until his dear wife suddenly passed away from severe cholera in 1896 (:83).

#### **5.2.9.7 Disclosing his religious identity**

During the thirteen years (1885-1898) that SAH<sup>175</sup> lived in Abu Hoor, he developed a profound cultural and lingual competency and gained a deep knowledge of the customs and beliefs of his people. This resulted in three reactions. First, he gradually rejected certain practices and withdrew from the active participation in some of the traditional customs that were strongly influenced by folk Islam. Second, he increasingly avoided close contact with his fellowmen. Third, he gradually terminated his state of incognito and started to disclose his religious identity. He began to speak about his Christian convictions, explaining the essence of the Christian faith and life (:84). He taught his fellow Nubians that true Christians do not superficially recite verses of the Old Testament and New Testament. Neither do they rely on good works and prayers nor do they understand them as an obligation that God requests from them, which they otherwise would have to pay for in the fire of hell. Good works are the fruit of faith granted to them through the free grace of Jesus Christ. Fourth, besides his teaching, SAH paid much attention to his conduct so that he would not give offence to them through his life, speech and actions, but instead win their confidence through his lifestyle (:84).<sup>176</sup> After many threats and much resistance and hostility from their religious leaders, the people in his village began to trust in him. This gave him the freedom and authority to challenge their lifestyle, which he considered wicked, and their unforgiving attitude and behaviour. SAH's withdrawal from their religious customs and festivals provoked their opposition and gave them a clear indication that he had become a Christian. This led to a physical attack on his life, when he was lured into an ambush and hit with an axe in his back. He collapsed and lost consciousness till the following morning. Although he was so seriously injured that the people around him thought he was dead, he survived the attack. In SAH's opinion, it was the fact that he had numerous relatives on both sides of the Nile that prevented those who wanted to kill him from throwing him into the Nile. As the village people called for the mayor, the Sheikh and the security person of the village, the attack was officially made known (:85). The people expressed their regret and promised to do everything he desired. The young man who had

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<sup>175</sup> Obviously, SAH counted the years of his life in Nubia from his return to Abu Hoor in 1885 until the beginning his work with the SPM in 1900 (Hussein 1920:83). Schäfer spoke of eleven years (1917:35).

<sup>176</sup> Instead of initiating a court case to prove his ownership against those who had cultivated the agricultural land of his family during his absence, he readily paid them the amount of money they requested in order to regain the right to use the property of his family (Hussein 1920:79-80).

attacked him was locked up so he could not escape. Although SAH was urged by the people to sue the attacker, he abstained from his right to do so and did not want this incident to be made public. SAH recovered from his injuries and regained his former strength. According to Nubian customs in a case like this, the perpetrator, once convicted of his crime, had to meet the victim in the presence of the mayor, the sheikhs and all honourable men, confess his wrongdoing and present him with an expiatory gift.<sup>177</sup> The person who had experienced the harm would then, in the presence of all the guests, return the gift as a sign of his forgiveness. In case the relationship between the families had not yet been made up due to past problems, the gift would not be returned (:86). SAH intended to use this event prescribed by their tradition as a powerful demonstration of forgiving Christian love. He explained the sinfulness of human nature and the inability to change this fact out of one's own strength. He explained to them that he was equal to them in nature, but that the kindness, love, patience and readiness to forgive that they saw in him was a gift of Jesus Christ, who is being worshipped by Christians. Then he repeated his statement of forgiveness to the perpetrator and returned the gifts to him to the surprise and amazement of all present and against the will of his mother and many of his relatives. They had all the more requested that SAH should sue the attacker and bring him to justice (:87). It was this powerful demonstration of loving forgiveness and reconciliation that allowed SAH to live among his Kunuuzi tribe as a respected Christian for many years. An additional fruit of this event was that he became a trusted person who was entrusted with the most secret issues and many asked for his advice and his help (:87). SAH was not afraid to even argue in public with an al-Azhar Sheikh who had called on Muslim attendants of a funeral to use violence against Christians in case they would not convert to Islam. SAH confronted him with Quranic verses that are sympathetic towards Christians. In the end, the Sheikh left the gathering ashamed since he had no answers to SAH's arguments (:88-89). SAH's method in his dialogue with Muslims was first, "to show them their wrong statements from within the Quran", second, to say that there is power in the Old Testament and New Testament that enables people to come to God, and third, to point out that human beings can receive repentance and forgiveness of their sins through Jesus Christ (:89).

#### **5.2.9.8 Invitation to Switzerland (1896)**

Surprisingly, his friends in Switzerland had not forgotten SAH as their long silence might have suggested. In 1896, the evangelist Lavanchy invited SAH to come to Geneva to assist in an exhibition there. SAH accepted this invitation with great joy since he needed a change after

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<sup>177</sup> According to SAH, the gift consisted of a rifle, a sword, some gold, silver, precious stones and an amount of money, four to five Egyptian pounds (Hussein 1920:86).



his many years of life in Nubia (:86). The rainy weather in Geneva prevented the open-air exhibition from being successful as they were limited to indoor facilities.<sup>178</sup> In addition to this, the rain had a negative effect on their health. Nevertheless, SAH experienced much-needed fellowship with his dear Christian friends and encouragement as he visited them. The visit to Switzerland meant, first of all, a strengthening of his faith and physical refreshment after years of hard physical labour and spiritual loneliness and isolation. The financial support received from his friends meant a lot to him as he could save some money to support his family as he was in great financial need (:86)

#### **5.2.9.9 Death of his wife (1896)**

While SAH was enjoying his visit in Geneva, he was deeply shocked by the news that his wife had died in Abu Hoor. She was infected in an epidemic of cholera and passed away suddenly.<sup>179</sup> Thus, he had to leave Geneva at once to rush back home. It took him about ten or more days to arrive in Abu Hoor to be close to his children and to be father and mother to them in one person (:89). The death of his wife was a big blow and a great loss for SAH. He described her as an intelligent, faithful, obedient and loving spouse different from most Nubian women. He also had the inner conviction that she was very close to making a public confession to Jesus Christ, but her early death prevented this from happening (:89). SAH had at least four children with his wife, three daughters and one son.<sup>180</sup>

#### **5.2.9.10 Looking for work in Cairo (1898)**

After more than a year back in Abu Hoor, SAH realized that the income from his work in the village was not sufficient to cover the expenses of his family. Obviously, the financial support of his Swiss friends was also used up. For economic reasons he was forced to look for work in the capital<sup>181</sup> leaving his children in the care of his half-sister. As he was looking for work in Cairo in 1898, he visited a Syrian friend whom he had not seen for many years<sup>182</sup> and who was concerned about his personal situation. SAH updated him and explained to him that the reason for being in the city was his search for work. They seemed to have remained in contact since the Syrian man recommended him to an English officer who was looking for an interpreter.

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<sup>178</sup> There is no information about the kind of exhibition that was organized in Geneva. It was possibly a Christian literature event organized by Christians in Geneva.

<sup>179</sup> After the symptoms of the sickness became visible it took only six hours until she died without the necessary medical and personal support (Hussein 1920:89).

<sup>180</sup> For more detailed information about SAH's family cf 6.4.

<sup>181</sup> Nubian men had been leaving Nubia for economic reasons since the early nineteenth century and had established a support system to employ their fellow Nubians (cf Poeschke 1996:58ff on occupational mobility).

<sup>182</sup> It needs to remain open whether the Syrian man was identical with the person that owned the school that SAH was working at when he returned to Cairo in 1885.

The Syrian man asked SAH whether he would be willing to accept this offer. After initial hesitation and fear that it may cost him his life, he dared to accept the request, putting his life into God's hands (:90).

### **5.2.10 Interpreter in the Anglo-Egyptian Army (1898)**

SAH joined the army in 1898 and started preparations in Cairo. Everyone, whether soldier or civilian, had to wear a uniform. SAH had been chosen to become the interpreter of the English Colonel Rhod who served in the Anglo-Egyptian Army that set out to put down the Mahdi Revolt that had started in 1881 under Khalifa Muhammed Ahmed and had culminated in 1885 with the conquest of Khartoum and the murder of General C G Gordon.<sup>183</sup> The group left Cairo at the end of June 1898 to join the Anglo-Egyptian Army under the command of General Kitchener at Atbara<sup>184</sup>, who was also called the *Sirdar*.<sup>185</sup> The army had just defeated the Mahdi troops under the command of Emir Mahmud and caused a lot of casualties. The Anglo-Egyptian army had three divisions, the British, the Egyptian and the Sudanese, and consisted of 60,000 troops. After getting to Atbara, they moved towards Khartoum passing the region of the sixth Cataract north of the capital city (:91). The Mahdi troops had deserted the area and totally withdrawn to Omdurman. The Jebel al-Rawiyan area became the main support base for the troops of General Kitchener. The Royal Navy preceded the troops and began attacking Omdurman and especially the tomb of Muhammed Ahmed, the founder of the Mahdi movement. SAH described the hardship of the army life. As an eyewitness, he narrated the sequence of the decisive battle and the overwhelming victory of the Anglo-Egyptian army and its superiority. The Khalifa Abdullahi escaped to the Province of Bahr al-Ghazzal. SAH participated in the triumphal entrance of the victorious troops of General Kitchener into the city of Omdurman on the White Nile on Friday, September 2, 1898, which marked the end of many years of conflict with the Mahdi rebels (:93-94).<sup>186</sup> Immediately after the fall of Khartoum, some wounded officers, including Colonel Rhod, had to return to Cairo. SAH was privileged to return with them. The long distance of about 2,000 kilometers was covered in less than seven days thanks to the railway line that had been built through the

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<sup>183</sup> For more details cf Holt (1970:73-97). Gordon was Governor-General of the Sudan from 1877-1880 under the Khedives Ismail and Tawfiq. In 1884 he was appointed by the British government to lead the evacuation of Egyptian troops from the Sudan. Contrary to his instructions, Gordon held Khartoum, waiting for reinforcements that did not arrive in time. Gordon and his troops were killed during the Mahdi attack on Khartoum in January 1885 (King 1984:308).

<sup>184</sup> SAH obviously found the journey from Cairo to Atbara very exciting but refrains from describing details in order not to take too much time from the reader (Hussein 1920:90).

<sup>185</sup> Persian title used during the period of British control of Egypt (1882-1936) for the British Commander-in-Chief of the Anglo-Egyptian Army.

<sup>186</sup> SAH described the events of his three-month spell with the army at some length (Hussein 1920:90-94).

desert under Lord Kitchener. Colonel Rhod returned from Cairo to England and SAH went back to Abu Hoor to stay with his children for some time (:94).

### **5.2.11 Working for the Egyptian Postal Service (1899-1900)**

Back in Abu Hoor, SAH's question of work and regular income had to be answered again. Some of his friends were employed by the Egyptian Postal Service and encouraged him to apply for work there as well. He liked the idea and applied for a job, sending his certificates, recommendations and a deposit. His application was accepted and in 1899 he was employed at the Aswan post office. After only a few weeks, he was transferred to the post office next to the building site of the Aswan Dam at Shellaal. SAH indicated that he was working in Shellaal in the year 1900, during the time in which some rock formations had to be removed by detonations and the solid foundation of the Aswan Dam was constructed (:94).<sup>187</sup> It seems that SAH was part of the small Christian group that met as a result of the work of the American Mission in Aswan (Sauer 2005:151).

## **5.3 Summary**

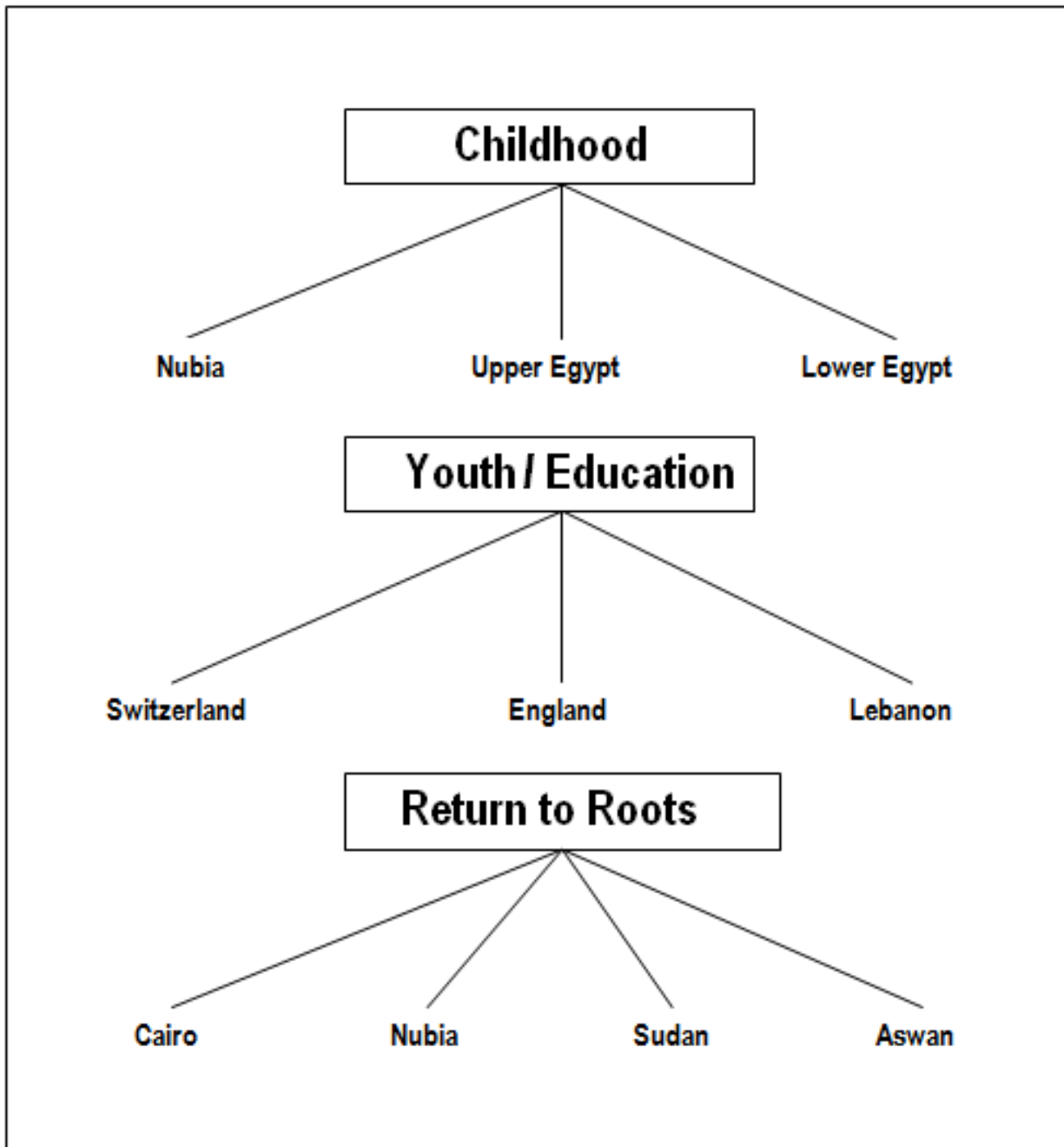
In this chapter we have described the formative years of SAH prior to his ministry with the SPM (1863-1900). During his early years, SAH was socialized in his original Nubian culture. He grew up as a social orphan. Through his experience in the Quran school, he was not attracted by Islam but rather driven into a non-religious lifestyle. Escaping from Upper Egypt, he started an adventurous and erratic season of in the Lower Egyptian cities of Cairo, Benha and Suez. His contacts with Europeans triggered in him an intrinsic desire to go to Europe. When he was offered the chance to do so, he accepted happily because his personal experience in Lower Egypt had prepared him for this step. SAH's inner personal development coincided with the much debatable idea of the Swiss industrialist, Th Necker, to educate a Muslim Egyptian, expect his conversion and send him back as a witness for Christ. In fact, what no one could have planned and carried out happened in the life of the young boy. After severe problems in the adaptation process to European life and education and much personal attention and care by one of the female teachers, SAH continued his school education at the renowned boarding school in Peseux, Neuchatel. Moreover, he accepted the Christian faith and asked for his baptism in 1876. At this occasion he took on his new name, Samu'iil, and perceived his call to serve God as an evangelist. Following his school education in

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<sup>187</sup> For more information on the Aswan Dam that was completed in 1902 and heightened twice in 1912 and 1933 cf Fahim (1983:25-26).

Switzerland, his sponsor sent him to Guinness' East London Training Institute for theological and practical training and to Beirut for medical studies. The death of Necker caused major changes in the proposed plans. Since the initial vision of Necker was not shared by his relatives, SAH was eventually sent back to Egypt in 1884. Working successfully as a teacher in two Christian schools in Cairo, he left both of them due to developments that led to his severe disappointment. In this phase, his relatives who had discovered "the lost son of Nubia" urged him to return to his home. When he went back to his home village, Abu Hoor, in 1885, he mastered the challenge to re-adapt to his original culture. He gradually disclosed his Christian identity and became a witness for Christ in this closed, simple, peasant, Muslim community. Economic needs made him leave Nubia in search of work. In 1898 he joined the Anglo-Egyptian Army as an interpreter and later became an employee with the Egyptian Postal Service in Aswan and Shellaal. This is the location where he met Guinness in 1900, an encounter that again decisively changed his plans but brought him back to the task that he was uniquely prepared for during the previous decades. This chapter has brought to light some distinct features in the life of SAH that can be regarded as most suitable for his future work as an evangelist with the SPM. SAH was the only known Nubian Christian at that time. He had a clear understanding that he was called and trained to share the Gospel especially with the Kunuuzi community. SAH was used to a simple lifestyle that included much limited economic resources. He was well trained and educated by western institutions in Switzerland, England and Lebanon. SAH had acquired medical knowledge and was experienced as a translator and teacher. He was polyglot as he spoke Kunuuzi, Arabic, French and English. This language competency helped him to communicate well with people from inside and outside Egypt. His multicultural upbringing enabled him to establish well-functioning relationships with people from various cultures. SAH had become an experienced Christian who had to face disappointing behavior from western Christians. He had to cope with the fact that from the time he left Egypt in 1873 other people decided on the progress in his life. He was rarely consulted and involved in the decision making process. SAH stood the major test of his Christian life when he returned to his original Nubian Muslim community, endured all opposition and started to be an outspoken witness to his people group. Thus, SAH was uniquely prepared for the work with the SPM and fulfilled all the criteria to become the major stakeholder of the Nubian vision.

**Illustration 2: SAH's life prior to work with SPM**



**Table 1: SAH's biographical data (1863-1900)**

### **Childhood in Egypt**

1863		Born in Fichchikol, Abu Hoor, Nubia
1868		Moves to Edfu with his grandmother
1869		Escapes to Cairo and meets his father in Benha
1869		Works in Cairo and Suez
1870		Works in Cairo for a French ophthalmologist
1873	April	Invited by Lavanchy to go to Europe

### **Training in Europe**

1873	Spring	Visits with Lavanchy Marseille, Cannes, Geneva, and Moges; Meets his sponsor Th Necker
1873	Autumn	Enters boarding school in Peseux, Neuchâtel, Switzerland
1876		Baptised in St Croix, Waadt
1879		Studies at ELTI, London and Cliff College, Sheffield
1880		Studies Arabic and medicine in Beirut; evangelizes among the Druze
1882		Called to Great Britain because of death of his sponsor
1883		Trained in ophthalmology in Geneva, Switzerland

### **Return to Egypt and Nubia**

1884		Returns to Egypt and works as teacher
1885		Returns to his home in Fichchikol, Abu Hoor, Nubia
1887		Marries and gets three daughters and one son
1896		His wife dies while he is away in Geneva, Switzerland
1898		Participates in the war against the Mahdists as translator
1899		Works for the Egyptian postal service in Aswan and Shellaal

## **6. The life story of Samu'iil Ali Hiseen during his ministry with the SPM (1900-1927)**

In the previous chapter we have presented the life story of Samu'iil Ali Hiseen (SAH) during his formative years and his preparation phase for the ministry with the SPM that was still ahead of him. In this chapter we will draw a detailed picture of the developments in the life of SAH and his family since he joined the SPM in 1900 until his death in 1927. The sequence of events in his life and his contributions will give us clear indications to what extent SAH was a key player in the development of the SPM in becoming a mission among the Nile-Nubians. We will follow the story of his life according to the phases of the SPM within the time frame above indicated.

### **6.1 Beginning and crisis years of the SPM (1900-1904)**

It is important to notice that SAH became part of the SPM history in its founding phase. He was part of the pioneer generation that had the privilege and challenge to build a new ministry in the Aswan region and beyond.

#### **6.1.1 Joining the work of the SPM (1900)**

At the end of 1899 and the beginning of 1900, Henry Grattan Guinness, the founder of the ELTI, and Karl Kumm came to Aswan on a fact-finding trip. It was their intention to start a new missionary venture from Aswan and extend it to the south via the Nile route. One day in January, as SAH was working in the Shellaal postal office, he was surprised by the visit of his former teacher, Guinness, who was looking for him by name (Hussein 1920:95). It seems that Guinness was directed to SAH by members of the Presbyterian Church in Aswan.<sup>188</sup> It is assumed that Guinness did not know whom to expect, and it was SAH who recognized Guinness, his former teacher, first. SAH asked his superior for permission to leave the post office to greet his guest and spend some time with him. After these years of separation, they took time to share their respective news since they were both emotionally moved by the renewed encounter. As SAH led Guinness to the construction site of the Aswan Dam, they watched the detonation of the rocks at the foundation level of the barrage.<sup>189</sup> About 20,000 Egyptians and foreigners made up the huge work force. After their sightseeing at the building

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<sup>188</sup> It is possible that the evangelist Ibrahim Musa had informed Guinness about the Nubian Christian SAH (Sauer 2005:151).

<sup>189</sup> Guinness was so impressed by the rock formation that he took it as a symbol for a life based on Christ, the rock. SAH replied in the affirmative adding that the one who has placed his life on Christ will be able to stand solid how heavy the load and the pressure of opposition may be (Hussein 1920:95).

site, they went to Aswan for further discussions. After a short consultation, they agreed that SAH would resign from his work with the Egyptian Postal Service and join the work that he had been called to and trained for. In this new development SAH saw the fulfilment of his long-standing desire to work as an evangelist among his people (Hussein 1920:95). SAH immediately submitted his resignation to the postal authorities and received approval within a short time. In February 1900, SAH joined the work of the newly founded SPM as an evangelist.<sup>190</sup> Parallel to him Girgis Ya'quub and his wife, Coptic Christians, were employed as teachers for the small SPM School.

### **6.1.2 SAH's suitability for the SPM**

H G Guinness was convinced that it was by God's providence that he was able to find and meet SAH. Moreover, he had no doubt that SAH was “the sort of man we needed to help to bring the water of life into this moral desert” (Guinness 1900:2). Indeed, there are a number of factors that verify Guinness' statement. First, SAH was the only known Nubian Christian at that time. Second, he knew the Nubian culture and was able to converse in the Nubian vernacular after he had re-learned it from scratch. His immersion in the Nubian culture and language during his thirteen years of continuous presence in Abu Hoor was the basis for his excellent cultural competency. Third, SAH was a well-trained and generally educated person. He had received his primary education in Europe and was fluent in French and English. In Beirut and later in Cairo he had re-learned Arabic. He had received medical training in Beirut and Geneva. He had gained some experience as an interpreter from Arabic into English during the Mahdi War. Most probably, he was one of the best-educated Nubians of his time. Fourth, he had received theoretical and practical missionary training at the ELTI. Thus, he was equipped for cross-cultural ministry, which he was partly able to practice while he was involved in missionary work in Britain and in Lebanon among the Druze. Fifth, he was not a recent convert to Christianity, but he had been baptized twenty-five years before and proven to be a faithful witness to Christ through all those years. In addition to this, SAH had overcome various personal and professional disappointments through which he gained spiritual maturity. He was able to maintain a strong relationship with Christ during his lonely, isolated years in Nubia. After the attack on his life, he overcame the opposition of his Kunuuzi tribe by extending them forgiveness and reconciliation and providing a powerful role model of a true Christian. Sixth, during his years of residence among his people who were largely ignorant about Islam but faithful adherents of Sunni Islam mixed with many Folk

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<sup>190</sup> SAH called himself a “humble servant”(Hussein 1920:96).



Islam practices, he had developed an excellent understanding of Islam through his inductive approach. He was even able to argue with Islamic sheikhs by using the Quran in his conversations with them. Seventh, initiated by Necker and Lavanchy and supported by his Christian friends, SAH developed a clear personal sense of calling to his own people. The origins of this calling can be traced back to his baptism during which he had a deep impression of being consecrated to be God's servant and witness wherever this might be (Hussein 1920:50). This calling was nurtured by his continued training in England, Beirut and Geneva. It was tested, when he was called back to England by the Ansteys after the death of Necker who kept him as a house teacher for their children without knowing, recognizing or acknowledging his life's calling. His calling was further tested when he was sent from Geneva to Cairo to teach at M L Whateley's School in Faggala without his prior consent, and when he felt forgotten by his European friends. The urgent need for secular work due to his poor financial situation could not quench his calling that went beyond a mundane understanding of doing a job just to make a living. In meeting Guinness, the latter's vision for the Sudan Belt and SAH's desire to be God's tool to his own ethnic group had eventually come together to form a well suited partnership. Based on their time at the ELTI beginning in 1879, there was immediate mutual respect, affection and trust between Guinness and SAH (Sauer 2005:152) which provided a sound basis for the beginning of their work together. Guinness, who had known and partly trained SAH himself at the ETLI, was so fascinated by SAH's early biography that he published the story of SAH's youth under the title *Ali's Adventures* (Guinness 1900:1).<sup>191</sup>

### **6.1.3 Starting the work of an evangelist (1900)**

As SAH was employed as an evangelist by Guinness and Kumm in line with his calling, gifts and training, he should be considered beyond all doubt the first modern native Nubian evangelist. It can be assumed that on the grounds of a trust based relationship with Guinness and Kumm, he worked at the beginning without a direct supervisor (Sauer 2005:152).

### **6.1.4 First exploration and colportage tour through Nubia (1900)**

After Guinness had agreed with Girgis Ya'quub, his wife and SAH about the first action steps in setting up the work of the SPM, they rented a house in Aswan for the school that was directed by the Coptic couple. SAH was commissioned to travel south of Aswan to explore

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191 Sauer (2005:152 fn 117) stated that he was not able to verify the publication "neither as an article in Guinness' journal *The Regions Beyond*, nor as a separate publication in the holdings of the British Library."

the region between Abu Hoor and New Dongola.<sup>192</sup> A travel permit they had applied for from the Anglo-Egyptian Ministry of War in Khartoum was granted. On March 20, 1900 (Guinness 1900:1; SP 1900:11),<sup>193</sup> SAH left Aswan for Abu Hoor to spend three days with his children and to prepare himself spiritually before he set out on the long journey to Lower Nubia (Hussein 1920:96). As the five villages, Shellaal, Dabood, Dehmiid, Umbarakaab and Kalabsha, were already better known to SAH, he did not stop there but intended to visit them on his way back. Four objectives were given for his exploration and colportage trip (:96). First, Kumm asked him to explore Lower Nubia and provide him with a survey regarding the inhabitants, the different tribal groups and their languages, list their occupations and provide agricultural statistics. Second, he was asked to distribute Bibles, New Testaments and Christian tracts. Because of their heavy weight they had been sent by the post boat in parcels to different places to be picked up en route (cf Sauer 2005:152-157). Third, SAH's assignment was to inquire about the possibility of opening a new mission station in New Dongola (Hussein 1920:96). Fourth, SAH was most probably motivated by Kumm to get involved in the linguistic field. As time allowed, he started to translate the Gospel of John into the Kunuuzi dialect and was working on a word list in Nubian-Arabic-English.<sup>194</sup> Kumm and SAH bought a donkey and employed an assistant to accompany and help SAH. In order to survey all of Lower Nubia, SAH travelled up the eastern bank of the Nile and returned down on the west bank. He described his journey in detail and also sent reports to Kumm in Germany (Hussein 1920:96-107). SAH provided the requested statistics, distributed the literature and shared the Gospel in all the places that he visited, but he did not meet even one Christian throughout his whole journey. To his great disappointment, the authorities did not permit the opening of a new station in New Dongola since they felt that the aftermath of the Mahdi War still prevented the stability required. Nevertheless, SAH's journey signalled a new era in the spread of the gospel to Nubia.<sup>195</sup> SAH returned via the west bank of the Nile and arrived back in Aswan very tired, but safe at the end of November 1900 (Hussein 1920:107).

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<sup>192</sup> New Dongola is called in Arabic Dongola al-Urdi, which was founded by Mameluke refugees in 1811.

<sup>193</sup> The date given by Guinness is in line with the fact that SAH wrote a letter between Abu Hoor and Koshtamne on April 11, 1900 (SP 1900:13). In his autobiography SAH mentioned April 25, 1900 (Hussein 1920:96). This divergent date may result from inaccurate memory.

<sup>194</sup> The details of SAH's linguistic contribution are presented and discussed in 8.3-8-10.

<sup>195</sup> For the leadership of the SPM SAH's reports that reached Germany during his journey (SP 1900:14-15) created an enthusiasm that the day had dawned for the evangelization in Lower Nubia (Sauer 2005:157). A complete issue of *Der Sudan Pionier* (SP 1900:1-15) was devoted to this topic and was entitled *Tagesanbruch in Nubien* (Daybreak in Nubia).

Since all sources mention a six-month journey<sup>196</sup>, SAH might have stopped on his return in Abu Hoor to see his family and rest from his extreme exertions (SP 1900:15-16) before he returned to Aswan to resume his work with the SPM.

### **6.1.5 Work in Aswan (1900-1901)**

The work in Aswan had developed well since the departure of Kumm in spring 1900. When SAH finally returned to Aswan, he noticed that the SPM boys' and girls' schools had grown considerably and Girgis Ya'quub and his wife, Zamerida Hinain, were in need of assistance. Thus, he began to help them in the school work. At that time, there was only one government school and one Catholic school at the northern end of the town. The closure of the American Mission School led to the unexpected growth of the SPM School that was ideally located in the town centre. The increasing number of pupils caused Girgis to employ his brother-in-law, Habib Henain, from Esna (Hussein 1920:107-108).

### **6.1.6 Work under the leadership of German missionaries (1901)**

On January 12, 1901 the first German missionaries, Johannes Kupfernagel and his wife Martha arrived in Aswan. The Kupfernagels had formerly been missionaries in India with the Gossner Mission (cf Sauer 2005:199-204). They had brought Margarete Hoffmann as an assistant with them (:199; Hussein 1920:108). Since the building that hosted the rooms for the schools was too small for all the teachers, assistants, SAH and the Kupfernagels, the SPM Board agreed to buy a new piece of land in Aswan (:108). Due to practical problems for Kupfernagel finalizing the deal, K Kumm was sent by the board to finalize the purchase of the desired property in March 1901 (:108).<sup>197</sup> The property was regarded one of the most beautiful sites in the area, located at the Corniche al-Nile (:108; SP 1901:69-71). It turned out to be the same piece of land that Kumm had tried to purchase already in the spring of 1900 (Sauer 2005:217) and that the Catholic Comboni Order had tried to obtain during the presence of Kitchener in the late 1890s (Hussein 1932:127). The schools were moved to the new site. The relationship between the Kupfernagels and the indigenous workers started well, but increasingly developed in a rather difficult manner. Yet, SAH only very cautiously indicated these tensions (:108).

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<sup>196</sup> SAH may have arrived in Abu Hoor at the end of September 1900. As he started off his journey from Abu Hoor, he might have considered arriving at his home village at the end of the journey (cf Sauer 2005:157), which accounts for the time difference of one or two months.

<sup>197</sup> The author of this study has verified that Kupfernagel had signed the purchase agreement (cf also SP 1901:54) already prior to the arrival of Kumm on March 27, 1901. The legal documents of the SPM property are preserved in the mission's property files in Aswan.

### 6.1.7 Kumm's visit to Aswan (1901)

It seems that SAH had gone back to Abu Hoor for almost four weeks as a result of the unpleasant relationship with Kupfernagel.<sup>198</sup> Due to various challenges during the pioneer phase of the SPM, Kumm, who had become the traveling secretary of the SPM, was sent to Aswan in March 1901 (Minutes SPM, 14.03.1901:23). Kumm arrived in Aswan on March 27, 1901. He spent several weeks finalising the purchase of the land and inspecting and developing the on-going work (Hussein 1920:108).<sup>199</sup> He also used the time to restore his tense relationship with the workers of the American Mission (Sauer 2005:217). As a visionary, Kumm was seriously considering extending the work further south. He certainly had inspired SAH with this vision that had led to the founding of the SPM. It seems that Kumm had developed a trustful and respectful relationship with SAH. Kumm had a clear understanding of SAH's competencies and the great potential that he bore within him.

### 6.1.8 Second exploratory trip to Nubia (April 1901)

In the second part of Kumm's stay in Aswan, in April 1901, both of them boarded a steamer and travelled to Wadi Halfa. SAH's hope was to travel to New Dongola as they both considered this city to be suitable for the next station (:218; SP 1901:83-87). SAH still had very vivid recollections of his first visit in 1900, which had resulted in the rejection of a request to open a SPM work in the town. It seems that Kumm's time schedule did not allow them to proceed further south. Thus, after a week, they were back in Aswan. Nevertheless, Kumm and SAH used the journey to continue their linguistic work. SAH finished the first draft of the translation of the Gospel of John in April 1901 during the visit of Kumm (SP 1901:79)<sup>200</sup> and continued his work on the Nubian-Arabic-English word list and on a Nubian grammar reference.<sup>201</sup> Kumm himself had been working on the manuscript of a basic Bishareen grammar reference (SP 1901:62.78).<sup>202</sup> It is highly possible that he was also using the time during the trip to gather first-hand information for his research about Nubia, which SAH had already contributed to so extensively during his first exploration trip in 1900.

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<sup>198</sup> After his teaching experience in Cairo in 1884, this was the third work relationship between SAH and foreign superiors that developed rather unpleasantly, but SAH did not comment on this *déjà vu*.

<sup>199</sup> The opening of a Christian bookstore in Aswan was already being considered. Cf Sauer (2005:217) referring to the correspondence between Kupfernagel and the SPM, June 21, 1901.

<sup>200</sup> SAH may have given the Gospel to Kumm to take it to Germany for a linguistic check. Cf Schäfer (1917:11) on the loss of the Gospel that Schäfer erroneously describes as the Gospel of Mark.

<sup>201</sup> For the description of the linguistic work of SAH cf 8.3-8.10.

<sup>202</sup> The manuscript has not been traced up to now.

### 6.1.9 Start of a new station in Gizaira (1901-1902)

It may not have taken long for Kumm to discover the tense working relationship between Kupfernagel and SAH. In addition, SAH was not completely happy with his teaching job and his working relationship with Girgis Ya'quub. As a result of this situation, Kumm spontaneously and rather over hastily set up a new station for SAH in the Nubian hamlet of Gizaira in April 1901<sup>203</sup>. The hamlet was located half an hour north of Aswan and inhabited by about 6,000 people (Hussein 1920:108). The original Nubian name of this semi-island was *Abinarti* (Grass Island). Kunuuzi Nubians had settled there before the building of the Aswan Dam (1898-1902).<sup>204</sup> The property was rented on April 15, 1901 (Sauer 2005:217) and Kumm had to leave Aswan quickly for health reasons.<sup>205</sup> At the end of May 1901, he submitted a report on his trip to the SPM Board, who subsequently approved the establishment of the Gizaira station (Minutes SPM, 29.05.1901:23). SAH took over the farm on May 1, 1901 and started to work there. At the end of May he travelled to Abu Hoor to bring his children to Gizaira to live with him there. He also sold his property and possessions and left Abu Hoor for good on the basis of his understanding that Gizaira would become the central SPM station in the near future (Sauer 2005:218-219). The SPM expected that the work there would be self-supporting through agricultural produce. But their expectations in this respect were not fulfilled. The cost of irrigating the sandy, non-fertile land mounted up and could no longer be justified. And by summer there was no more water available (SP 1901:101-102; Hussein 1920:108). In addition to this, it seems that due to a different tribal background SAH was not able to connect well with the people living in Gizaira in order to reach out effectively to them with the Gospel. Another reason for abandoning and closing down Gizaira was the climate, which was not regarded as suitable for future western missionaries (Sauer 2005:219). Progress could only be recorded in the linguistic field as SAH was able to send his manuscript of the Nubian word list to Kumm at the end of July 1901 (:219). After disagreement with Kupfernagel about the construction work in Gizaira, SAH asked the SPM to finally decide on the matter. As he summed up the effort put into the work versus the poor results from it, he was not disappointed when Kupfernagel indicated that the station might be closed. Thus, Kupfernagel urged the SPM board to give up the work in Gizaira (:225). Eventually, the SPM Board decided in its meeting on April 10, 1902 to close down the prematurely opened station in Gizaira and SAH had to return to Aswan (Minutes SPM 10.04.1902:44). SAH requested

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<sup>203</sup> SAH erroneously dated the beginning of the work in Gizaira in 1902 (Hussein 1920:108).

<sup>204</sup> Unfortunately, SAH called the place Gezira (Arabic for island), which easily leads to the misunderstanding that he is speaking of the Elephantine Island, which is what the locals call it.

<sup>205</sup> Kumm was diagnosed with appendicitis (Cleverdon 1936:37).

the board to be employed as an evangelist in Abu Hoor (Sauer 2005:226-227). In the meantime, Kumm had already started with his doctoral studies, which the SPM board had asked him to pursue (Minutes SPM 29.05.1931:31).<sup>206</sup> Only one year after its inauguration, on May 1, 1902, the Gizaira station was closed. SAH continued to remain there with his children for a few more weeks. He communicated with the Board in Germany and requested to be discharged from the work with SPM or at least to be granted a leave of absence due to his physical and emotional exhaustion. Finally, SAH and his children left Gizaira on June 4, 1902 and travelled to Abu Hoor. There, SAH became very ill and only recovered after a month (Sauer 2005:227). At their meeting on May 29, 1902 the Board asked SAH to open a bookshop in Aswan, a new ministry branch that had been suggested earlier (SPM Minutes, 29.05.1902:46), not knowing that the American Mission had also planned to set up a bookshop in Aswan.

### **6.1.10 Growing conflict with Kupfernagel (1901-1903)**

In addition to the hard and seemingly fruitless work in Gizaira, SAH had to face the growing conflict with and accusations from the German missionary. Kupfernagel was dissatisfied with the fact that SAH was given the privilege of working without the supervision of a western missionary. In his opinion, an indigenous worker was not on equal to a western missionary. In December 1901, he communicated serious accusations against SAH in a letter to the Chairman of the Board, Rev Ziemendorff. He questioned the integrity of SAH by accusing him of a number of failures. First, SAH avoided fellowship with the foreign missionaries. Second, he worked on Sundays. Third, his children were not yet baptized. Fourth, he still had his Islamic name Muhammed and thereby denied his new identity. Unfortunately, Kupfernagel maintained his critical attitude towards SAH until the end of his work with the SPM in August 1904 (Sauer 2005:223). SAH responded in a letter to all these accusations, but also questioned the ability of the SPM Board to come to a fair judgement, since they did not know him. The relationship between Kupfernagel and SAH deteriorated and finally broke down. Kupfernagel denied being in conflict with SAH, but still did not stop criticizing him. There is evidence that at times Kupfernagel had made some attempts to work together with SAH (:255-256), but they could not overcome the loss of mutual trust and things were not “as they were in the beginning” (Hussein 1920:108).

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<sup>206</sup> The women's branch of the SPM donated a stipend for Kumm. His employment as itinerant secretary was postponed until the successful completion of his doctoral studies (Sauer 2005:218).

Still considering himself a SPM worker, SAH returned to Aswan on August 26, 1902. Back in Aswan, SAH had to work with Girgis Ya'quub and his wife and the Kupfernagels under the supervision of the latter (:108). He sent his three girls to the American Mission boarding school in Luxor (Sauer 2005:229). Concerning the work in Aswan, SAH noticed that the work of the school had declined to such a degree that Girgis' brother in law, Habiib, and his wife had to be dismissed. Regarding the work atmosphere under the leadership of Kupfernagel, SAH commented in one sentence that it had deteriorated in comparison with the first weeks but was bearable (Hussein 1920:108). It seems that SAH had put a clear focus on his ministry. His letter gave ample testimony of his evangelising activities. He reported on the time between December 1902 and June 1903 about his sharing the Gospel with Nubians, Bishariyiin, Copts, Arabs and Sudanese, although a special focus was given to Nubians, especially in March 1903 (SP 1903:22ff, 30ff, 33ff, 54ff).

### **6.1.11 Abduction of SAH's children (1903)**

In early May 1903, the Kupfernagels left Aswan for their summer vacation in Alexandria. SAH was given charge of the mission compound. After the death of his wife in 1896, SAH had not remarried. He had willingly taken on the full responsibility for his children and was caring for them as best as he could. The three older girls, Sarah (fourteen years old), Ruqaiya (twelve years old), and Maryam (ten years old) were sent to the American boarding school in Luxor. Abbaas, SAH's son (eight years old) was going to school in Aswan (Hussein 1920:113). Convinced of the need for a sound education, SAH was pleased that his girls were at school in Luxor. Since it was not all common in Nubian tradition for girls to receive a proper school education, the two older girls did not share their father's enthusiasm (Sauer 2005:260). During the absence of Kupfernagel, SAH completed the construction of the well (SP 1903:72-74). On Sundays, he conducted the SPM services. He recalled that on Sunday, June 21, 1903 the number of attendants was remarkably high, which encouraged him a lot (SP 1903:72ff). It is possible that some of his relatives were among the careful Muslim listeners who were already planning the abduction of SAH's children. As the older girls had already reached marriage age according to Nubian customs, close relatives of SAH had come and asked him some time earlier to marry his girls to them. SAH refused this request as he was in favour of their completing their education first (Hussein 1920:109). During the summer holidays, all his children were with him on the SPM compound. It was on July 16, 1903 that a most dramatic event took place. While SAH was attending the funeral of a close relative of a friend of the SPM in Gizaira, all four children were kidnapped. When SAH returned home, at

around 11 am, he found the house empty, except for the presence of the servant. As time went by, SAH learned that his relatives, Ibrahim Hasan and Abdallah Husain (twenty-eight to thirty years old), were the people who had abducted the children. During this tragic and traumatic experience, SAH did not receive any official or legal support.<sup>207</sup> The whole action seemed to have been well prepared with the consent of the local officials and police. They were not willing to support SAH in any of his efforts to get his children back (Hussein 1920:111). SAH suffered a great deal of public opposition, insults and religious fanaticism. In all his emotional turmoil, he experienced God's protection from any physical violence (:112). Christians from all denominations were gathering for a service in the SPM house, three days later on July 19, 1903, and expressed their support for SAH. Outside the masses were gathering and had instigated a riot so that the attendants of the service had to escape from the compound through the back door. A day later, on July 20 Girgis Ya'quub came to comfort SAH at Kupfernagel's request. SAH found himself in a dramatic personal crisis; he was feeling physically weak, emotionally exhausted, and his life was threatened (Sauer 2005:261) He sent an appeal for protection to the German Consulate, which resulted in an invitation by the Consul General to come to Alexandria. SAH accepted this invitation and travelled to Alexandria on July 22, 1903. When all attempts by the General Consul failed to bring a solution to the problem<sup>208</sup>, SAH, after two weeks of standstill, went for help to Dr Murch of the American Mission. Together they went to Rev Akhnukh Fanus, the representative of the Coptic Evangelical Church of Egypt, who had his office in San Stefano, Alexandria. He wrote a petition to the Minister of Interior, but SAH's friends from the American Mission advised him to withdraw his complaint in order to continue to live in Egypt and to minister with the SPM (Hussein 1920:115-116). Regarding his children they encouraged him to wait until they might come back to him voluntarily. SAH was comforted and agreed to their advice (:116). As Kupfernagel had returned to Aswan at the end of July to follow up on the incident, SAH was not allowed to return to Aswan and expressed his disappointment at the SPM's inability to protect his life (Sauer 2005:261-262). Unfortunately, although the abduction of SAH's children amounted to a severe crisis for the SPM in general and SAH personally, the relationship between Kupfernagel and SAH did not improve, but actually deteriorated further since Kupfernagel renewed his accusations against his Nubian co-worker and regarded SAH as the main reason for the critical situation of the SPM in Aswan (:262-264).

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<sup>207</sup> This shocking and traumatic experience had a lasting effect on SAH. He described the event and his unsuccessful attempt to get his children back and his emotional state extensively and in great very detail (Hussein 1920:108-116). Cf also report by Kupfernagel (SP 1903:74-76).

<sup>208</sup> The Consul General had listened to SAH's report and immediately contacted the deputy of the Khedive who then promised to look into the matter, yet without any practical result.



Regarding SAH's future, the SPM Board held differing positions on the issue. As Wittekindt suggested dismissing SAH, Kumm offered to employ him in order to save him for the ministry. J Lepsius (Deutsche Orientmission) had suggested employing SAH for their work among Muslims in Shumla, Bulgaria. The SPM board asked SAH to search for temporary work in Alexandria, answer Kupfernagel's accusation and consider his transfer to the DOM ministry in Bulgaria. As SAH had understood the letter from the SPM as his dismissal, Ziemendorff opposed this interpretation. After having acquired a deeper understanding of SAH's situation, he had developed a more sympathetic attitude towards the much-troubled Nubian co-worker. While SAH was still in Alexandria, his two older daughters, Sarah and Ruqaiya, were married on October 22, 1903 (:262-264).

### **6.1.12 SAH's first trip to Germany – a turning point (1903-1904)**

In the beginning of November 1903, SAH received a letter from Miss von Zitzewitz, which he interpreted in his depressive mood as an order to come to Germany.<sup>209</sup> With great hope and aspirations, SAH responded promptly in the affirmative, as he saw the hand of God at work (Hussein 1920:116). The next day, he started his journey and arrived safely in Germany after eight days. He was overwhelmed by the heartfelt welcome of the SPM workers when he arrived in Wiesbaden on November 13, 1903 (:116; Sauer 2005:269). During his stay at the home office, he received news about his children. Sarah, his oldest daughter, had died soon after she arrived in Abu Hoor and Ruqaiya had been married there. Abbaas was sent to his relatives to Suez to earn some money and Maryam, his youngest daughter, was living with her sister Ruqaiya in Abu Hoor (Hussein 1920:118). Kupfernagel was greatly disappointed when he learned about SAH's invitation to Germany. From his perspective, he regarded this move from the SPM Board as a vote of no confidence in him. As he was in a physical and emotional state of exhaustion and felt deeply hurt, he expressed a harsh verdict on SAH, calling him a hypocrite, adulterer, liar, apostate and intriguer (Sauer 2005:264). After lengthy discussions the SPM Board eventually decided in their meeting on March 1, 1904 to dismiss Kupfernagel, leaving him to set the date of departure from Aswan to avoid additional hardship. He officially ceased to be a SPM missionary on August 31, 1904 (Minutes SPM 25.07.1904:25). Th Ziemendorff had taken the full responsibility for SAH's presence with the SPM and committed himself especially to care for SAH (Sauer 2005:269). Through his pastoral care and by listening to SAH's opinion and explanations, Ziemendorff and the Board arrived at a

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<sup>209</sup> “Da, gerade in diesen Tagen, erhielt ich aus Wiesbaden die Weisung, mich umgehend aufzumachen und dort hinzukommen. Das war gewiß Gottes Stimme!”(Hussein 1920:116).

much better understanding of the situation and person of SAH. The relationship improved immensely and developed into a trusting relationship.

The misunderstanding regarding the invitation had turned into a win-win situation for the SPM and SAH. SAH was encouraged by the Christian fellowship, especially as he was cared for by the Ziemendorff family so well. He was strengthened and slowly regained his vitality (Hussein 1920:119).<sup>210</sup> The problems with Kumm and the severe accusations by Kupfernagel had had an effect on the Board members, but were gradually overcome in time and through a better knowledge of the person of SAH (Sauer 2005:269). SAH was given time to recover from all his setbacks and challenges. Requests from the Helpers Unions to be visited by SAH were turned down as they still saw a need for SAH's recovery and recuperation (SP 1903:91). As SAH shared in the daily work in Wiesbaden, he was recognized as a gifted, well-educated and valuable co-worker (Hohenlohe 1914:14). Ziemendorff saw SAH's potential as a teacher and interpreter (Sauer 2005:269 fn 304).

The SPM was reorganizing its work and looking for new missionaries to make a new beginning after the breakdown and crisis during the early years (1900-1904). J S Enderlin, L Zimmerlin and E Gonnermann were recruited and started their training in Wiesbaden. With all his language skills, SAH acted as their Arabic teacher and gave the three new missionaries a cultural introduction. At the same time he accompanied them during their visits to the supporting churches. Thus, they also got to know SAH and one of the *Helpers Unions* in Eisenach committed themselves to raise financial support for SAH. It was a privilege for the SPM to have SAH, a man of the *first hour*, with them in Wiesbaden as the SPM dared to consider a new beginning. His experience, insights, and his cultural and linguistic competence were a great asset for the new group that was to be sent out. Likewise, it was a privilege for SAH to be part of this new beginning as he had suffered from the failure in Gizaira, the challenging work relationship with Kupfernagel and his strong accusations, the loss of his mentor and supporter Kumm, and the abduction of his four children who he had cared for in such a committed and caring way. In Wiesbaden, SAH had experienced his rehabilitation, although his future status was explicitly defined as "assistant" and not as "missionary" (Minutes SPM 01.03.1904:53; Sauer 2005:270). The time in Germany came to an end, when on October 7, 1904, J Enderlin and L Zimmerlin were ordained in Wiesbaden by Revs

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<sup>210</sup> Nevertheless it is notable that SAH summarized his complete year in Germany in only one sentence. "Ein Jahr oder etwas länger weilte ich bei den lieben Freunden im Missionshause in Wiesbaden und habe mich dort recht gestärkt und neue Lebenskraft gewonnen" (Hussein 1920:119). At the end of his stay, SAH was invited to sign the guest book of the Ziemendorff family in Emser Street 12 in Wiesbaden (1881-1940). He wrote a short entry in German and Arabic saying: "Jesus allein (Arabic: Yasuu' faqat). The guestbook is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden.

Ziemendorff, Wittekindt, and Rappard and the whole group, including E Gonnermann and SAH, were sent to Egypt.

### **6.1.13 Summary**

It was by divine arrangement that Guinness found SAH while he was in Aswan unaware that he would meet his former student. Kumm was able to see the potential in SAH, inspire him for the exploration and colportage tour and direct him according to the vision. SAH identified with the vision and longed to start a new work in Dongola. Kumm, the visionary SPM traveling secretary, treated SAH as equal and enabled him to work in full responsibility. Interpersonal conflicts with the first missionary sent from German, failure in Gizaira, the loss of his first gospel translation into Nubian, lack of clear guidance and the abduction of his children threw SAH into a deep crisis. His major contributions to the Nubian cause were the exploration tour through Nubia, preparing a spiritual map and coming up with meaningful data. The exploration tour had shown the need for the gospel since there were no known Christians. During this trip he made his first attempt in translating the Gospel of John and parts of the Gospel of Matthew, compiling a word list, reading book, primer and doing work on a grammar reference. His first visit to Germany provided emotional and physical relief and restoration. Trust building with the board members of SPM and with the new team. SAH became involved in teaching, visiting supporters and becoming part of the core group that restarted the ministry, yet he was a native indigenous evangelist and the last stakeholder who had remained in ministry.

## **6.2 New beginning, development and consolidation (1904-1914)**

SAH was the only first generation SPM worker that was also able to be a part of the new era of the SPM work. He had experienced an enthusiastic beginning, disappointing interpersonal conflicts, failures, crisis situations and the abduction of his children. Yet, he had come to Germany at exactly the right time. He was privileged to shape and train a new generation of workers and to develop the much needed trust relationship with them and the SPM chairman and board. This second phase of the SPM work in Egypt was going to be the most productive phase in SAH's ministry life. At the age of forty-one, he was at the zenith of his strength and able to contribute greatly in various ministry fields of the mission in line with his great potential.

### **6.2.1 Return to Egypt (1904)**

A party of eight persons left for Aswan on November 24, 1904. The three missionaries and SAH were accompanied by Th Ziemendorff, his wife Adelheid, their daughter Hanna and the volunteer nurse, Anita R uthnick. The journey went well and they arrived safely in Alexandria. Before they continued to Cairo, they visited some of the existing mission stations in the Mediterranean city. In Cairo they visited some ministry places and did some sightseeing in the capital as well (Hussein 1920:119). Since A Ziemendorff fell sick on the second day, she had to be hospitalized in Victoria Hospital in Cairo. As no quick recovery was to be expected, Enderlin and Zimmerlin were sent on to Aswan, whereas Gonnermann and SAH stayed with the Ziemendorffs and R uthnick in Cairo. With no visible improvement in sight, SAH was also sent to Aswan before Christmas to support the struggling missionaries (:119). The challenging part of his return to Aswan was certainly the question of whether he would be received in a hostile manner and rejected or would receive a peaceful reception by his compatriots. Kupfernagel had communicated to Germany as recently as in August 1904 that SAH would still be in danger if he returned to Aswan, but Enderlin and Zimmerlin did not confirm any aggressive attitude towards SAH and encouraged his arrival. All apprehension proved to be without substance as he was received well (Hohenlohe 1914:16). As A Ziemendorff's health problem could not be solved quickly, Gonnermann and R uthnik travelled to Aswan as well.<sup>211</sup> The news of A Ziemendorff's death in Alexandria on January 9, 1905 reached the three men shortly after SAH's arrival in Aswan (Hussein 1920:119). Soon afterwards, Ziemendorff and his daughter Hanna joined the new team in Aswan and supported them in structuring the beginning of a new ministry phase.<sup>212</sup>

### **6.2.2 New developments in the work in Aswan (1905)**

Besides cleaning the SPM facilities on the compound, SAH's main task was to be the language instructor for the new missionaries and to continue their cultural introduction. The

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<sup>211</sup> They travelled in company of the elderly Miss Ackermann from Eisleben who went to Aswan for health reasons (Hohenlohe 1914:16).

<sup>212</sup> From March 6-15, 1905, Ziemendorff and his daughter travelled with Enderlin to Wadi Halfa where they met the American missionary Giffin (AM). Ziemendorff discussed with him the possible involvement of the SPM in the Blue Nile region (Hohenlohe 1914:16). Ziemendorff and his daughter developed such a love for the work of the SPM in Aswan and felt an increasing ownership and burden for the ministry that they came to Aswan in winter 1905 and in the years 1909-1912.

mission had agreed to allow Dr Schacht to use the compound for a polyclinic.<sup>213</sup> SAH started to be involved in evangelistic work among the waiting patients.<sup>214</sup>

### **6.2.3 The return of SAH's children and his third marriage (1905, 1906)**

As a totally unexpected encouragement, SAH experienced the return of his two younger children Maryam and Abbaas. They had obviously heard of his return and chosen by their own will to return to their father as they still remembered his love towards them (:119; Götte [s a]:22). Spiritually, they were cared for by the SPM missionaries and educationally Maryam was sent to be trained at the American Mission boarding school in Luxor while Abbaas attended the boys' school of the same mission in Luxor (:120).

After the death of his Nubian wife in 1896, SAH had remained unmarried for about ten years. On April 30, 1906 SAH married Fariida, a former student of the American Mission School in Luxor (Hohenlohe 1914:17; SP 1906:63).

### **6.2.4 Extension of the work in Aswan (1906)**

At the end of October 1906, Dr W G Fröhlich and his wife arrived in Alexandria where they were received by Enderlin. Fröhlich started a small polyclinic in Aswan and enjoyed the manifold support of SAH as assistant and interpreter (Unruh 1944:7) and as evangelist during the visits in the villages around Aswan, Daraw and in Nubia (:7-9; Fröhlich 1926:31-32).

### **6.2.5 Extension of the work in Daraw (1907)**

Due to the presence of Dr Fröhlich, the Swiss ophthalmologist, the SPM was able to open a new branch of the work in Daraw. A place was rented close to the train station. The activities of this branch were bible studies and medical work. The SPM Board approved the opening of the new work in their meeting in June (Minutes SPM 18.06.1907:65; Hohenlohe 1914:18). In November 1907, SAH was called to join Enderlin as evangelist and live in Daraw. In Aswan, the SPM employed Shenuda Nakhel as an assistant in his place. Since the SPM team was not satisfied with Shenuda's work he was dismissed and SAH called back to Aswan at the beginning of 1908 (:18).

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<sup>213</sup> Schacht had started a dispensary for tourists in Aswan in January 1904. Since the SPM compound was not used, he considered buying the property from the SPM to use it for a boarding house and a sanatorium (Sauer 2005:265). On June 4, 1904 the SPM Women's Committee suggested making two rooms on the compound available to Dr Schacht (:420-421).

<sup>214</sup> It is striking that in his biography SAH covers the years between 1905 and 1910 only by referring to events regarding his family situation: the return of Maryam and Abbaas in May 1905, their baptism in February 1910, their school education, and their possible future employments in the context of the SPM ministry (Hussein 1920:119-120).

## 6.2.6 Another exploratory trip to the south (1908)

Despite the advance to the area north of Aswan, the SPM had not given up its primary vision to extend the work further south. Thus, they were continuously looking for opportunities to implement their original vision and tried to constantly reconnect with the Nubians south of Aswan. This is evidenced by another seventeen-day trip by Enderlin, SAH and Abbaas to the northern district of Lower Nubia in July 1908 (SP 1909:13-15). SAH wrote a detailed report of his observations during the journey and commented on the drawbacks of the Aswan Dam for the Kunuuzi Nubians, especially since the government had decided to raise the dam by another six meters in 1909. The construction work was completed in 1912.<sup>215</sup>

## 6.2.7 Cooperation with H Schäfer (1908)

Early in 1908, SAH was back in Aswan. It seems that SAH was not able to commit much time to translating New Testament texts during the previous three years. But this situation was about to change decisively. In 1906 the Egyptologist Schäfer discovered Old Nubian manuscripts that contained New Testament references. In his search for a Nubian who was able to translate those New Testament passages into modern Nubian Schäfer was brought in contact with the SPM. It was SAH who translated the texts into Kunuuzi and made them available to Schäfer through G Roeder, who was working with the Antiquities Service in Nubia (Schäfer 1917:11). When Schäfer came to Aswan in September 1908, he immediately contacted SAH and asked for his cooperation. The SPM agreed and allowed SAH to work with Schäfer for one day per week (SP Supplement 1909:2-3). They started their linguistic cooperation in November 1908. The SPM released SAH for this promising linguistic work, which was characterized by enduring mutual respect and appreciation. The contact with H Schäfer in September had led SAH to resume his translation work. He used the time between September and November to translate the Gospel of John (Schäfer 1917:11-12). From then on, a substantial part of SAH's ministry was his linguistic work.<sup>216</sup> The main concentration lay on the translation, revision and publication of the four Gospels into the Kunuuzi dialect. In May 1909, the SPM Board agreed to the request by H Schäfer to grant SAH a one-month

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<sup>215</sup> The report was published in the SP 1909:13-15 and selectively included in SAH's autobiography (Hussein 1920:120-128) under the title *Samuels Klage über den Untergang seiner Heimat* (Samuel's lamentation about the drowning of his native country). Enderlin also wrote a report about this trip (SP 1908:95-97).

<sup>216</sup> Cf 8.3-8.10 which deals exhaustively with the linguistic contribution of SAH, including scripture translation, writing ethnographical texts, language tools, such as a wordlist, grammar and primer, and correspondence in Kunuuzi Nubian.

leave for linguistic work in Berlin with the Egyptologist (Hohenlohe 1914:20)<sup>217</sup> and also with Prof Meinhof in Hamburg (Minutes SPM 06.05.1909:79).

### **6.2.8 Travelling to Nubia (1909)**

From June 16, 1909 onwards, SAH had the privilege of attending the first conference for converts from an Islamic background in Zaitun, north of Cairo (SP 1909:61-63, 73-75). In November and December 1909, Dr Fröhlich took SAH with him on a medical outreach trip to Nubia (SP 1910:19-21, 27-29; Hohenlohe 1914:20). During the same time, SAH translated the Gospel of Matthew together with H Junker (SP 1909:95). He was also working on the translation of the other gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. It was hoped that these five books of the NT would be finished by February 1910. SAH also started to correspond with Schäfer in his Kunuuzi vernacular by sending letters and postcards beginning in May 1909 (Schäfer 1917:14).

### **6.2.9 Baptism of SAH's children Maryam and Abbaas (1910)**

While SAH's two older daughters had left school and gone back to Abu Hoor and had been married to Nubian relatives, Maryam and Abbaas received their training in the schools of the American Mission in Luxor and Assiut. As they grew in the Christian faith, they asked for their baptism. It was while Rev Th Ziemendorff was in Aswan that SAH's children were baptised in the newly built SPM church<sup>218</sup> on February 6, 1910. The service was attended by many Egyptian Christians (SP 1910:17-19).<sup>219</sup> In July of the same year, Abbaas Daniel (fifteen years old) completed the elementary and preparatory government school in Aswan and Luxor and qualified for secondary school. He was sent to the American College of the American Mission in Assiut (Hohenlohe 1914:20). Maryam (seventeen years old) was expected to finish her teacher's education after one or two years in order to become a teacher for Nubian children at the SPM School. SAH's hope for Abbaas was that he might become "a tool in the harvest field of Christ" (Hussein 1920:120). The SPM Board considered employing Maryam and Abbaas after they finished their education (Minutes SPM 10.10.1911:91).

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<sup>217</sup> This trip actually did not take place due to SAH's involvement in the building activities going on in Aswan. Erroneously, in some sources the decision by the SPM Board was taken as an indication that the trip had in fact taken place (Hohenlohe 1914:20; Held 1925:63). Schäfer might have forgotten that SAH did not visit him in 1909 when he mentioned that SAH spent again some months in Berlin during the summer 1911 (1917:37).

<sup>218</sup> The new SPM chapel was built in 1909 and inaugurated on December 25, 1909 (SP 1910:14-17, 22).

<sup>219</sup> The date given by SAH for the baptism on January 19, 1910 (Hussein 1920:120) is not correct.

### **6.2.10 SAH's work in the new bookshop (1910)**

Beside his broad participation in the SPM's work, SAH was made responsible for a small bookshop that was part of the entrance area of the new SPM church and inaugurated on April 1, 1910 by J S Enderlin (SP 1910:56-57). The bookshop and its attached reading room provided a suitable atmosphere to engage in many evangelistic conversations. During the summer, SAH, his son Abbaas and Taufiiq, another convert, attended the second conference (August 30-September 3, 1910) for converts in Zaitun, north of Cairo (Hohenlohe 1914:20).

### **6.2.11 Writing the first part of his autobiography (1910)**

After a number of people had asked SAH to write down God's story with him, SAH followed this request in all humility while still being aware that the details might not be as exact as one would wish. It seems that SAH had completed the manuscript by July 1910. The last events included in his story are the baptism of his children in February and their completion of the school year in July 1910.<sup>220</sup> As for himself, SAH mentioned only that he was about to complete the translation of the New Testament into Nubian (Hussein 1920:120).<sup>221</sup> Beyond this, SAH referred to people being in distress due to the expectation of a comet descending to earth (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer 10.06.1910). In the same letter, he also referred to the unrest among the Egyptian population following the assassination of the Prime Minister Butrus Ghali in February 1910.

### **6.2.12 SAH's second trip to Germany – a finishing point (1911)**

As SAH could not follow Schäfer's invitation to come to Berlin in 1909, Schäfer renewed his request to the SPM board to send SAH for linguistic reasons to Berlin in September and October 1911. The SPM board agreed to Schäfer's request (Minutes SPM 30.05.1911:88). On September 1, 1911, he arrived in Berlin and spent about five weeks in Schäfer's house in Berlin-Steglitz to revise the four Gospels in the Kunuuzi dialect with Schäfer (Schäfer 1917:13; Nubian Letter SAH September 11, 1911). He also worked with D Westermann<sup>222</sup> and Enderlin in Berlin for about two weeks to produce a Nubian primer (Hohenlohe 1914:21; Schäfer 1917:14; Nubian Letter SAH November 14, 1911). From Berlin he was sent to

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<sup>220</sup> In the English translation of the second part of his autobiography, SAH spoke of about 16 years that had passed since he had written the first part (Schönberger 1927:1). Unruh (1944:5) also dates the autobiography to the year 1910.

<sup>221</sup> It seems that SAH's mention of the completion of the New Testament is actually a reference to the completion of the first draft of the remaining books of the New Testament beyond the four gospels. SAH was working on the revision of these translations between April 1912 and June 1913 (Noack 1934:1).

<sup>222</sup> D Westermann was appointed as a board member of the SPM and attended his first board meeting on October 10, 1911.



Hamburg as he was invited by C Meinhof<sup>223</sup> for some recordings of the Nubian Kunuuzi dialect. He spent three days in Hamburg where he enjoyed the city with its beautiful houses and the big ships in the harbour. But he was happy to leave Hamburg since the weather was very cold. He returned to Wiesbaden again and spoke in some Christian meetings in the Wiesbaden area. He returned to Egypt in the second half of November.<sup>224</sup>

### **6.2.13 Extension of the work in Edfu (1911)**

As the SPM ministry was extended to Edfu in 1911 after a request by a Sheikh to establish a school and serve the women of the place (Hohenlohe 1914:20-21), Lina Götte, Gertrud Noack and Irma Pauer worked as teachers in the school and were supported by two local female teachers. SAH was not involved in this new branch. It was only during World War I that he had to take care of the property and pay rent to the owner. Unfortunately, because of the uncertain and delayed return of the SPM workers, he could not prevent the handover of the SPM's assets to the owner and their auction on January 19, 1921. Due to the lack of finances and to SAH's weak health, the place could no longer be maintained (Unruh 1944:37-38).

### **6.2.14 Publication of the four gospels by the BFBS (1912)**

At the beginning of 1912, SAH lost his friend and mentor Rev Ziemendorff who passed away after a severe heart attack during his annual visit on February 28, 1912 in Alexandria. SAH had been working on the translation of the four gospels with the support of Schäfer and Junker from 1908-1911. After the final revision had been completed by Schäfer, the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) published them in 1912 using the Latin script and made them available for distribution (Enjil Yesu 1912).

### **6.2.15 Extension of the SPM work in Daraw and Aswan (1912)**

SAH was encouraged by three additional important developments that took place in 1912. Between March and June a house was built on the new compound in Daraw to host a new polyclinic. In Aswan a new strip of land was bought to provide an easy exit to the east of the town (Hohenlohe 1914:22). In autumn the hospital, Dr Fröhlich had been asking for since 1906, was built and finally inaugurated on January 27, 1913. In the first half of 1912, the SPM

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<sup>223</sup> C Meinhof, director of the Kolonial Institut in Hamburg, became a member of the SPM board in December 1918 and remained on the board until 1927.

<sup>224</sup> SAH signed the guestbook of the Ziemendorff family on November 20, 1911 saying, "(1) By grace we are saved through Jesus Christ. (2) Let us remain in this grace and love of the brothers. (3) The undersigned your brother in the Lord S A Hissein".

was asked by two missionaries of the Egypt General Mission to start working among Nubian men in Cairo (Hohenlohe 1914:22).

### **6.2.16 Revision of the remaining books of the New Testament (1912-1913)**

Inspired by the publication of the four Gospels, SAH worked tirelessly on the translation of the other NT books. Between April 1912 and June 1913 (Noack 1934:1), SAH focused very much on the revision of the New Testament books of which he had completed the first draft version in August 1910 (Nubian Letter SAH August 13, 1910)<sup>225</sup> Almost twenty years later, the SPM worker G Noack typed this collection for limited circulation.<sup>226</sup>

### **6.2.17 Publication of the Nubian primer (1913)**

Another fruit of SAH's linguistic contribution was the publication of the Nubian primer that he had worked on with Westermann and Enderlin before the end of his trip to Germany in November 1911. The primer which was meant to help the Kunuuzi Nubians receive an introduction to the writing system of their own vernacular was published in 1913 (Primer 1913).

### **6.2.18 Exploration trip to Dongola (1913)**

The SPM's original vision was still alive in its workers and board members. In its meeting on June 13, 1912, the SPM Board discussed again the extension of the SPM work to the south (Minutes SPM 13.06.1912:121). In autumn 1913, Enderlin and SAH went for an extended trip to the south which took them five weeks from October 17 until November 23 (Hussein 1932:128-153; SP 1914:22-26). They were able to obtain promises and permissions to start a new ministry in Wadi Halfa, for which E Schäfer and his wife were appointed.

### **6.2.19 Summary**

This ministry phase of SAH was based on a restored relationship between SAH and the SPM leadership and a trust relationship with the new foreign missionaries. SAH became their teacher and advisor. He applied and developed his evangelistic gifts among patients and educated people in Aswan and during village tours. He was involved in various exploration tours especially in 1908 and 1913. The last tour finally led to substantial steps regarding the

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<sup>225</sup> The collection of NT books contained all the books from Acts to Revelations, except 1 and 2 Peter, James and Hebrews.

<sup>226</sup> For detailed information cf 4.5.2.5.

expansion of the work to the South. In autumn 1914 a new station in Wadi Halfa was planned. SAH was part of the beginning in Daraw where a Nubian colony had settled due to the Aswan Dam construction. In 1910 he became responsible for the bookshop and reading room in Aswan. He also followed the desire of the SPM supporters to write his life story. By doing so he not only told his life story but he introduced the reader into the various cultural expressions of Nubian life. The distinct mark of this phase is the deep involvement of SAH in linguistic work. He was privileged to cooperate with German scholars which led to the most fruitful time of his linguistic production. He translated Biblical books, such as the four gospels and almost all other NT books, wrote ethnographic texts, Nubian letters and literary tools, such as the Nubian primer. 1911 brought him to Germany for the second time for revision work, language samples and the Nubian primer, and visiting the headquarters of the SPM in Wiesbaden, along with many SPM supporters in Germany.

### **6.3 Ministry reduced – World War I and beyond (1914-1924)**

After these encouraging years during which the work of the SPM increased in the number of workers, ministry places and buildings and most of all in its missionary dimensions, another crisis phase was on its way.

#### **6.3.1 Outbreak of World War I (1914-1915)**

During the summer months, the foreign SPM workers went for a holiday in cooler areas of the Middle East. Rev Oertzen and his wife took SAH's son Abbaas with them to Palestine to spend his holidays with them. SAH and his daughter Maryam remained at the SPM station. When the news of the outbreak of the war between Germany and the other western states reached Egypt in August 1914, the German workers of the SPM were no longer allowed to return to their work places and had to leave for Germany. Fortunately, D W Fröhlich who was Swiss was allowed to continue for another year. But at the end of September 1915, he also had to leave Egypt with his family, and SAH was left behind on his own. He became the trustee, administrator and maintainer of the property, but never gave up hope that one day the missionaries of the SPM might return (Hussein 1932:154-155).

#### **6.3.2 SAH's activities during and after World War I (1914-1924)**

The fact that most of the European missionaries of the SPM had been deported brought some changes in the work schedule of SAH who was able to continue the work with the Fröhlichs and Maryam, his daughter.

### **6.3.2.1 Work until the deportation of the Fröhlich family (1914-1915)**

Although, SAH was only little involved in the work of the SPM schools during the early years, he became increasingly active by teaching religious classes in the school. The Fröhlichs were teaching music and knitting classes. Thus, the whole team was supporting Maryam who had been officially running the SPM School since 1914 that was attended by more than forty students (Held 1925:71).

Basically, SAH was responsible for the bookshop and to continue his translation work. He also supported Dr Fröhlich in his medical services. Due to the lack of nurses, the hospital could not be continued on a large scale. But Fröhlich was able to continue the medical ministry with the help of his wife. In September 1914, he was granted permission to open the polyclinic again. Per each clinic day he was able to see between thirty to fifty patients and perform some operations on a weekly basis. Up to ten patients were admitted to the hospital. A Fröhlich, the wife of W Fröhlich held devotions for the waiting female patients. SAH and Fröhlich spoke to the male patients who were present in the polyclinic or the hospital. As the Copts seem to side with the British, they developed a spirit of opposition towards the SPM work. Yet, the Muslims were seeking contact with the missionaries and attended in good numbers a Bible study on the Gospel of Mark (:70-71).

In September 1915, the English authorities deported Fröhlich and his family leaving the work solely to SAH and Maryam (:71; Hussein 1932:155).

### **6.3.2.2 Work until the return of the SPM missionaries (1915-1924)**

Maryam and SAH were able to continue the school for another year until they were forced to close it down in autumn 1916 due to the increasing Coptic pressure. Maryam continued as a teacher with the Egypt General Mission in Ismaelia (Unruh 1944:18; Hussein 1932:155). In November 1920, she got married to Prince Albert Hamilton and moved with him to Khartoum since Hamilton had become the BFBS agent for the region (Unruh 1944:35-36).

Abbaas continued his studies at the theological seminary of the AM in Cairo and ministered during his vacation time to Nubian men in Cairo. Due to increasing health problems, he was not able to complete his studies. In January 1918, he passed away and was buried in Aswan (:20-22; Hussein 1932:158-164).

SAH continued by his own. In May 1916, he married Brinza, a relative of Rizk, a former evangelist of the SPM in Daraw (Unruh 1944:18). Regarding his work SAH had to write monthly reports to the SPM and was responsible for the financial issues in the SPM places. He sold literature in the small bookshop, continued his translation work, sought

opportunities to share the gospel, and was entirely committed to protecting the SPM property in Edfu, Daraw and Aswan. The stations in Daraw and Edfu had to be closed down and for financial reasons the national workers had to be dismissed (Schäfer 1917:37; Unruh 1944:11-26). The financial support during these years was mainly raised by the Swiss friends of the SPM. L Rubli, preacher and SPM board member, was in contact with the Swiss supporters and arranged SAH's financial support via the AM (Held 1925:73; Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:30). Further, price increases, hunger, and sickness resulting from the war were part of the daily challenges in the life of SAH (:29).

Although SAH was missing the fellowship with the SPM workers, he was an active member of the Coptic Evangelical Church in Aswan. In 1919 he was appointed an elder and deputy preacher (Hussein 1932:163). At the end of 1920, the SPM courageously published the first part of SAH's autobiography (Hussein 1920).

### **6.3.3 Confiscation of the SPM property**

During World War I the British government put an eye on the SPM property in Aswan. In summer of 1916, SAH was summoned to meet an English officer for interrogation about his relationship with the SPM and his responsibilities towards the property (Hussein 1932:167-168). This was followed by an inspection by an English inspector with the local city director (:168-169). In autumn 1916, the Public Custodian in Cairo asked the agent of the National Bank of Egypt in Aswan to get the property contracts of the SPM and forward them to him. SAH unhappily complied with this request (:169-171). The end of the war in November 1918 raised hopes regarding the return of SPM. The local population constantly approached SAH, asking for news about the missionaries (Unruh 1944:26-27). Egyptian newspapers spread the news that all Germans that were deported from English colonies in the beginning of the war are allowed to return. In answering a request by the SPM board, the Property Trust in London clearly stated that a return of the SPM was not feasible and that the stations in Daraw and Aswan were to be handed over to the American Mission (Hussein 1932:173-174). The missiologist E Schlunk and the SPM chairman W Ziemendorff went to Britain but were unable to change the opinion and decision of the Property Trust (:174 fn 1).<sup>227</sup>

On January 19, 1921<sup>228</sup>, the station in Edfu had to be closed and the mission's and the missionaries' private property had to be sold on auction (:171-172; Unruh 1944:37-38). In 1922, the Karmel Mission had invited the Enderlins and C Wolter to start a new work among

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<sup>227</sup> This information was most likely added by Enderlin who had edited SAH's autobiography.

<sup>228</sup> SAH referred to January 22, 1921 (Hussein 1932:171).

Arabs in Akko, Palestine.<sup>229</sup> On their way to Palestine, after long and difficult negotiations in Cairo, the Enderlins and C Wolter were granted a two-month visit to Aswan by the Public Custodian (Hussein 1932:174-176). They were allowed to leave the boat in Port Said and travel to Aswan in order to recover their private property. The most difficult experience during their stay in Aswan was the visit of missionaries from the AM in April 1923. They very openly discussed how to use the SPM places in the future in the presence of SAH, Enderlins and Wolter (Unruh 1944:48).

In summer 1923, SAH wrote a petition (Hussein 1932:176-177) in which he mentioned the benefits of the presence of the SPM missionaries, their loving medical service to the local population and the influence of their ethical behavior. Their houses had become “houses of truth” (:176). In the name of the Kunuuzi mayors, village councils and elders, SAH requested the return of the SPM workers. He sent the petition that was written in Arabic and signed by signatures and stamps<sup>230</sup> to S Zwemer<sup>231</sup> for translation into proper English and to be forwarded to the Property Trust in London (:177). Following this petition, the Public Custodian asked the agent of the National Bank of Egypt in Aswan to take over the SPM property in Daraw and Aswan and receive all keys. SAH being paralyzed emotionally, complied with this request after having received an official receipt by the agent. He left the compound, returned to his house behind the hospital and cried out to God in utter despair (:177-178).

In spring 1924, the Property Trust in London sent a representative to Egypt who met with Zwemer, Gairdner and Swan in Cairo. His feedback to the Property Trust in London indicated a decisive change in opinion and decision making. In July 1924, the Property Trust issued a decision saying that the SPM was allowed to return to Aswan without further conditions (:179). After this incredible and unexpected news, Enderlins and C Wolter terminated their work in Palestine and arrived together with G von Massenbach in Aswan on November 4, 1924. Based on a letter that Enderlin had received from the Public Custodian in Cairo, the agent of the National Bank of Egypt in Aswan handed over the property and returned the keys to the SPM missionaries (:181). Thus, after many draining years of uncertainty with regards to the future of the SPM work, SAH experienced the silent occupation of the compound and the hearty welcome of the population with overflowing joy

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<sup>229</sup> This opportunity arose through the mediation of the Swiss preacher L Rubli who was a board member of the SPM and the Karmel Mission.

<sup>230</sup> Illiterates who could not write their signature were given a small individual brass stamp that functioned as signature.

<sup>231</sup> S Zwemer was a friend and supporter of the SPM who had visited the SPM home office already in March 1907 (Guestbook of the Ziemendorff family, 1881-1940) and had come to Aswan twice (Hussein 1932:177).

and gratitude towards God and a renewed commitment to faithful ministry (Unruh 1944:21-22; SP 9, 1924:2-6; SP 1925:10-11).

### **6.3.4 Summary**

This third phase of the SPM history was introduced by the beginning of World War I which forced the missionaries to abandon their ministry leaving SAH behind. For SAH this phase can be characterized by loneliness, isolation, external pressures, emotional stress, numerous personal health issues and numerous familial deaths. As the steward for the SPM property, he had an exhausting time as he was caring for protecting and preserving the locations. In 1921, the Edfu station had to be abandoned. The years until 1924 stood under the pending question whether the SPM would be allowed to return to Aswan again. Nevertheless, SAH was able to continue some of his activities within the given political, legal, social, financial and medical limitations. His mobility was reduced to a minimum and he was not involved in itinerant ministry. He made some home visits and became an elder and deputy preacher in the Coptic Evangelical church in Aswan. In the bookshop he offered literature and involved people in discussions on their faith. Nubians were informally consulting him. When time allowed, he was translating Christian literature into Kuuuzi. Maintaining a Christian presence in the place and getting the Nubian population involved in a petition requesting the return of the missionaries were also essential contributions. Besides all this, he was occupied with writing report letters to Enderlin, Fröhlich and the SPM. Prayer, faith and trusting the promises of God had become the marks of his spirituality.

## **6.4 SAH's family life**

Developments in marital and family life have an effect on the well-being and the quality of the contributions of every evangelist. Since information about SAH's family is quite limited and is only to be found in various scattered sources and we are looking in this chapter for biographical data, we will present only a short summary about his family life.

### **6.4.1 His marriages**

Throughout his life time, SAH was officially married four times. Unfortunately, his marriage life was used by J Kupfernagel in the initial phase of the SPM (1900-1904) to discredit SAH (Sauer 2005:147ff).

#### **6.4.1.1 His first marriage (1885)**

When SAH returned to Nubia in 1885, he was a young man of twenty-two years who had forgotten the Nubian way of life. Soon, his family put pressure on him to marry (Hussein 1920:80-83). Eventually, he gave way, yet unconvinced that this was the right thing to do. The young Muslim girl that was chosen to be his wife was the daughter of his uncle. It was a Nubian custom to marry a cousin. His chosen niece was only between ten to twelve years old and still very small and light so that SAH described her as a doll (:80). Although it was illegal, the Nubians usually arranged marriages for daughters already at the beginning of their adolescence. The bridal price that was paid for her was ten Egyptian pounds.<sup>232</sup> The initial lack of knowledge regarding marriage customs led to a disastrous wedding night. He did not consummate the marriage with her. She left him and he became the laughter of the village people. Yet SAH was pleased with the breakup of this marriage and returned to his mother (:83).

#### **6.4.1.2 His second marriage (1887)**

As SAH became more familiar with the Nubian culture and extended his circle of acquaintance among his relative, he got to know a mature Nubian girl that was able to lead a household and care for children. As he knew her already, he asked for permission to marry her. Joyfully she was given to him (:83). They seem to have developed a pleasant relationship and had at least four children together. SAH does not mention whether they had more children who may have died at an early age. The four children were Sara, Ruqaiya, Maryam and Abbaas. Sadly, his wife died of Cholera in the year 1896 during his visit to Geneva when he had accepted an invitation by his Swiss friends. Of course, his wife was a Muslim at the time he married her, but SAH was certain that at the time of her death she was not far away from confessing her Christian faith.

#### **6.4.1.3 His third marriage (1906)**

After about ten years of a widower's life, SAH married a third time in April 1906. The name of his wife was Fariida and she was a student at the school of the AM in Luxor. She was a former Muslim who had become a Christian.<sup>233</sup> Unfortunately, the marriage that was arranged by the AM failed. SAH was not given the chance to talk to the young convert and get to know her prior to their marriage. She seemed to have been unsuitable, witless and ill-mannered (SP

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<sup>232</sup> This was equal to 200 German Marks. 25% of this sum was to be paid at the wedding, 25% after six month and the remaining 50% in case of a divorce (Hussein 1920:80).

<sup>233</sup> She was obviously a student at the same school of the AM in Luxor that was attended by Maryam, SAH's third daughter as well.



1916:80). Although the missionaries tried hard to save this marriage, they were not able to succeed. Fariida left SAH and after another four years he divorced her in 1910 (:80). Understandably, SAH did not mention this marriage in his autobiography. Altogether, information about this relationship is scarce indicating that this relationship had become a black spot in his life as a Christian evangelist.

#### **6.4.1.4 His fourth marriage (1916)**

In 1916 SAH married Brinza a relative of Rizk Efendi who was a former evangelist of the SPM in Daraw (1909-1914).<sup>234</sup> In a letter in September 1916, SAH describes in detail that he had agreed with the niece of Risk Effendi to marry her (Unruh 1944:18). The wedding took place in Daraw on May 21, 1916 (:18). SAH concludes his letter with the words that he thanks God from the bottom of his heart for his good gift to him and asks him to help him to live with her as a sincere, true, and devout Christian (:18). SAH mentioned in the second part of his autobiography that he had three girls and three boys with Brinza and that out of these six children only Wadia was still alive (Hussein 1932:156). It seems that Brinza's general health condition was not very strong. He describes at length that she once was seriously sick and that he thought that she would die, but she had recovered again by the mercy of God (:156-157; Unruh 1944:41). SAH had sent her to Luxor to her relatives although they had not proven to be very caring for her since she was married with SAH. Brinza was an orphan and it seemed that her relatives were pleased when they finally were able to give her into the care of SAH in 1916.<sup>235</sup>

#### **6.4.2 His children**

While SAH was in Geneva in 1896, he heard the news about the death of his second wife. He immediately returned to Abu Hoor to take care of his four children. He was working very hard as a farmer and a date tree owner to cover the material needs of his family. He may also have received some practical support by his immediate relatives. Nevertheless, SAH had to admit that the economic situation had become so critical that he was no longer able to care sufficiently for his family. Thus he felt urged to go to Cairo and look for work (Hussein 1920:90). While he was there, through the mediation of a Syrian friend he was offered the job of an interpreter for an English officer during the final battle against the Mahdists in 1898.

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<sup>234</sup> It is worth paying attention to the fact that SAH regarded this marriage as his second one (Hussein 1932:156). Maybe he regarded the first and third marriage not as real marriages since the first was not consummated and the third did not last long.

<sup>235</sup> After SAH and also his last son Wadia had died the SPM supported Brinza financially since they felt responsible for her due to SAH's faithful service throughout his life.

Based on the good relationship with his immediate family he was able to leave his four children in the close care of his half-sister (:90). After his return in 1898, he visited his children for a short time only to leave them again in the care of his sister. Facing the same financial challenges as before, he accepted the opportunity to work for the Egyptian Postal Service. First, he was offered work at the Aswan postal office, later he was transferred to the Shellaal office being the main office in the harbor area close to the building site of the barrage. With his income SAH was able to financially care for his family (:94).

The separation from his children continued also during the beginning phase of SAH's work with the SPM. As he joined the SPM in February 1900 and prepared for his long exploration and colportage trip through Nubia until Dongola in March of the same year, he again left his children in the responsibility of his close relatives. At the beginning and at the end of his trip he stopped in Abu Hoor to spend some days with his them.

When Kumm arranged for SAH to start the new mission station in Gizaira in May 1901, he was able to bring his children in June from Abu Hoor to Gizaira to live with him and under his immediate responsibility (SP 1901:101-102). The children may have been between the age of thirteen and five. It seems that while he had sent his two older daughters, Sarah and Ruqaiya, to the American Mission School in Luxor, Maryam and Abbaas had started in the SPM School in Aswan or were taught by SAH himself in Gizaira. After the closing down of Gizaira, SAH went back with his children to Abu Hoor where he spent some months during which he became quite sick (SP 1902:84). After his recovery and most probably at the beginning of the new school year SAH returned to Aswan, his youngest children being with him (SP 1902:96) and his oldest daughters most probably returned to the AM school in Luxor. Maryam and Abbaas may have been taught at the SPM School in Aswan. During this time, SAH's relatives had repeatedly been asking for the older girls to be given as wives to one of their sons. They also did not consider school education for girls valuable or necessary. As the girls were in their beginning adolescent years, in their opinion, the most preferable thing for them was to get married to their cousins according to the Nubian tradition. It also became obvious that the older girls were not really happy at the American Mission School in Luxor and had tried to escape several times.

During summer 1903, SAH was taking care of the mission compound while Kupfernagel and his family were on holiday. His children were living with him during the summer holidays. One day, SAH went to Gizaira to attend the funeral of a friend. This opportunity was seized by his relatives to abduct all four children. The girls were brought to Abu Hoor and Abbaas was taken by one of his uncles to Suez. SAH was deeply shocked and

tried to get his children back. Yet, he did not succeed and was left in despair. He sought for help from the AM and went to Luxor to meet with Dr Murch, the leading missionary there. Together they travelled to Alexandria to gain the support of Akhnukh Fanus, the official representative of the Protestant churches in Egypt, yet without success (Hussein 1920:108-116).

In October 1903, SAH travelled to Germany to stay more than a year in the training center of the SPM in Wiesbaden. While he was there, news reached him that his oldest daughter, Sarah, had died soon after her arrival in Abu Hoor. Ruqaiya was married to a relative and Maryam was staying with her (:116; SP 1908:96-97). Ruqaiya continued to stay in Abu Hoor. She had children and kept the relationship with her father. Her husband respected SAH very much (SP 1908:96-97). After Ruqaiya's husband had died she was remarried (Hussein 1932:192 fn 3; Herzfeld 1937:26). During occasional visits of the SPM missionaries she showed interest in the Bible message. After SAH's death, Ruqaiya inherited his house, which she sold later to Maryam.

After more than one year in Germany SAH returned to Aswan in December 1904. To his utter surprise, in May 1905, Abbaas first and then Maryam, returned to their father out of their own will and with the consent of their relatives. The mutual joy about their reunion was overwhelming (Hussein 1920:119). They had returned to SAH like the Prodigal Son to his father (:119).<sup>236</sup> Abbaas entered the SPM school in Aswan and Maryam was sent to the American Mission school in Luxor (:120). The two came to a personal faith commitment to follow Christ through the guidance of SAH and the missionaries of the SPM. 1908, Abbaas made a trip together with his father and Enderlin to the south and to Abu Hoor where they still met SAH's mother Amne.<sup>237</sup> Abbaas developed a good relationship with H Weil who had come to Aswan and Daraw in 1909 and taught Abbaas to play the trombone (SP 1910:81). During their Christmas holiday in December 1909, Maryam and SAH expressed their desire to get baptized. Both were baptized on February 6, 1910 in the newly built SPM Church that had been inaugurated on December 25, 1909, by Rev Ziemendorff (:120; SP 1910:17. Abbaas had struggled until he decided to ask for baptism (Götte 1925:18-22). At this occasion he chose the additional name Danyaal. Both, Maryam and Abbaas, were committed to serve Christ. They have kept their faith in Jesus and remained faithful until the end of their lives.

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<sup>236</sup> Maryam had been using the same picture in sharing her experience away from her father to L Götte (1925:18-22).

<sup>237</sup> SAH's mother died on November 28, 1920 (Unruh 1944:36).

#### **6.4.2.1 Maryam's education, work, and marriage**

After baptism, Maryam returned to Luxor to complete her school education at the AM girls' school (SP 1910:14; SP 1916:80). In the years 1910-1912, Maryam received teaching training (SP 1910:45). The SPM board expressed its intention to employ Maryam after passing her exams as teacher in the SPM school (Minutes SPM 10.10.1911:91). After she had passed her final exam in Assiut, Maryam was employed as a teacher at the SPM girls' school in Aswan in 1913. Her enthusiasm and motivation for teaching the children was striking and was happily noticed by the missionaries (SP 1913:32). When the school had to be closed down she took the initiative and obtained the license from the local authorities to open a girls' school in the SPM building in 1914. Despite the Coptic competition, about fifty girls, predominantly Muslims attended her classes. The Fröhlichs helped with music and knitting lessons. When Fröhlichs had to leave Egypt in summer 1915, Maryam continued the school with the help of her father who taught religious classes (SP 1915:11.13). When in December 1915 the Coptic school was re-opened they tried to win Maryam as a teacher on the condition that the SPM School would close, but SAH refused this request and closed the negotiations. He and Maryam remained loyal to the SPM (Unruh 1944:16-18). Due to the pressure of the Copts the number of the children in the SPM School decreased dramatically from forty-five to twenty-five (SP 1916:7.19). In autumn 1916 the SPM School was eventually closed. Fortunately, Maryam was offered a teaching position with the EGM in the Canal Zone, in Ismaelia (Unruh 1944:18). There she got acquainted with Prince Albert Hamilton, a British soldier from British-Guayana. After his military service Hamilton joined the BFBS. After he had asked SAH for permission to marry Maryam, they got engaged and then they were married by Dr. Alexander, an AM missionary, on November 17, 1920 in Cairo. SAH was unable to attend the wedding (Husseini 1932:165-166). But, as Hamilton was appointed agent of the BFBS in Khartoum, they immediately rode the train to Aswan and visited SAH on their way to their new assignment. They were received by SAH and Ruqaiya who was married in Abu Hoor and had come with her little daughter to meet the newly married couple before they would continue their journey (Unruh 1944:35-36). In Khartoum the house of the Bible Society caught fire. The Hamiltons lost everything, but were able to save their lives and the Bibles from the storeroom. They had three daughters and one son. In addition to Hamilton's responsibility for the BFBS in Khartoum he was also appointed director of the BFBS in Addis Ababa. There he came in contact with the Emperor Haile Selassie. Later, Hamilton was

ordained as Anglican priest (Massenbach 1952:21-23).<sup>238</sup> It was Maryams greatest desire that their son Hektor would continue the ministry that Abbaas had earlier started but was unable to complete due to his early death (:28).<sup>239</sup> Maryam regularly visited Aswan where she owned the house of her father. She kept contact with the mission. After she died in Asmara in 1975, Hamilton donated SAH's house to the EMO.<sup>240</sup>

#### **6.4.2.2 Abbaas Danyaal's education and early death**

Abbaas, the youngest son of SAH was very talented and sensitive. In Aswan he went to the Coptic boys' school (SP 1909:8). In summer 1910, he graduated from the AM school in Luxor and was allowed to enter the AM secondary school in Assiut (Hussein 1920:120). It was his father's conviction that he would become "a tool in the harvest field of our savior" (:120). The SPM board in Germany expressed its intention to appoint Abbaas as a SPM worker in the future (Minutes SPM 10.10.1911:91). Abbaas graduated from the AM College in Assiut in June 1914 with honors (Hussein 1932:158; SP 1913:68; SP 1914:16). Thus, the SPM board planned to send Abbaas to Jerusalem to get trained as a teacher at the training center of the Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem (Minutes SPM 17.10.1913:183). This plan was thwarted through the beginning of World War I. After a short visit to Aswan, Abbaas went to Cairo to study at the theological seminary of the AM beginning in autumn 1914. Abbaas was a diligent and smart student and was put under the fatherly care of the pioneer and senior missionary Samuel Zwemer. In his first year SAH attended classes in New Testament introduction and received as final grade: 9,4; Exegesis Romans and received as final grade: 9,2, and the Parables of Jesus and received as final grade: 9,5 (Minutes Nile Synode 01.03.1916:98).<sup>241</sup> Usually, the training at the seminary took three years. While Abbaas was in Cairo, he had started to gather Nubians in a tea house to share the gospel with them during the summer vacation. Occasionally, he had an audience up to 250 persons and was able to share God's word with them and reading to them from the Nubian gospels (SP 1915:64; SP 1916:19). It seems that he also distributed the Nubian tract *Immediate Salvation* that his father had translated and that was published by the NMP (SP 1916:20). Abbaas was a spiritually

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<sup>238</sup> During her research trip in 1952, Massenbach and Bühler went to Khartoum and visited the Hamiltons while Maryam was still in Aswan for a short visit.

<sup>239</sup> The news about Hektor that Hamilton shared with Massenbach and Bühler did not sound encouraging in regards to Maryams aspirations (Massenbach 1952:28).

<sup>240</sup> The legal papers are kept in the EMO files preserved in Aswan.

<sup>241</sup> Abbaas was registered as a special student for he was not financed by any Presbytery of the Nile Synode. Therefore it says in the minutes that he "entered and left optionally." I am indebted for this clarification to Dr Therwat Wahba (09.10.2014), professor at the ETSC in Cairo. The only grades that were recorded in the minutes of the Nile Synod were those of the academic year 1914-1915. There are no records of grades in the minutes of the following years 1916 and 1917. Therefore, it could not be confirmed from the documents of the seminary that Abbaas was enrolled in the years 1915-1916 and in 1916-1917.

ambitious young man. The SPM considered him as a promising co-worker for the work among the Nubians. Michail Mansur, an evangelist of the AM and a former Muslim had also offered to support Abbaas in his ministry among the Nubians in Cairo (SP 1915:64). Since Abbaas became sick in 1917, he was unable to pursue his studies and to continue his outreach to the Nubian men in Cairo. Abbaas had to be admitted to the Viktoria Hospital in Cairo where he was operated on for appendicitis from which he recovered well. As time progressed the symptoms of his tuberculosis became visible and he was sent to Alexandria. On his way back to Aswan he went to Zaqaziq, in the Delta, and visited his sister Maryam in August 1917. His health improved in Aswan so that he urgently wanted to visit his wider family in Abu Hoor. Only with much hesitation SAH agreed. In Abu Hoor his health deteriorated rapidly and so severely that SAH himself went to Abu Hoor by sailing boat to bring Abbaas back to Aswan to make sure that he would receive a Christian funeral. Abbaas died on January 19, 1918. The joy of SAH had turned into deep grief (SAH 1932:158-163).

## **6.5 Restart of the SPM work (1924-1927)**

After ten years of absence, the SPM was back in Aswan. What had seemed to be impossible had become true. The SPM experienced its “resurrection”. All obstacles regarding its return had been removed. The British and Egyptian government approved the new beginning of the German mission and the American Mission had withdrawn their plans and received the SPM in the fellowship of western mission agencies with warmth.

As the missionaries resumed their work, SAH enjoyed a time of “unclouded and hearty fellowship” with them (Unruh 1944:63). SAH had passed through the crisis years with great spiritual perseverance and unshaken faith, as evidenced by numerous statements in his letters during these years. The hope of a new missionary era and the return of the SPM was challenged but had never faded.

### **6.5.1 Deterioration of SAH’s health**

When the missionaries returned to Aswan in November 1924, it did not go unnoticed that the strain of the past years had left its effects on SAH’s health. They were struck by the deterioration of SAH’s health condition. His energy was severely diminished. His strength had faded away. The death of his son Abbaas, his sickly wife and her rejection by her Coptic relatives, his son Wadia, who was suffering from trachoma, the collapse of the back part of his house, the feeling of hunger and his worries regarding the mission property and the future of the SPM had worn him out and left him in a state of attrition. According to Enderlin, he

had become an old man, suffering from cataracts, teeth problems, extreme loss of weight and an obstinate cough (Unruh 1944:60).

Nevertheless, he still had some good days and at times his health allowed him to get involved in some activities. In October 1926 a dysentery epidemic struck Aswan and SAH lost a young grandchild and his little daughter.<sup>242</sup> He himself was so sick with dysentery that Dr Kallenbach was very much concerned that SAH, who was already very weak, would not survive it. SAH bore the loss of the two little children as a true follower of Christ, acknowledging that our life on earth is life in the valley of death, but that on the other side we will be united with all our loved ones (:67).

His diminished strength did not allow for an extensive contribution to the newly resumed work of the SPM. Nevertheless, the return of the SPM staff became for him a source of new strength, motivation and inspiration. He helped with the cleaning work in the period after the missionaries had returned, started to care for the neglected garden again (:60)<sup>243</sup> and showed great interest in the on-going work on the compound. The missionaries found him to be a weak man, but their presence encouraged him a lot and seemed to renew his physical and mental strength.

### **6.5.2 Sharing the gospel**

Despite his much affected health, SAH tried to participate as much as possible in the preaching of the gospel. He had an open house for his Nubian kinsmen who came to him with full confidence. He was ready to help them with his advice and cooperatively with the other SPM workers to meet their needs (Unruh 1944:63). When the medical work was restarted with the arrival of D Kallenbach, SAH told the waiting patients in front of the Polyclinic Bible stories as his health allowed.

### **6.5.3 Teaching Arabic and Kunuuzi Nubian (1925-1926)**

It was a high priority for SAH to help the new missionaries, like Rippert and Schönberger to advance in their language competency in Arabic (:64). Thus, he taught Arabic with great effort and enthusiasm. Beyond this, his passion was to pass on as much knowledge as possible about his Kunuuzi mother tongue to Enderlin, Massenbach and Schönberger (:64). In his opinion, Kunuuzi was an essential aspect of equipping the missionaries for the planned extension of the SPM work to the south (:64). In spring 1925, SAH was glad to receive his

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<sup>242</sup> This was already the loss of his thirteenth child.

<sup>243</sup> From March 1924, SAH had no longer been allowed to enter the mission house or the garden (Enderlin in Unruh 1944:60).

scholarly friend H Schäfer and to revise some ethnographic texts with him and G von Massenbach (Schäfer 1935).

In 1926, SAH translated some Old Testament passages from Genesis, Ruth and Daniel into Kunuuzi. SAH was a passionate teacher and driven by care, accuracy and a sense of duty. Even when his strength no longer allowed him to participate in a normal day's work, he insisted on teaching Schönberger for an hour daily in his vernacular, the Kunuuzi language. As his health deteriorated further, Schönberger had to ask him whether his strength was sufficient for the daily lesson. Only with great difficulties was SAH willing to withdraw from the work he loved so much (Unruh 1944:65).

#### **6.5.4 Longing for extension of the work into Nubia (1925-1926)**

SAH's deep desire was that he might see some Nubians become Christians before his death and his heart was on fire when the extension of the work into Nubia south of Aswan was discussed (:60-61,63). After the work in Aswan had been restarted and consolidated, Nubia again came into focus. In spring 1925, the SPM Board in Germany decided to extend the work into Nubia south of Aswan and appointed three female missionaries to establish work among women. For most of the year, the majority of Nubian men were working outside Nubia in the cities of Lower Egypt. In late autumn 1925, Enderlin and SAH went on a fact-finding trip to Upper Nubia, but their mission did not enjoy the expected success. Since they were unable to rent a house on acceptable terms, the nurses had to wait in Aswan and help in the work there (Unruh 1944:66).

A second trip in January 1926, undertaken by Enderlin and Rippert, led to the renting of a house in Koshtamne, about ninety kilometers south of Aswan. This was the first SPM station in Nubia south of Aswan. SAH was deeply moved when in the middle of March 1926 the three female missionaries left Shellaal in a fully loaded boat for Koshtamne to begin their work among the Kunuuzi Nubians of this region. SAH certainly supported this trip with his prayers and joyfully and closely followed the news of this new work with eager interest (:66). He even wrote some short letters to the nurses in Koshtamne in his Kunuuzi vernacular.

In the same year, J Rippert went to Haifa in Palestine to build a motorboat for the SPM that was meant to be the means of transport for the missionaries to travel faster from Aswan to Koshtamne or other places in Nubia. SAH followed the new developments with deep joy and satisfaction as a fulfilment of his desire, aspiration and faith.



### **6.5.5 Writing the second part of his autobiography (1926)**

Following the request of the SPM friends, SAH with his dwindling strength but with the assistance of H Schönberger continued to write the second part of his life story covering the years 1910-1926. He wrote down his story in the Kunuuzi vernacular and discussed it with Schönberger, who translated it into German (Feller 1931:3). SAH wrote from his memory since he had not taken any notes (:3).<sup>244</sup> He was about to finish his life account when SPM inspector Feller visited him in Aswan in October 1926 (:3). The two parts of his autobiography were published together in one volume in 1932 (Hussein 1932). As Rippert was in Haifa to supervise the construction of the motorboat for the work in Nubia, SAH was eagerly waiting for the arrival of the boat. He had named it *aleen ishinbul* (messenger of the truth) since it was supposed to help in the spread of the Gospel in his Nubian homeland.<sup>245</sup> When Rippert arrived with the motorboat much delayed on March 5, 1927, SAH was already too weak to go to Shellaal and have a look at it and participate in the joy of its arrival (Unruh 1944:67).

### **6.5.6 Last days of his life - passing on the baton (1927)**

During the last phase of his life, SAH's health was very unstable due to chronic tuberculosis. Used to his regular daily work schedule, SAH disliked his inability to pursue his daily routine. He was in need of much encouragement, especially during the weeks he was bedridden. In his thoughts he was busy up to the last moments of his life with questions relating to the SPM's missionary work in Dongola and Cairo and the relationship with the American Mission (Unruh 1944:67-68; Hussein 1932:195). About six weeks before his death, SAH had a strange experience at night. In a dream Jesus appeared to him and told him not to fear, but that he would be close to him and use him. Happy about this dream, SAH was totally convinced of his recovery and his renewed active participation in the work of the mission. But only a few weeks later, SAH passed away quietly to be with Jesus whom he had served faithfully (Unruh 1944:68-69). When Enderlin asked him some days before his death whether he had any special desire, SAH told him: "No, only to be with the Lord always, which is much better." (:68). Rippert, who was regarded by SAH as his own son, visited him on his last day. When SAH recognized him, he asked him not to go to work, but to stay with him knowing that this would be his last day. Thus, Rippert stayed with him until he had said a prayer and passed away shortly before midday on March 8, 1927 (:69; Hussein 1932:194). The funeral took

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<sup>244</sup> Unruh remarks that the continuation of his life story was not as vivid and complete as his monthly reports that he had written to the SPM (Unruh 1944:67).

<sup>245</sup> The SPM had printed postcards for their friends showing the boat.

place in the SPM church and was attended by many people. Four hours after his death, SAH was buried on the southern desert graveyard in Aswan near the mission compound (:70). His tomb was decorated with a white stone cross and a marble grave plate. It was SAH's desire that the tomb plate with its inscription might be a testimony for his fellow Nubians, showing them what God can do in the life of a Nubian (Hussein 1932:195). It bore the following inscription in Arabic:

“Here rests in the Lord  
the late Samuel Ali Hiseen from Abu Hoor  
the first-fruit of those that have returned to the Christian religion of his  
forefathers and servant of the German Mission in Aswan  
as a faithful evangelist for twenty-seven years  
according to the promise of the prophet Zephaniah, chapter 3:10:  
From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshippers will bring me  
offerings.  
March 8, 1927 <sup>“246</sup>

### 6.5.7 Summary

The final years of SAH were characterized by his joy about the return of the SPM to Aswan and his own physical weakness. In the last twenty-eight months of his life (beginning of November 1924 until the beginning of March 1927), SAH concentrated on three essential aspects of his ministry. First, SAH acted as an organized, disciplined and ambitious teacher who invested his knowledge in others. He committed himself to teaching Arabic and the beginner level of Kunuuzi to the new missionaries. He passed on his linguistic legacy to senior missionaries like Enderlin and Massenbach by bringing them to a deeper understanding of Kunuuzi. With Schäfer and Massenbach, he was ready to get involved again in the meticulous work of revising ethnographic Kunuuzi texts. Second, he focused on continuing to preach the gospel since after a quarter of a century, SAH, with the exception of his children, had not seen a Nubian who had made a faith commitment based on his ministry or of the work of other SPM missionaries. He still had an intrinsic passion to see the gospel preached in Nubia, as he became a Christian in Europe and was trained for ministry among his own people and finally became an evangelist with the SPM. His involvement in the exploration

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<sup>246</sup> The tomb plate was destroyed by fanatical Muslims several times and has always been renewed. The last tomb plate was salvaged in 1992 by R Ax, H Pfeifer, I Nübling and W Krützen just before the grave was covered by waste since the whole area had become a disposal site. Today, the grave plate has been secured by the author and is stored on the EMO mission compound in Aswan.

tour to Koshtamne in 1925 was an expression of this deep desire to see the gospel advance to Nubia. He was able to follow up on the beginning of SPM work in Nubia proper. Third, by producing the second part of his biography (1910-1926) in the Nubian language, SAH passed on another aspect of his legacy. Through the selective description of certain events, activities or developments he shows us the mind and heart of a person that has remained loyal to God, his calling and the SPM.

## **6.6 A Kunuuzi version of SAH's life story**

In the year 2000, the Kunuuzi Nubian Abu Bakr Mahgoub Hasan published a written documentation on the village Abu Hoor under the title *Abu Hoor baladna* (Abu Hoor our village). The author collected documents related to the history, the inhabitants, traditions and events of the village. On pages 107-108 he presents the "Nubian version" of SAH's life story. To our knowledge this is the only written document in Arabic on SAH's life that was published and made available to the broader public. In the following we will present a short analysis of this Nubian version.

Abu Bakr Mahgoub has based his account on the oral version that he heard from Hasan Ali Bahar who was an advisor of the Sudanese president Ibrahim Aboud during the 1960s (Mahgoub 2000:107). In the headline of the two-page section he refers to the life story as being a rare event in the history of the village Abu Hoor in the twentieth century (:107).

### **6.6.1 Information about SAH**

Mahgoub begins his article with a short introduction saying that someone from Abu Hoor East left Islam and had become a Christian due to being deceived financially by a relative.

#### **6.6.1.1 Name of SAH**

The author of the article is familiar with the three names of SAH. His original name is Muhammed which he has changed to Samu'iil. His nickname was Girem, a name that he had received from a German baron who had adopted him (:107).

#### **6.6.1.2 Story of his conversion**

The story of SAH's conversion to Christianity is dated in the years 1900-1910. The understanding is that he was working as a child in the church of the mission in Aswan for which he received wages. He regularly sent part of his income to a maternal cousin to keep it for him. The other part of the money was distributed among the poor by SAH. When he

returned to Abu Hoor and asked for the money, his relative denied that he had received any. As a consequence SAH left Islam and became a Christian.

### **6.1.1.3 Education and achievements**

Regarding his life and his education, the church in Aswan took over full responsibility. SAH began to work and study Christian theology at the same time and excelled in it. He was sent to Germany to continue and complete his studies and it is said that he gained a doctorate, wrote some books about Christianity and an autobiography in English saying that he was from Abu Hoor. One of his most famous books was the translation of the Gospel of Luke into the Kunuuzi language in Latin script printed in Berlin in Germany by the BFBS in 1912. He was held in high esteem among the clergy of the church and he had Christians that followed and admired him (:107). It is mentioned that he never cut off his relationship with his relatives in Abu Hoor, regularly sent them money, hosted them in his house in Aswan and reminded them to pray their Islamic prayers at the time of the call to prayer (:107).

## **6.6.2 Information about his family**

SAH had children, too. Two boys died when they were small. In addition, he had two girls and one boy. The oldest daughter was called Setah, she was a Muslim and lived in Abu Hoor until she died. She was married to Hasan Hamudi and they had a daughter who got married to Gum'a Fadl. The second daughter and his son were summoned by the court in Aswan to decide if they wanted to remain Muslims or become followers of their father's faith. They decided to follow the new religion of their father (:107). The wife of SAH had died before these events and had remained a Muslim (:108)

### **6.6.2.1 Abbaas**

The name of his son was Abbaas who was twenty years old. While he was visiting his village Abu Hoor Abbaas became critically ill. SAH went to Abu Hoor and told his son that he was afraid to bury him in the sand. He asked him to take his body with him in order to place him in a coffin in case of his death. Thus, he brought him to Aswan and buried him on a Christian grave yard in Aswan (:107).

### **6.6.2.2 Maryam**

His daughter's name was Bazyadah, but was changed to Maryam Girem. She was one of the first Nubian girls that received education at a time when girls usually did not go to school. She worked as a teacher and married after World War I the American Hamilton. He was a

missionary and General Secretary of the Society for Worldwide Evangelism in East Africa. Through this high position, he was in relationship with the president of the Sudan, ministers and political parties. Maryam immigrated to the Sudan with her husband and bought a big villa with two floors on Republic Street, in the center of Khartoum. On the first floor was a big bookshop of the Bible Society, on the second floor was their flat. Maryam continued to visit her family in Abu Hoor until she died in 1972 in Asmara, Eritrea. Her American husband had died in 1966 in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. Maryam had three girls and one son. One of her daughters became a famous doctor and married a Sudanese doctor from the south Sudan. She lives in Asmara, Eritrea and was still alive on the date of the publication of this book. The youngest daughter was working in the office of the Belgium Airlines until 1967 and then moved to Asmara.

### **6.6.3 Name of the hospital**

When Gireem died, the mission hospital in Aswan derived its name *al-Germaniyya* from his name as he was the first between Upper Egypt and Khartoum who had left his religion (:107-108).

### **6.6.4 Closing remarks**

The people in modern Abu Hoor still remember SAH and his strange and amazing story. Even though the details of the events differ, the *Sitz im Leben* is recognizable: a Nubian from Abu Hoor had become a Christian and two of his children followed him. Further, he has translated the gospel of Jesus Christ into their Nubian vernacular.

## **6.7 Summary**

In this chapter we have described SAH's biographical data during his active ministry phases with the SPM from 1900-1927. This was done with two basic questions in mind.

First, what did SAH actually do? What ministries was he involved in? What were the responsibilities that were given to him? Second, to what extent did SAH contribute to the shaping of the SPM into a mission among Nubians through his various activities?

Through his personal contact with Guinness and Kumm, SAH was certainly aware of the overall vision of the SPM: reaching the unreached Sudan belt with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Further, he was deeply impacted by the intermediate vision of the SPM: reaching the Nubians of the Nile valley between Aswan and Dongola. Finally, as a mission practitioner he was practically involved in reaching out to the Nubians in his geographical context.

The results of this chapter can be summarized in the following statements:

First, SAH maintained his contact with the Nubian community in Abu Hoor. Although nobody followed him in making a faith commitment to Christ, they accepted and respected him. They even came with their problems and needs to him, asking for guidance and advice.

Second, through his presence as a Nubian, SAH was a constant reminder for the SPM not to lose sight of the unreached Nile-Nubians.

Third, SAH was involved in exploring parts of the Nile valley and the possibility of starting new ministries in new places. Although his trips in 1900, 1907, 1913 and 1925 initially were not successful, they were done with this understanding and intention.

Fourth, SAH actively participated in evangelizing and preaching to the patients in the polyclinic, during medical outreach visits with Enderlin and Fröhlich in Aswan, in Daraw and in Nubia, during home visits, and during discussion rounds using the argumentative approach.

Fifth, SAH was granted the privilege to see two of his children becoming Christ-followers, asking for baptism and getting involved in ministry. It seems that SAH had passed on to them the vision to reach Nubians for Christ. Abbaas started a promising ministry among Nubian men in Cairo and Maryam began as a teacher in the SPM School in Aswan. Abbaas died already at the age of twenty-three, and Maryam married and moved to the Sudan and Eritrea, yet, stayed in Christian ministry with her husband. She had the desire that her son, Hector, would take the place of Abbaas and continue his calling towards the Nubians.

Sixth, SAH was very productive in providing the SPM and the scholarly world with Biblical, ethnographical and linguistic and Christian material.

**Table 2: SAH's biographical data (1900-1927)**

<b>Early years with the Sudan Pionier Mission (1900-1904)</b>		
1900	Jan	Meets Grattan Guinness
	Feb	Enters the service of the Sudan Pionier Mission
	Mar-Sep	Undertakes a six-month colportage trip through Nubia
1901	Apr	Completes the translation of the Gospel of John
1901	May	Starts a new mission station in Gizaira
1902	May	Closes Gizaira station due to failure
1902	Aug	Resumes work in Aswan
1903	July	His children abducted by relatives
1903	Nov	Travels to Wiesbaden, Germany; recovers from trauma, teaches Arabic to new missionaries
<b>Restart and development of the SPM work (1905-1914)</b>		
1904	Dec	Returns to Aswan with new missionaries
1905		His children Maryam and Abbaas return to their father
1907		Takes part in opening a new mission station in Daraw
1908		Undertakes an exploration trip to Nubia with Enderlin
1908	Sept	Starts translation project of the gospels with Schäfer and Junker
1910		Writes part one of his autobiography
1911	Sept	Travels to Berlin to revise the gospels with Schäfer
1911	Nov	Completes the Nubian primer with Westermann
1912		Publication of the four gospels in Kenuuzi-Nubian by the BFBS
1912-1913		Translates the rest of the New Testament, except for three books
1913		Publication of the Nubian primer
1913	Oct-Nov	Undertakes exploration tour through Nubia with Enderlin
1914-1915		Continues work with Dr Fröhlich and Maryam
<b>World War I and beyond (1914-1924)</b>		
1915-1924		Takes care of the mission property during World War I; conducts spiritual and linguistic work on a limited scale
1916		Marries for the fourth time
1918		His son Abbaas dies of tuberculosis
1919		Appointed elder in the Coptic Evangelical Church in Aswan
1920	Nov	His daughter Maryam marries P A Hamiton, agent of the BFBS
1921	Jan	Edfu station closed and mission property sold on auction

1923	Mar-Apr	Enderlin and Wolder visit Aswan on their way to Palestine
1923	May	Initiates Nubian petition for the return of the SPM missionaries

**New beginning and final years (1924-1927)**

1924	Nov	Return of missionaries
1925		Teaches Arabic and Kuuuzi to missionaries and works with Schäfer and Massenbach on ethnographic texts
1925	Nov	Undertakes exploration trip to Koshtamne with Enderlin
1926		Writes part two of his autobiography
1927		Dies in Aswan on March 8



## **7. The multifaceted ministry of Samu’iil Ali Hiseen with the SPM (1900-1927)**

In the previous chapter, we have described in detail the life story of Samu’iil Ali Hiseen (SAH). We have noted the various phases and events in his life that shaped him and made him the person he had become when Guinness and Kumm met him in January 1900. In this chapter we will highlight the distinct formative impact of the years prior to SAH’s work with the SPM (1863-1900) and the extraordinary importance of his multifaceted proximity to his Nubian people. Then the focus will be put on the various and constantly changing contributions of SAH to the SPM work during the period between 1900 until his death in 1927. His unique and significant role within the SPM ministry and the various facets of his ministry will be presented and recognized.

### **7.1 The formative impact of the years prior to 1900**

SAH’s life story is amazing, intriguing and strange, yet it contains exactly the phases and elements that are needed to shape and equip a person like SAH for a meaningful contribution to missionary work. It was the comprehensive life experience of SAH between the years 1863 and 1900 that led H G Guinness to the conviction that “the Lord in his providence” had granted him to discover “the sort of man we needed to help to bring the water of life into this moral desert” of the region (Guinness 1900:2). In the first concise mission history of the SPM that was published for the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary, J Held came to a similar conclusion when he wrote: “Eine Gabe freilich legte Gott dem neugeborenen Kindlein mit in die Wiege, um die manche andre Missionsgesellschaft es hätte beneiden können, das war ein eingeborener Gehilfe, Samuel Ali Hussein” (Held 1925:6). Together with Girgis Ya’quub and his wife Zamerida, SAH became the first indigenous worker of the SPM and remained a faithful pillar of the SPM work throughout the twenty-seven years until his death. He stood loyal to the SPM during the founding and crisis years, the years of a new beginning, the lonely years of World War I and beyond and the third ministry period of the SPM beginning in 1924 until his death in 1927.

#### **7.1.1 SAH’s life story as a basis for his work with the SPM**

It is of primary importance that SAH was born a Kunuuzi Nubian and part of a family that were members of a tribal group within the ethnic group of the Kunuuz which constituted an essential part of the wider Nile-Nubian community.

As far as his childhood is concerned, SAH was not raised by his parents. He was abandoned by them, since they were divorced before his birth, and was raised by his grandmother. Due to a famine he had to leave his home village and spent some time in Edfu, a city in Upper Egypt, 105 kilometers north of Aswan. He developed a dislike towards Islamic religious education because of harsh treatment from a teacher in the Quran School in Edfu. After escaping to Lower Egypt as a child, he had to learn to cope with the simple and hard street life of Egyptian cities in the north, and he knew the reality of low paid service occupations. While working for a French ophthalmologist, he developed a love for francophone Europe and a desire to live there one day. This coincided with the most unusual and debatable offer by a Swiss evangelist to come with him to Europe – France and Switzerland. This invitation was the “master plan” of a Swiss Christian and industrialist and factory owner to bring an Egyptian Muslim to Europe and educate him in a Christian environment and send him back as an evangelist to his own people. This plan matched with the life story of SAH since he desired to live in Europe. Nevertheless, his enculturation and education in Switzerland was extremely challenging, but SAH received enough care and guidance that he succeeded in continuing his education in the boarding school and benefited greatly from it. It was in this loving and caring context that he submitted his life to Christ, being convinced and affected by the teaching of salvation by grace. At his baptism he had a clear sense that this act would involve much more than just confessing publicly his Christian faith. SAH felt a calling on his life to become an evangelist to his own Nubian people. His training in London and Beirut constituted the next important steps towards his future work. His disappointment with the Christian foreign community in Cairo and the lack of concern by his European supporters raised many questions in him regarding the reasons for his training during the past years. This deep disappointment and the sense of having been abandoned led to his willingness to return to Nubia. During his eleven years in his home village, Abu Hoor, he was re-socialized in his original culture and language. He deeply learned and understood the traditions and daily life of his Kunuuzi people with all their challenges. He also learned to understand the kind of Islam that was prevalent among this particular Nubian community. As SAH neither renounced nor hid his Christian faith, he constituted the first permanent Christian presence in Nubia in the nineteenth century. Beyond his silent Christian witness, he gradually started to confess his Christian faith and to engage in discussions with his Muslim kinsmen, neighbors and clergy. As a consequence, he was severely wounded by an attack on his life but responded in a strong demonstration of true Christian love and forgiveness. Eventually, his economic responsibility for his family forced him to look for work outside Nubia. While

looking for work in Cairo, he was recruited by the Anglo-Egyptian army as an interpreter during the Mahdi War. After his safe return, he spent some time with his motherless children and at the recommendation of his friends he started working in the Egyptian postal service in Aswan and later in Shellaal, a harbor village south of Aswan. This was the location where H G Guinness found his former student SAH although he was not specifically looking for him. The surprising reunion and the reliving of memories of days past marked the beginning of an eventful period of work in the ministry of the newly founded SPM. Guinness immediately realized that SAH was uniquely suitable for the work that was about to begin. SAH had obviously never lost his vision to serve his people as an evangelist but his life situation did not yet provide the necessary and suitable framework for the implementation of this silently kept dream. When, by divine appointment, Guinness and SAH met and exchanged the aspirations of their hearts in “mutual affection and trust” (Sauer 2005:152), it did not take long for SAH to respond positively to Guinness’ call to join the initial team of the SPM. Thus, SAH was the birth present to the SPM that was laid into the cradle of the newborn mission. He was the person that embodied the qualifications that were needed for the work that was ahead of him the next twenty-seven years. His individual expressing of faith, his commitment, endurance, ability to suffer and loyalty to the mission, and his flexibility and broad variety of gifts and talents were outstanding characteristics that were to make him a pillar in the work of the SPM. Thus, the call that was expressed by Guinness and the instant willingness of SAH to join the work proved to be extremely compatible during the next twenty-seven years.

### **7.1.2 SAH and his proximity to his ethnic group**

As the SPM was a mission that was working among Muslims in general and specifically among Nubians, the significance of an indigenous Christian such as SAH cannot be over-estimated. The great disadvantage of expatriate Christian workers is that they have to work hard to make their inroad into a different culture and language from their own. They usually lack proximity to the ethnic group that they are sent to. The process of enculturation needs considerable time and is usually never a complete success, which very often affects the degree of acceptance that is extended to the missionary. Beat Jost has convincingly explained the importance of the concept of proximity in regards to a better acceptance of the Christian worker by the members of an unreached people group (2005:15-20). As a born Nubian, who was extracted from and later reinserted into his culture SAH was uniquely proximate to his Kunuuzi Nubian group and fulfilled the pre-conditions of being an effective worker. In the following we will explain the various parameters of proximity as applied to the life of SAH.

### **7.1.2.1 His geographic proximity**

SAH, born a Nubian, was an accepted part of the Kunuuzi Nubian community. He initially grew up in Abu Hoor, then in Edfu among his kinsmen, and later in Lower Egypt where he mixed with Nubians as well. When he returned to Nubia in 1885, he maintained a permanent presence among his people for a noticeable period. He became one of them and did not have to travel to be with them. He was generally not regarded as an ethnic foreigner among them although as a Christian he was regarded as foreign by some since, at the very least, a “true Nubian” had to be a main stream Muslim.

### **7.1.2.2 His cultural proximity**

Although he grew up among his own people during the first formative years of his childhood, SAH was also socialized in a European context which left a strong mark on the development of his personality during his formative years of becoming an adult. But when he returned to the village life of Abu Hoor, he was re-socialized into the Nubian culture including its world view, beliefs, core values, behavioral patterns and customs.

### **7.1.2.3 His linguistic proximity**

SAH spent his first years in a monolingual setting only speaking the Kunuuzi vernacular of his people. When he went to Edfu and then to Lower Egypt, he learned to speak Arabic, some Italian and some French. During his twelve year absence from Egypt, he had basically forgotten his mother tongue. In spite of the fact that he still may have known some Nubian through his early ability to master the language, he had to relearn Kunuuzi as he started his life as a peasant in the village community. Due to the relative isolation of Abu Hoor, the local dialect was regarded as one of the purest. In the early twentieth century, Schäfer and Junker testified to the excellent language competence of SAH. Thus, as language is regarded a main component of identity, SAH had become a Kunuuzi Nubian again due to his fluency in his mother tongue.

### **7.1.2.4 His sociological proximity**

SAH was a part of the Kunuuzi society with its existing social structure. He was part of the extended family and clan structure of the Kunuuz in Abu Hoor, in Edfu and likewise in Lower Egypt. His return to Egypt and the discovery by his relatives that he was still alive and living in Cairo and their strong desire for him to return home shows how much SAH was regarded as part of their family. The fact that his much respected and admired grandmother and mother were both still alive was a strong incentive to return to Nubia. SAH is a vivid example for the

deep emotional affiliation with their homeland that is so characteristic of the Nile-Nubians. Although he had been absent for many years, SAH became an integrated part of his extended family and the close Nubian society again. He reconnected with his relatives when he returned and started to live with and among them. In order to conform to Nubian life and customs, he agreed to marry within the Nubian community after much pressure. Yet his first marriage was still too early in his adaptation and enculturation process. He did not consummate this marriage since he did not know the appropriate marriage traditions for the wedding night. When he had to look for work at the end of the nineteenth century, he left his children with his sister, since his second wife had passed away in 1896. SAH never had in mind to cut his links with his kinsmen. He maintained his close connection with them even when he started to work with the SPM. Visiting his village and receiving his kinsmen in Aswan was a social and spiritual duty for him.

#### **7.1.2.5 His economic proximity**

SAH was proximate to his kinsmen as well in his readiness to live a simple and isolated village life through which he displayed a similar standard of living. Although he was sponsored during his education in Switzerland, England and Lebanon, SAH never had the chance to accumulate riches. Financial affluence was never one of his marks. When he returned to Cairo in 1884, he managed to survive although being underpaid or not paid at all in the mission school in Faggala. One reason for his initial hesitancy to return to Nubia was his economic inability to cover the expenses for the required gifts that he had to bring with him for his relatives. Back in Abu Hoor, he started to live a simple peasant's life growing vegetables and dates. As the children grew older the income from his agricultural work was insufficient, which required him to look for work outside Nubia. During his work with the SPM, he received a modest allowance to cover his life expenses and was able to build a small house next the SPM compound. During the years of war, when the money transfer from Germany stopped, he sold some of his palm trees and agricultural land to make his living. His personal economic situation never suggested to his Nubian kinsmen that his being a Christian was related to possible economic and financial gain. There was no basic discrepancy in economic matters between him and the average person of his ethnic group which could have created a barrier regarding the reception and impact of the gospel.

#### **7.1.2.6 His mental proximity**

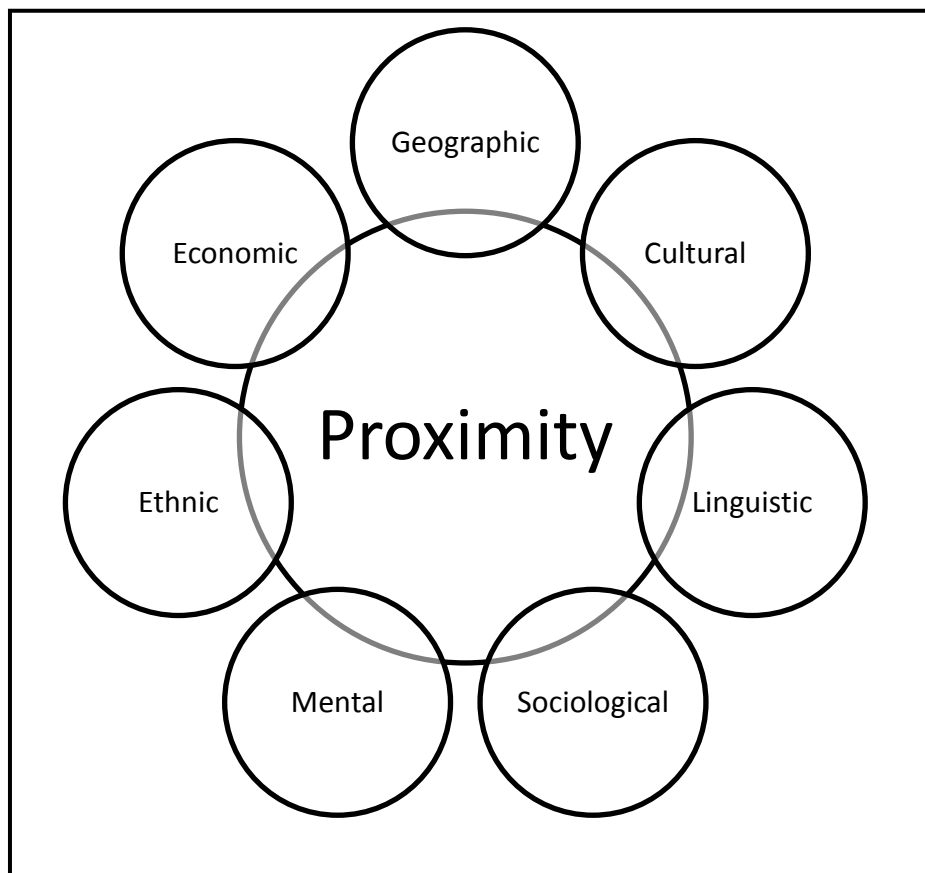
Mental proximity indicates the fact that people that were raised in a similar rural or urban setting are more likely to minister effectively among their community than people that grew

up in an opposite environment. SAH grew up in a rural context and later became acquainted with the life in Egyptian cities, such as Cairo, Suez and Alexandria, and in Europe and Lebanon. Nevertheless, despite his outstanding education he had acquired, he maintained his affinity for life in a rural setting. Although he was extremely well educated, he was able to live and work in an isolated rural farming community. In his writings SAH gives ample evidence that his thoughts, expressions and metaphors are soaked in rural imagery.

#### 7.1.2.7 His ethnic proximity

SAH had inherited and maintained his Nubian ethnic identity knowing their culture, speaking their language and living their lives. When he settled in Abu Hoor, he displayed neither the Egyptian attitude of superiority over the Nubians nor the Western colonial attitude. He simply was one of them, someone who in total identification was walking in their shoes and thus not posing a threat to his fellow Nubians. It was easy for him to establish respectful, loving and trusting relationships in his native community.

**Illustration 3: Facets of SAH's proximity to his Nubian people**



## 7.2 The different facets of SAH's ministry

When H G Guinness, L Guinness and K Kumm were in Aswan in January 1900, they started to plan their new adventure. They tried to address the educational need first and were looking for teachers. As they realized the presence of the Nubians in and around Aswan, they were also looking for a native Nubian speaker. As Guinness was given a hint by local Christians,<sup>247</sup> he searched for the Nubian in the suggested location at the post office in Shellaal next to the construction site of the Aswan Dam. When Guinness found SAH, they did not immediately recognize each other, but SAH recognized his former teacher first. Yet Guinness, although he most probably had known SAH and may even have taught him and directed him from Harley House, East London to Cliff College, Sheffield and back to Harley House, had lost track of SAH and forgotten the young Nubian man. The renewed encounter brought back happy memories and mutual affection as they were sharing their news, and even reminded Guinness of the story that he had written about SAH's early years (1863-1880 under the title "Ali's Adventures" (Guinness 1900:1) about twenty years before.<sup>248</sup> Without knowing it or realizing it in the beginning, in SAH Guinness had found a man that had much more potential than he expected or was even looking for. It is remarkable that Kumm's first assignment for SAH, the colportage and exploration tour through Nubia, quickly brought to the surface the significant gifts that were hidden in the deep levels of SAH's personality structure. SAH functioned during his journey as an explorer, colporteur, evangelist, Bible translator and linguist. Most of these areas were further developed during SAH's ministry life with the SPM.

### 7.2.1 SAH as an explorer

SAH was a learned and educated person. Moreover, he was experienced in observing, analyzing, encountering and adapting to different cultures because of his time in Switzerland, England and Lebanon. When he returned to Nubia after more than fifteen years of absence, he had to be re-socialized again by observing the patterns of daily life, traditions and religious convictions in Nubia. During his participation in the Mahdi war with the Anglo-Egyptian army, he received profound insight into the situation between Wadi Halfa and Khartoum. With his western education, knowledge of languages and cultures, and personal experience in Europe and the Middle East, he was the appropriate person to explore geographical regions, observe the behavior and attitude of people, conduct surveys and write down statistics.

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<sup>247</sup> The information may have come from Girgis Ya'quub, the new teacher of the SPM or from Ibrahim Musa, the evangelist of the American Mission in Aswan.

<sup>248</sup> Sauer, who assumes that the story may have been part of a children's publication, tried to trace it back in the *Regions Beyond* journal and the British Library, yet without success (2005:152, fn 117).

### **7.2.1.1 Exploration tour to Nubia (1900)**

SAH started his work with the SPM in February 1900. After Guinness had left Aswan, Kumm started with the formation of the work. His first assignment for SAH was to send him on an exploration and colportage tour up to Dongola (Hussein 1920:96). In terms of exploring the region, SAH had to meet three main requirements. First, he was to survey the attitude and receptiveness of the Nubians towards the gospel. Second, as the plan was to start a new mission station in Dongola al-Urdi, he was to find out the political situation in the region and the official policy of the English government towards missionary work in the northern part of the Sudan. Third, he was asked to collect data of the economic, geographical and political situation of Nubia for Kumm, who was about to put together material for his doctoral dissertation (Kumm 1903).<sup>249</sup> SAH succeeded in collecting information about the population in the Nile valley, including their number, tribal names, the names of Nubian villages and their languages, their occupations, the agricultural productivity of the region, the number of palm trees and the number of waterwheels. In the regular reports he sent to Kumm, he also described the situation of Nubia after the Mahdi War as whole regions being depopulated and devastated, towns and villages left in ruin and fields left barren (Guinness 1900:4; SP 1900:15; Sauer 2005:154).

### **7.2.1.2 Exploration tours to Nubia for the extension of the SPM work (1908, 1913)**

SAH and Enderlin, supported by the board of the SPM, had the intrinsic desire to extend their work to the south. They felt obliged to pursue the initial vision of the founders that led to the mission's name: *Sudan Pioneer Mission*. This ambition to reach out beyond the present field of work led to a number of exploration tours. The first trip to Nubia in March 1905 was initiated by Ziemendorff. He went together with Enderlin to the Egyptian-Sudanese border in order to explore the possibility of extending the work further to the south (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:16). The second trip of importance was the seventeen-day exploration trip by sail boat together with Enderlin to Wadi Halfa in July 1908. The trip included visits to Abu Hoor, the home village of SAH, and other villages. The two explorers were received warmly but there was still no plan to move into action (Dessien, Ehrbeck & Troeger 1985:20). These trips were followed by an intensive building and expansion phase in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu

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<sup>249</sup> Kumm's thesis was accepted in 1903 at Freiburg University. Unfortunately he does not make any mention of SAH's meticulous work and thereby not giving credit to his effort that he would have deserved so dearly and would have shown Kumm's right understanding of scientific work.



(1909-1913).<sup>250</sup> The board of the SPM was determined to pursue the extension of the work into Nubia proper and requested another exploration trip (Minutes SPM 11.05.1912:111). Between October 17, and November 23, 1913 Enderlin and SAH underwent a five-week exploration trip. The trip included Wadi Halfa, Abu Hammed and Merawi, the residence of the governor of Dongola (Hussein 1932:128-153). As a result of this trip the SPM board decided to start a station in Wadi Halfa in autumn 1914. First steps were taken to purchase a piece of land in Dongola with the support of the only Protestant Christian in the city, and the English government was asked to grant the permission to start missionary work (Minutes SPM 28.04.1914:231). Due to the outbreak of World War I, the plan could not be implemented. SAH, with all his gentleness, intelligence, language competency and deep longing for the Nubians to hear the gospel, was the suitable person to take part in most of these trips.

### **7.2.1.3 Exploration tour to Nubia for the extension of the SPM work (1925)**

When the SPM board decided in spring 1925 to extend the missionary work to Nubia proper, SAH was again part of the exploration team. Although SAH was physically weak, he was spiritually highly alert and looking for any opportunity for the gospel to reach his people in the south. He dreamed of and sought the setup of a SPM station in Nubia proper. In November 1925, Enderlin and SAH went for an exploration tour to the Kunuuzi area that was going to be SAH's last excursion. The journey ended with thorough disappointment. No opportunity had yet been found to rent a suitable house for the female missionaries who were already prepared to move (Unruh 1950:66). The hesitation to invite foreigners to live in their villages and the fear of being confronted as Muslims with the Christian message led to the failure of this tour. When a second trip by Enderlin and Rippert to Nubia in January 1926 was granted success in Koshtamne, the work on the first SPM station in Nubia proper could begin, much to the delight of SAH (:66-67).

### **7.2.2 SAH the promoter of Scriptures and Christian literature**

The foundation of another area of SAH's ministry was laid during the exploration and colportage trip in 1900. There is no written evidence that SAH was involved in literature distribution prior to his involvement with the SPM. Yet there is the possibility that during his involvement in evangelistic campaigns in England or Syria among the Druze he participated

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<sup>250</sup> In 1909 Enderlin directed the construction of the new mission building, including the church in Aswan. SAH also built his own private house. In 1910 a new piece of land was purchased in Daraw and a building was constructed in spring 1912. In October 1910 a request reached SPM to start a new work in Edfu. The station was finally opened in November 1911. Then in 1912 the hospital was built and inaugurated on January 27, 1913.

in passing out Bibles, parts of Scripture or Christian literature. Further, it remains unclear whether the exhibition in Geneva, to which SAH was invited by his Swiss friends in 1896, was a Christian book exhibition in which Bibles and Protestant literature were distributed.

### **7.2.2.1 The itinerary approach - colportage of Bibles and literature during the journey to Nubia (1900)**

The colportage of Bibles and Christian literature was a commonly used method of evangelism. It was strongly promoted by the BFBS, the ABS, the CMS and later by the NMP. These agencies became the major sources for Bibles and other Christian literature. Partly, they distributed the material by their own agents or made it available to the other mission organizations that were working in Egypt. For Kumm, the missionary method of colportage was essential and was given priority when he set up the structure of the young mission. It was his vision to produce and widely distribute Christian literature among the many tribal groups in the Sudan Belt (SP 1900:11). When he planned the trip for SAH up to Dongola, colportage work was high on the agenda. Plenty of Bibles were ordered from the BFBS in Alexandria and sent to post offices along the route of the trip. Two donkeys were bought to carry the literature and the personal luggage. SAH visited the villages and read from the Bible. He offered his audience Bibles, scripture portions and tracts. Due to the fact that the Nubians in the villages were economically very poor, he gave most of them away for free rather than selling them. It was still the minority of people that could read. Those that could read would then proudly read to the bystanders (Guinness 1900:3-5; SP 1900:14). All the literature was in Arabic. Although there was the gospel of Mark available in Latin and Arabic script in the Nobiin language, there is no evidence that it was used by SAH. In Kunuuzi no literature was available at that time. Arabic was the commercial and religious language and spoken mainly by men whereas most of the women were monolingual, only speaking their Nubian vernacular (SP 1900:11). During the tour, SAH was able to sell and distribute all his literature and thereby leave a “silent evangelist” behind in many Nubian houses (Sauer 2005:292-293).

It seems that the itinerary approach of the literature ministry was not continued systematically by the SPM, neither immediately after SAH’s trip nor later in the SPM’s history (:292). Yet there is evidence that Kumm had the plan to use SAH for more colportage work by releasing him from his exhausting agricultural work in Gizaira in 1902, but due to various reasons this could not be realized. When SAH and Kupfernagel went together for evangelistic visits, they may have sporadically distributed literature to those that were able to read (:292). It seems that the SPM Board, after the dismissal and separation from Kumm, did not put the same emphasis on colportage work as Kumm did (:293). When the SPM

consolidated and developed its work in its second phase (1904-1915), SAH visited villages in Nubia with W G Fröhlich or J Enderlin. Regardless, whether the visits had primarily a medical or an exploration purpose, the SPM workers shared the gospel wherever they had an opportunity and distributed literature to the literate. In summary, in regards to the literature ministry, Kumm put an emphasis on the itinerary approach which certainly fit the perspective of the visionary founder and pioneer of the SPM who was looking for advance and extension of the work. After SAH's colportage tour this systematic and "aggressive" distribution of Bibles and Christian literature was not pursued by the SPM, but literature was used as a support tool during evangelistic visits.

### **7.2.2.2 The locally based literature ministry through a bookshop**

In addition to the colportage method, Christian literature was also made available through locally based facilities. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the CMS had started a bookshop and reading room ministry which attracted many interested people and led to deeper conversations. The distribution of Biblical and Christian literature was high on the agenda right from the beginning of the SPM work. Next to the more extensive initiative form of literature distribution with a go-approach practiced in the very beginning of the SPM work, there was the localized, less extensive form of distribution in the form of a Christian bookstore employing the come-approach. It seems that Kupfernagel was the first SPM missionary who considered using this approach in setting up a bookshop. Yet when he learned that the AM had plans to start a bookshop in Aswan<sup>251</sup>, he did not pursue his own plans (Sauer 2005:293).

It took the SPM until April 1910 to realize the plan of opening a bookshop in Aswan. Under the supervision of Enderlin, a bookshop and reading room were prepared and inaugurated (SP 1910:37-38). The bookshop was located in a room that was attached to the SPM church in the southern direction. There is no indication that the SPM bookshop was in competition with the AM bookshop which probably had never come into existence or no longer existed. SAH was given the responsibility for the bookstore. Even during the years of World War II, SAH tried to operate the bookshop according to the request of by W G Fröhlich who had to leave the country in autumn 1915 (Unruh 1944:10). Next to selling books, SAH used numerous opportunities to sit and discuss his Christian faith with his Egyptian, Nubian and otherwise foreigner visitors. He also used his bookshop hours without customers to work on translating various tracts into Nubian (Unruh 1944:19). After the return

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<sup>251</sup> There is no evidence that the AM ever opened a bookshop in Aswan.

of the missionaries in November 1924, SPM considered asking SAH to continue his ministry in the bookshop, since this was the only work his ailing health and diminished strength would allow him to do (Minutes SPM 23.03.1926:119). But in fact, the bookshop was not re-opened during the remaining lifetime of SAH.

### **7.2.2.3 Writing Christian literature in Nubian**

Kumm's initial vision included not only the distribution of Bibles and Christian literature, but also the production of it. Yet SAH was not able to set enough time in the first phase of the SPM work (1900-1904) to commit himself to writing Christian material in Nubian. In the second phase (1905-1914) SAH was heavily involved in translating NT books. Only during the war time, in the third phase (1915-1924), was he able to start writing during his free time while working in the SPM bookstore (Unruh 1944:19). H Schäfer informs us that SAH wrote a four-page tract with the title "Immediate Salvation in Nubia" (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15; Lauche 2004:327). The tract contains two small contributions under the headings "Immediate Salvation" and "The Great Story of God's Love". The leaflet was printed by the Nile Mission Press in Cairo. Unfortunately, so far no copy of this publication can be traced.

### **7.2.3 SAH the evangelist**

The initial vision of Mr Necker was that a native from Egypt should be brought to Switzerland, educated and raised in the Christian faith and then sent back to be a witness to his people. When SAH was baptized in 1885 in St Croix, in the Waadt district by Rev O Stockmeyer (1838-1917)<sup>252</sup>, he received an intrinsic sense of a distinct calling on his life to be a witness and servant of the Lord wherever he would send him (Hussein 1920:49-50).

#### **7.2.3.1 Evangelism among the English**

In 1879 SAH went to England to enroll as a student at the ELTI, he received theological and practical training and became involved in evangelistic work in Sheffield and also in Devizes, Wiltshire when he was staying with Necker's relatives (:50-52). While SAH was studying in Beirut his sponsor Th Necker suddenly died and for this reason SAH was called back by his relatives to Devizes. Working mainly as a house teacher for the children of Mr Anstey he also was asked to become involved in evangelistic activities of the Brethren Church in the region (:55). But he did not see his purpose fulfilled in staying in England and enjoying a luxurious life. His call was to work among his own people.

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<sup>252</sup> Stockmeyer served as a pastor of various churches in the Free Church of Waadt (Ohlemacher 1994:1911).

### **7.2.3.2 Evangelism among the Druze**

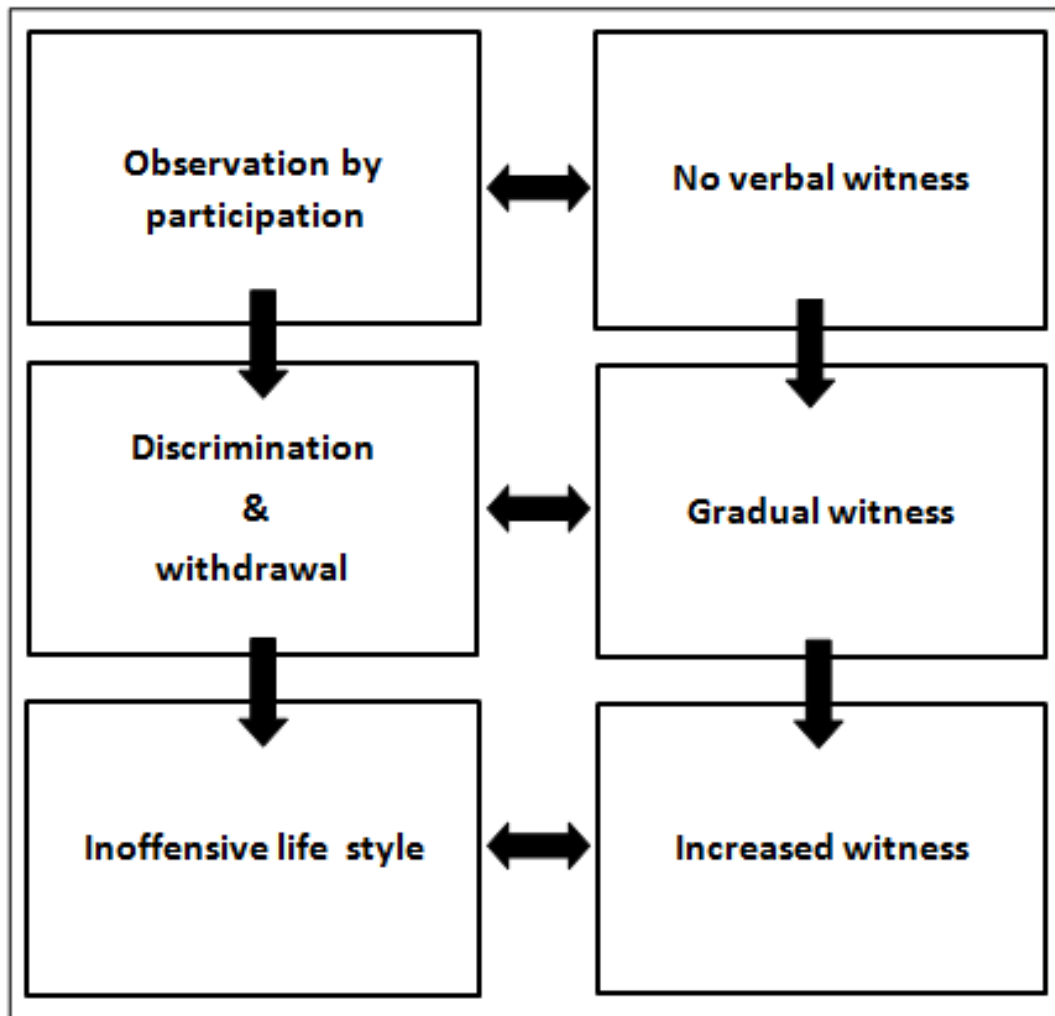
In 1880, SAH was sent to Beirut to study Arabic in order to enter medical training at the Syrian Protestant College. His skills and experience in evangelism were further enhanced when he came in contact with a Scottish female missionary to the Druze during his summer vacation in 1881. This was his first step in sharing the gospel with people in the Middle East (:54).

### **7.2.3.3 Evangelism among the Nubians**

When SAH had to leave Switzerland in 1884, he returned to Cairo. After his disappointing experience with two teaching jobs at Christian schools, he was willing to go back to his Nubian home village Abu Hoor in 1885. SAH was the first and only Nubian Christian in his community. As he had been away for more than fifteen years, he had to re-learn the culture and the language and to get familiar with the practical life of his people. He also had to learn and understand Islam beyond his book knowledge. In retrospect, SAH described three levels of his cross-cultural adaptation process. In the first phase, he remained incognito and tried to be in close contact with his fellowmen to understand their thinking, behavior, values and world view. By participating in their daily life, he tried to put aside his European life, also adopting their dress code and the simplicity of their life style (Hussein 1920:77-78). In the second phase, based on his participation and a growing understanding of their religion, traditions and habits, he was able to come to a better discernment and discrimination. He started to withdraw from some of their practices and disclose more of his Christian convictions. Verbally he gradually shared more about Christianity, Christian faith and life (:84-85). He tried to avoid any offense through his words and actions in order to win their trust. He set a powerful sign of peace and love when he bought back fields that he had inherited instead of going to the court to claim his right (:79-80). In the final phase, next to an inoffensive lifestyle, he very openly shared the gospel with individuals and Muslim clergy. He used the Quran to show his Muslim audience the shortcomings of their teaching in order to show them, through the Old Testament and New Testament, the power that draws people to God to repent and receive forgiveness through Jesus Christ (:89). His clear and fearless testimony and open evangelism led to suffering, rejection, resistance and an attack on his life that he survived miraculously against all expectations. When he responded with forgiving actions against all traditional behavior and family advice, he overcame their hostile attitude and was able to live as a sole Christian in an otherwise purely Muslim society. Moreover, he became a person of peace that was approached for advice and help (:85-87). Through his

brave and wise testimony in life, action and word, SAH had become the first Nubian evangelist in modern times.

**Illustration 4: SAH’s adaptation process and verbal witness**



#### **7.2.3.4 Evangelism during his work with the SPM**

During his colportage and exploration trip in 1900, SAH not only gathered research data and distributed Bibles and scripture parts, but he also shared the gospel wherever possible. SAH, knowing Kunuuzi and Arabic, was using a wise approach. As he connected with the Nubians, in order to win their trust, he emphasized his Nubian identity and explained to them the SPM’s intention to open schools for their children. During the Islamic Feast of Sacrifice, SAH used the occasion to explain the meaning of the blood of Christ for the atonement of mankind (Guinness 1900:3.5; SP 1900:14). Guinness appreciated SAH’s work and described it as “gently, wisely, patiently” done (:2). During the trip many Nubians heard the gospel for the first time in their lives. SAH can be regarded as the first evangelist in Nubia beyond his home village of Abu Hoor (Guinness 1900:2).

After his journey to Dongola, SAH tried to share the Christian message in Gizaira, and later together with Kupfernagel during their visits in the villages.

In the second phase of the SPM work, SAH preached the Bible message to the waiting patients in Aswan or in Daraw and the surrounding villages. He told Bible stories in the *laterna magica* meetings and preached the gospel in meetings for educated men, the so-called Efendi meetings or during the Sunday services in the SPM church. The bookshop that SAH was responsible for was a suitable place for religious discussions which SAH liked as a method to explain the gospel. Medical outreach visits to Nubia or in the surrounding villages of Aswan also provided plenty of opportunities for SAH to use his evangelistic gift.<sup>253</sup> Even during the years of war, SAH occasionally went on house visits using these occasions to evangelize. In his final years SAH was not able to participate in evangelistic activities. However, his heart and mind were still busy with following the news about the advance of the gospel into Nubia.

#### **7.2.4 SAH the Bible translator**

SAH was not only polyglot but was gifted in translating Scripture texts from Arabic and French into Kunuuzi Nubian. In regards to reaching the Kunuuzi Nubians with the gospel, SAH's translation work can be considered his most important contribution.<sup>254</sup> Kumm saw and realized SAH's potential from early on and encouraged him to start with the translation of New Testament books. Thus, during his colportage and exploration tour in 1900, SAH had already started with the translation of the Gospel of John and completed it after his return. He immediately continued with the translation of the Gospel of Matthew but did not complete it. When the AM learned about the internal tensions between SAH and Kupfernagel, they tried to employ SAH as their translator. In loyalty to the SPM, SAH declined this offer.

In 1906 SAH returned back to the translation work when Schäfer, after the discovery of some Old Nubian New Testament texts, asked for the translation of these into Kunuuzi. In 1908 he started his main translation project with Schäfer and Junker that led to the publication of the four Gospels by the BFBS in 1912. SAH continued to translate and revise most of the NT books, except 1 and 2 Peter, James and Hebrews, into Kunuuzi. These were typed by G Noack in 1933/34 and mimeographed in a limited edition of fifty copies. During the war, SAH also translated Old Testament passages.

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<sup>253</sup> It is worth noting that Fröhlich realized SAH's hesitation to accompany him to Abu Hoor for an evangelistic-medical visit. Fröhlich also described SAH's rhetoric to win the attention of his audience (Unruh 1944:7-8).

<sup>254</sup> Cf 8.3-8.10 for a detailed and concise description of SAH's linguistic contribution including the sequence of his translation of New Testament and Old Testament books.

### **7.2.5 SAH the linguist**

During his exploration journey in 1900, SAH had already begun collecting Nubian words for a Nubian Arabic dictionary, most likely inspired by his encounters with the Kunuuzi Nubian villagers in the Nile valley. In Gizaira, SAH started to write a primer that could be used in Nubian schools that were still to be established. This plan could not be realized. Schäfer and Junker, after their initial reservations, acknowledged SAH's extraordinary linguistic ability and regarded him as a reliable source for Kunuuzi. In 1911, during SAH's visit to Berlin, he worked together with Enderlin and Westermann on a Nubian primer which was published by the SPM in 1913. The SPM was committed to the process of making Kunuuzi a written language. SAH played a major role in this project together with the invaluable contributions of the German scholars Schäfer, Junker and Westermann.

### **7.2.6 SAH the ethnographer**

When SAH, after about fifteen years of absence, returned to Nubia in 1885, he had to be re-socialized. He observed his original culture and relearned it by participation. Due to this special situation, he was uniquely suitable to describe Nubian traditions and daily life. When Schäfer and Junker realized the quality of SAH's work and his ability to produce Kunuuzi texts in connection with his profound insight into the Kunuuzi culture, they asked and encouraged him to write ethnographic texts. They also encouraged the SPM to set SAH free for writing ethnographic texts as this would be of great benefit not only for scientific research but also for the SPM missionaries and their work among the Nubians. Thus, SAH produced a number of ethnographic texts that were published by Schäfer, Junker and Massenbach.<sup>255</sup>

### **7.2.7 SAH the teacher**

Although SAH was employed by Guinness, not as a teacher, but rather as an evangelist, he taught throughout his work life with the SPM to various audiences and on different levels. The basis for his ability to teach lay in his individual gifting, personality, biography and education.

#### **7.2.7.1 SAH's teaching experience prior to his work with the SPM**

During his education in Switzerland, England and Lebanon, SAH was exposed as a student to different methods of teaching. The methodology and depth of study varied from primary

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<sup>255</sup> Cf 8.5 for more details.



school education in Peseux, Switzerland, missiology training at the ELTI in London and Sheffield and university education in Beirut, Lebanon.

In 1880, during his summer vacation from Cliff College in Derbyshire near Sheffield, SAH gained his first practical experience in teaching when he was sent to Devizes in Wiltshire to the Ansteys. Mr Necker's sister was married to Mr Anstey, a rich industrialist in Devizes. They were Christians following the Plymouth Brethren tradition and had seven children. SAH started to help teaching them while he was kindly welcomed and received by the Ansteys during his holiday time. He also spent some weeks of enjoyable holiday with them in Weymouth at the south coast of England (Hussein 1920:51-52).

When SAH was in Beirut to prepare for his medical studies in 1882, his financier, Th Necker, died. SAH was immediately ordered back to England by the Ansteys. They felt responsible for SAH, but did not know or did not share the vision of Th Necker who wanted SAH to return as a doctor and evangelist to his own ethnic group. They happily offered him the position of a teacher for their children. His teaching work led to a substantial increase of his experience and was received with gratitude and appreciation. Nevertheless, he asked to be sent on to pursue his studies towards his life's calling.

Eventually, in 1883 SAH was sent to Geneva to Mrs Anstey's brother to pursue his medical training. During his stay, the brother of Mr Necker was visited by Mary Louise Whately who ran a mission school in Faggala, Cairo. Necker and Whately agreed that SAH should return to Egypt and work in Whately's mission school. Thus he left for Cairo in 1884. Whately employed SAH as a teacher for French, English, Geography, Mathematics and Religion. Although he did his work in a satisfactory way, he was paid only minimally and irregularly. SAH was severely disappointed because of the lack of emotional and financial care. He left the work of Whately after about six months since they could not reach a mutually satisfying agreement regarding the mode of payment (Hussein 1920:56-57).

After this first disappointing experience, SAH joined the work of Mr Amin, a Syrian, who led a Catholic school in Cairo. This time, the cooperation basically went well, but when he was asked to teach religious classes according the Roman-Catholic doctrine, he refused out of conscientious reasons and left this school as well (Hussein 1920:58).

In 1885, SAH returned to Nubia at the request of his relatives. After he had settled there and started his agricultural work, he gathered young children around him in order to teach them. As he realized the relation between the low standard of living and the lack of education that prevented a better future, he wanted to give the younger generation a better prospect (Sauer 2005:152).

### **7.2.7.2 SAH's teaching experience during his work with the SPM**

Although SAH had accumulated a broad teaching experience, he was not asked to teach when he joined the SPM. While SAH visited Dongola during his exploration tour, he hoped to start a new work there starting a school, but this did not come about (Hussein 1920:106).

After his return from the demanding and exhausting journey in November 1900, SAH took some time to recover. Then he returned to Aswan to help Girgis Ya'quub and Kupfernagel in the SPM school work. Due to rising tensions between him and Kupfernagel, in spring 1901 Kumm provided a new assignment for him and made him responsible for the establishment of a new station in Gizaira, north of Aswan. The plan included the setting up of a school for children of the surrounding Nubian villages. Although SAH tried to write some teaching material, he was not able to establish a school due to the high demands of the agricultural work. In summer 1902, the whole station had to be closed down.

In 1903, SAH was much discouraged by the severe tensions with Kupfernagel and his accusations. But the major blow came through the abduction of his four children by his fanatic relatives in summer. SAH was desperate for support and encouragement and was invited to come to the head office of the SPM in Wiesbaden, Germany to regain his emotional balance and stability. As the SPM had envisioned a new beginning in Aswan and recruited three new workers, Enderlin, Zimmerlin and Gonnermann, it became SAH's primary work to teach them Arabic and introduce them to Egyptian culture and life. His guidance and instructions became a major factor in the new workers' adaptation process to the new culture. At the same time during the teaching, SAH and the new missionaries established a respectful, trusting and loving relationship that was to last until the end of his ministry with the SPM in 1927.

In the end of 1904, SAH and the new missionaries arrived in Aswan. He was the main language tutor for them, for the Fröhlichs who arrived in 1906 and for Gertrud von Massenbach who joined the SPM in 1909. In addition to SAH's tutoring, the missionaries attended Arabic courses offered by the Cairo Study Center in Cairo. As the SPM developed after 1905, the vision for their work among the Nubians became stronger. SAH started to teach Nubian to the missionaries, especially to Enderlin and Massenbach.

According to his time schedule and the varying needs of the SPM schools, SAH was helping out especially after the German missionaries were not allowed to return to Aswan after their vacation in summer 1914. As Maryam, the daughter of SAH, was given the prime responsibility for the girls' school, SAH was supporting her. Unfortunately, the SPM School had to be closed down in 1916 due to outside pressures.

Although SAH would never have called himself a teacher of the well-known scholars like Schäfer, Junker, Westermann and Meinhof, he in fact had become their instructor. He was not just a simple language assistant to them, but a profound, diligent and meticulous, linguistically gifted reference of information and knowledge. He enhanced their understanding of the Kunuuzi language a great deal as they encouraged his output by guided and qualified questions. They so much respected SAH's judgments that they tried to discuss and revise SAH's texts with him personally before publication. The fruitful relationship lasted through the years 1909-1914 and 1925.

During the years of the absence of the SPM missionaries, SAH's health had severely and badly suffered and deteriorated. Nevertheless, the return of the missionaries in November 1924 revitalized his activities. He again was active in teaching the new missionaries Arabic and some Nubian, especially Rippert and Schönberger (Unruh 1944:64-65). For the missionaries, SAH was the outstanding reference person regarding the Kunuuzi language. SAH, knowing that his end was near, had a deep desire to give as much input of the Kunuuzi language as possible to the SPM workers, especially von Massenbach. In summer 1925, he spent some weeks with G von Massenbach to review the Kunuuzi language with her (:65).

## **7.2.8 SAH the interpreter**

SAH served on many occasions as an interpreter. It can be regarded as a privilege for the SPM that a multilingual and educated native Nubian Christian accepted to work with their mission.

### **7.2.8.1 SAH's multilingual upbringing**

SAH was privileged to have been exposed to several languages in his formative years. As a child in Nubia and Lower Egypt, he learned Kunuuzi, Arabic, some Italian, some French and possibly some English. When he went to Europe, he excelled in and mastered French and English. During his stay in Beirut, he re-learned Arabic. After his return to Cairo in 1885, he certainly improved his Arabic and continuously practiced his English. While staying for eleven years in Nubia, he revived his Kunuuzi vernacular. Later, during his time with the SPM, he added some German competence to the facet of his multilingual ability.

### **7.2.8.2 SAH as an interpreter in the Anglo-Egyptian Army**

Being gifted to speak several languages, he was the ideal person to work as a dragoman and interpreter. Due to his financial situation, he had travelled to Cairo to search for work. Through the mediation of a Syrian gentleman whom he met in the capital, SAH was

employed as an interpreter for an English officer. He joined the Anglo-Egyptian army and left Cairo in the end of June 1898 for the battle of Khartoum against the Mahdists (Hussein 1920:90).

### **7.2.8.3 SAH as an official with the Egyptian Postal Service**

After his return from Khartoum in 1898, SAH spent some time with his children but he was in need of new work. Some of his friends who were working as post-office officials persuaded him to apply for work with the Egyptian Postal Service. SAH applied and was accepted to work at the Aswan office. After only a few weeks, he was transferred to the post office in Shellaal. This was at the time when the construction work of the Aswan Dam was well underway (Hussein 1920:94). Shellaal was the Aswan harbor place for any boat traffic to the south. He was the ideal person to communicate with English soldiers and engineers and all sorts of foreign tourists and travelers who were passing by.

### **7.2.8.4 SAH working as an interpreter for the foreign missionaries**

Although the foreign missionaries had some basic knowledge of Arabic, they were dependent on the interpreting support of SAH, especially in the beginning. Thus, SAH translated the sermons of Kupfernagel. Fröhlich vividly described his work together with SAH who was, for several years, his helper in the clinic. Primarily he was his interpreter using German, French, English, Arabic and Nubian as needed (Unruh 1944:7).

## **7.2.9 SAH the medical assistant**

SAH was also a suitable helper in the medical work that the SPM offered. Dr Fröhlich, the first physician of the SPM who came to Aswan in 1906 to establish the medical work, appreciated SAH's understanding, interest and competent assistance in medical matters (Fröhlich 1926:29; Unruh 1944:7).

### **7.2.9.1 The vision of SAH becoming a physician**

Although there are no written documents available regarding Th Necker's plan regarding SAH's life, it became obvious that Th Necker, who was convinced about the potential of SAH, was willing to finance his medical studies. Necker wanted him to return to Nubia as a medical missionary. Yet decisions regarding the next steps of SAH's life were made without consulting SAH. It seems that Th Necker neither introduced his sister in England nor his brother in Geneva into his plans to train SAH as a medical missionary. In the year 1880, Necker planned to send SAH for medical studies to Beirut at the American Seminary. He

called SAH to come to Geneva for a visit. SAH left his training at Harley House in East London and went to Switzerland for some time. It can be assumed that Necker shared and explained his vision with SAH during his stay. In October 1880, he went from Geneva to Beirut to study Arabic and take courses in preparation for his medical studies (Hussein 1920:52-54). When Necker died in 1881, SAH was called back to England by the Ansteys who did not know or share the vision of their late relative. But in 1883, SAH requested to be released from his teaching duties in order to pursue his medical studies. A Swiss based brother of Mr Necker arranged for him to come to Geneva and organized his training under the care of Dr A Bard in the Rothschild Ophthalmological Hospital. Unfortunately, after a visit of M L Whately to Geneva, Necker had agreed with Whately to send SAH to Cairo to work as a teacher in her missionary school in Faggala, Cairo. By doing so, Necker disregarded the original plan of his brother and disappointed the aspiration of SAH to return to Nubia as a doctor.

#### **7.2.9.2 SAH's involvement in the medical work of W G Fröhlich**

The medical work was already part of Kumm's vision for the SPM work in Aswan. It was planned to supplement the school work, literature distribution and evangelistic work with medical service. This idea was reinforced by Kupfernagel as well. Between 1903 and 1905 Dr Schacht, a German physician who came to treat especially foreigners in Aswan during the winter season, also offered to see poor local patients and rented a place on the mission compound. In 1906 Dr Fröhlich, the first SPM physician arrived in Aswan to establish the SPM medical work in Aswan and Daraw. Although there were nurses to help medically, Fröhlich needed an interpreter. As SAH was the most suitable person, he also began to work as a medical assistant. In Fröhlich's perspective SAH became more interested in medical work and gratefully received a significant amount of additional explanations and information (Unruh 1944:7). Fröhlich was obviously not aware of Necker's plan with SAH as he does not make any mention of SAH's medical pre-education and training that he had received in Beirut and Geneva. It can be assumed that SAH was a competent assistant to Fröhlich and Enderlin during their evangelistic-medical visits in the villages around Daraw and in Nubia.

#### **7.2.10 SAH the elder**

When the SPM began in Aswan, the American Mission had already established work among the Copts and others. The leading missionary of the AM was C Murch who was placed in Luxor and acted as the AM's supervisor in the southernmost region of Upper Egypt. In

Aswan, Ibrahim Musa was working as an evangelist for the AM and responsible for a small group of believers (SP 1901:108ff). It is highly likely that SAH, after many years of spiritual isolation and deprived from all Christian fellowship, was looking for a group of Christians when he came to Aswan to work with the Egyptian Postal Service. It seems that he had some fellowship with Musa's Presbyterian group. At least SAH was known as a Christian which explains why he was suggested to Guinness when he inquired about a Nubian Christian in early 1900. Most likely it was Ibrahim Musa, the evangelist, who pointed Guinness to SAH. Although SAH later called Girgis Ya'quub "a native friend" (Hussein 1910:185) it is unlikely that he as a Copt was worshipping with Presbyterians in Aswan. There is no indication that SAH in the beginning of his work with the SPM attended the meetings of the Presbyterian Church. Further, ministry life with the SPM work was far too busy, entailing its own meetings and required times of absence. This did not allow SAH to be a regular and active church member between 1904 and 1914. But it seems that this situation had changed during World War I, especially when Dr Fröhlich, the last missionary, had to leave Egypt in summer 1915. SAH most likely joined the Coptic Evangelical Church in Aswan during these years and increasingly participated in teaching and preaching there. This led to the development that he was elected and ordained an elder and deputy preacher in the Aswan Coptic Evangelical Church in 1919 (Hussein 1932:163 fn 1). This act can be seen as a significant sign of trust to the SPM in general and to SAH in particular. Yet SAH made it clear from the beginning that he would only be able to hold and practice this office as long as the missionaries of the SPM were still outside the country (Unruh 1944:33).

### **7.2.11 SAH the autobiographer**

SAH was not the kind of person that put himself in the limelight. He was the only remaining part of the initial team of SPM workers. After the crisis years, in the beginning SAH had gained the trust of the board, the supporters and the new missionaries and become a pillar of the SPM work.

#### **7.2.11.1 Part one of his autobiography**

In the introduction to the first part of his autobiography, he declares that he was repeatedly asked to write a clearly structured report about his life (Hussein 1920:7). Only after much consideration did he decide to simply tell what he had experienced throughout the forty years that he had spent in Europe and in the Orient as far as he could remember and as accurately and truthfully as possible (:7). The life account begins with SAH's origin and early childhood

in Nubia, Lower Egypt and Switzerland. In the next chapter, he describes his spiritual development and training for ministry in Switzerland, England and Syria. This is followed by a vivid report about his return to Egypt, his work in Cairo, his life as a Christian Nubian among Nubians and his participation in the Mahdi war. He closes his own writing with descriptions of parts of his ministry, such as his exploration journey through Nubia, the beginnings in Aswan and Gizaira, the abduction of his children and a short summary of the new beginning of the SPM work at the end of 1904 and its development until 1910. The editors of the published version of SAH's autobiography added a preface by C Meinhof, an essay about the flooding of his homeland that SAH had written after his exploration trip with Enderlin in autumn 1908, and a postscript by D Westermann. The autobiography covers events in SAH's life from his birth in 1863 until July 1910 and closes with the words "this is the report about my short, arduous and eventful life" (:120).

The genesis of this publication can be reconstructed as follows. SAH wrote or at least completed his life account most likely in the second half of 1910. The original manuscript<sup>256</sup> was in English, written with pencil and comprised of 232 pages.<sup>257</sup> It seems that it later was given to P A Hamilton and Maryam, SAH's daughter, who took it with them to Khartoum.<sup>258</sup> According to Meinhof<sup>259</sup> the German translation was done by E von Zitzewitz<sup>260</sup>. The German original was written in Sütterlin script and comprised of 173 pages. It seems that the publication was planned for 1913 since C Meinhof had already written his preface on 31 December 1912. There are no indications in the minutes of the SPM why the publication was delayed. Most likely the financial situation of the SPM did not allow a first print run. It is surprising that so shortly after the war the publication was even considered by the SPM board. The board decided to print 5,000 copies (Minutes SPM 29.09.1920:285). The same preface by Meinhof was re-used with only minor modifications<sup>261</sup> in September 1920. The autobiography was finally published in December 1920 and well received. The German version of the first

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<sup>256</sup> The author's search for the original copy of the manuscript in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden and the Mission on the Nile International (MN) archive in Knonau was unfortunately not successful.

<sup>257</sup> This was identified by the author who analyzed a photocopied version that is preserved in the EMO archives in Wiesbaden. It might be possible that the copy had come via the Swiss office of the MN from Khartoum to Wiesbaden.

<sup>258</sup> A handwritten remark on p 1 of the photocopied version of part 2 of SAH's autobiography says that the first part of the autobiography was written in English and that the manuscript is in the hands of SAH's son-in-law Hamilton. This reference is to be dated from the early fifties since the work in Dakke that began in 1952 is already assumed (p 101).

<sup>259</sup> The handwritten preface by Meinhof dates from December 31, 1912 which is preserved in the EMO archive.

<sup>260</sup> Feller writes in his preface for the second part of SAH's autobiography that it was H von Hahn who had translated part 1 into German (Feller 1931:3). In this study preference is given to Meinhof's statement, that E von Zitzewitz translated his first version. As Meinhof wrote his preface at the end of 1912 he was closer to the date of the actual translation into German.

<sup>261</sup> Meinhof had deleted his reference to the translator of the English original into German.

part of SAH's life report was reprinted in 1942 by the Evangelische Mohammedaner-Mission Konolfingen (EMMK) in Zürich (Hussein 1942). H G Feller draws attention to the fact that SAH's autobiography was also translated into Swahili and published before 1931 (Feller 1931:4).

The value of the first part lies in the fact that SAH had agreed to write this life account and that he described the years prior to his work with the SPM (1863-1900) in detail. Two thirds of the material is devoted to this period in his life. Regarding his work with the SPM from 1900-1910, he gave much attention to the description of his exploration and colportage journey (Hussein 1920:95-107). On two pages, he mentions his initial work in Aswan and Gizaira and indicates in only two sentences the tensions between Kupfernagel and himself (:108). The deep shock that the abduction of his children in summer 1903 evoked in him is reflected in his detailed and lengthy account about his unsuccessful attempt to reunite with his children (:108-116). On only two pages (:116-120)<sup>262</sup> does he give a summary of his stay in Germany (1903-1904), the new beginning of the work, the return of Maryam and Abbaas and their educational and spiritual development culminating in their baptism (:120). It is remarkable that SAH pays only little attention to his Bible translation work. In one sentence he refers to the process of the translation of the New Testament that was about to be finished shortly thereafter, without mentioning Schäfer or Junker. As SAH wrote this autobiography for the supporters of the SPM, he obviously intentionally avoids mentioning the internal tensions and his problematic third marriage. It is also striking that he did not refer to the extension of the work in Daraw, the construction of the new mission building including the church, the opening of the bookshop and the constant desire to expand the work to the south. In his writing style, SAH employs a lot of metaphoric language that heavily draws from his Nubian culture. Another distinct feature is the spiritual reflection and evaluation regarding a number of situations and events during the periods covered in his autobiography.

#### **7.2.11.2 Part two of his autobiography**

As the first part that was published in 1920 received such a positive feedback, SAH was urged to write the continuation of his life story (Hussein 1932:3). SAH confesses that he is neither a writing genius nor a man with a "wide and deep spirit," recognizing his relative insignificance (:3). He complied with the desire of the SPM supporters. He confesses that he may not remember all the events of the years passed since he did not take down any notes. Yet he is willing to present happily the things that had engraved themselves on his spirit. He concedes

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<sup>262</sup> Text runs only on half a page on p 116, interrupted by a photo and an empty reverse side on p 117-118, on p 119 and on half a page on p120.



that parts of his memories are positive and joyful while others are sad and dark, but that all contributed the glory of God underlining the truth of Romans 8:28: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Most likely, SAH may have started his writing project in 1926 (Unruh 1944:67). When Feller visited Aswan in October 1926, SAH was about to finish this part of the autobiography (Hussein 1932:3). This time the original manuscript was written in Nubian.<sup>263</sup> SAH wrote the text with pencil in six copy books on about 360 pages.<sup>264</sup> Later, the Nubian text was typed on eighty-six pages.<sup>265</sup> SAH worked on his biography together with H Schönberger who had come to Aswan in 1925 and was learning Arabic and Nubian from him. Based on his Nubian text, SAH may have translated passage-by-passage and dictated them into English to Schönberger<sup>266</sup> who then translated them directly into German. Most likely, Schönberger produced a typed manuscript of his German 108 page version, which was completed on October 28, 1927 and contains handwritten corrections and additions by fountain pen.<sup>267</sup> Prior to the publication, Enderlin revised the text, transcribed the Arabic and Nubian words and added the headings with their respective Bible verses (:4). In 1932, the second part of SAH’s biography was published together with the first part in one edition. Yet the first part was edited again, re-arranged and contains some additional information in comparison with the 1920 edition. The second part contains at the end a postscript referring to the death of SAH and providing a translation of the inscription on SAH’s tomb. An interesting fact is that there is also an English version of the second part which may have been produced twenty years after the published edition.<sup>268</sup> The English text contains a different introduction from the German edition and also contains a number of diverse additions. On the last two pages, the work in Koshtamne, Gerf Hiseen and Dakke is described which suggests a date not earlier than 1952 for the final editorial work. It might be possible that the manuscript was thought to be a preparatory version for an English autobiography of SAH that was discussed by the German board in the 1930’s. A feedback was still expected by S Zwemer who may have initially encouraged this project (Minutes EMM 1932:245).

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<sup>263</sup> The suggestion to write the life story may have come from Schäfer who suggested this in a letter to the SPM prior to the publication of part one.

<sup>264</sup> All six copy books are preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden.

<sup>265</sup> The text could have been typed by H Schönberger or by G Noack who in 1933/34 typed SAH’s Nubian collection of NT books. The typed manuscript is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden.

<sup>266</sup> The short time of Schönberger’s presence in Aswan was not long enough to obtain such a proficiency in Nubian that would have allowed him to produce an independent translation.

<sup>267</sup> A copy of this typed German version is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden.

<sup>268</sup> There is no original manuscript available. The one that is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden is a copied version and contains 101 pages.

Regarding the contents of the second part, SAH started with a short description of the work in Edfu, Daraw and Aswan from 1910 to 1914 (Hussein 1932:125-127). This is followed by an extensive report about the long exploration trip to Dongola by Enderlin and SAH in 1913 (:128-153). The next section is concerned with the events during World War I (:154- 166), including the deportation of Dr Fröhlich and his family (:154-155), the illnesses and bereavements in his family (:156-157)<sup>269</sup>, especially the early death of Abbaas (:158-163), his own health condition (:164), and the wedding of his daughter Maryam to P A Hamilton (:165-166). Then, SAH narrates very vividly the developments during the post war period until the return of the missionaries (:167-181). These years were physically very demanding and emotionally extremely draining for SAH as he was the last and only SPM worker taking care of the mission's property. The mission station in Edfu had to be abandoned and the property of the mission sold in an auction in January 1921 (:171-172). His autobiography ends with a detailed report about the unsuccessful exploration trip with Enderlin to Nubia in November 1925 (:182-194). Interestingly, SAH does not include the beginning of the SPM work in Koshtamne<sup>270</sup> in March 1926 which had caused him so much joy (Unruh 1944:66-67). SAH had planned to close his report with the arrival of the motor boat which Rippert had built in Haifa. SAH himself had already determined the name "aleen ishinbul" (messenger of the truth) for the boat. Although the boat arrived on March 5, 1927 SAH was too weak to realize and celebrate the safe arrival of the boat (:67).

### **7.2.12 SAH the trustee**

When Dr Fröhlich and his family had to leave Egypt in summer 1915, SAH and his daughter Maryam were the only native SPM workers left. SAH was handed over the full responsibility. He had become the sole trustee of the SPM property in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu until the missionaries were allowed to come back in 1924. When Fröhlich finally left Aswan in summer 1915, he wrote a job description for SAH that contained the following duties:

- Supervising the stations in Aswan and Daraw.<sup>271</sup>
- Supporting Maryam in the SPM girls' school.
- Operating the small bookshop and distributing and selling Christian literature.
- Supervising Mursi the gardener, so that the garden remained in good shape.

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<sup>269</sup> It seems that SAH did not count his first and third marriages as valid marriages. Therefore he regarded Briinza his second wife (Hussein 1932:156).

<sup>270</sup> Ruqaiya, a daughter of SAH, was married in Koshtamne (Hussein 1932:192 fn 2).

<sup>271</sup> Fröhlich had obviously forgotten to mention Edfu. The place in Edfu was still rented and contained the property of the SPM and its workers.

- Being responsible for the cashier and paying the taxes for water, house and watchmen
- Paying the monthly wages to Mursi, the gardener, Said the watchman in Daraw and to himself.
- Writing a monthly report about the work and about the general situation including a financial report regarding the income and expenses (Unruh 1944:10)

With the time of absence of the sent workers from Europe, years of loneliness began for SAH. As he was left behind, he felt a “heavy burden on his shoulders” to care, as a native, for the workers of the three stations in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu. In the years prior to the war, SAH had proven himself to be a reliable, faithful and loyal worker of the SPM. He was much more than a “Gehilfe” (assistant). In fact he was an all-rounder, a pillar of the work and a sensitive native advisor who knew how to interpret the signs of the time. He was also outstanding in his spiritual reflection of the situations he went through. The SPM was privileged to have an educated and committed person like SAH on their team. Although he was, with the exception of the early years, working under the leadership of foreign missionaries, he was a key person. He proved to be the only right choice for becoming the sole steward of the SPM stations. His regular reports and letters displayed clear evidence of how seriously he was pursuing his responsibilities (Unruh 1944:11-63).<sup>272</sup> SAH openly and severely struggled with his isolation. He longed for signs of fellowship and news from Enderlin, Fröhlich and others. He was also disappointed by the reaction of the majority of Christians in Aswan towards him as a believer from a Muslim background. He lamented about the indifference, hardness and coldness of the local Christians and suffered under their rejection and opposition. He accused them of being jealous instead of grateful (Unruh 1944:12). SAH regarded himself as “a smoldering wick that the Lord will not extinguish but re-kindle into a new fire.” When his daughter Maryam left Aswan after the SPM School had to be closed in 1916 and joined the EGM work, Fröhlich asked SAH about his daily time management. SAH responded with a report about his daily business (Unruh 1944:18-19):

- Edification through Bible reading and prayer time.
- Visiting Muslims and Copts who are open to hear the gospel or discuss it.
- Spending time in the bookshop.
- Translating different Christian tracts into Nubian.
- Often visiting Daraw to look after the station.

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<sup>272</sup> The letters of SAH were sent regularly to Wiesbaden. Excerpts of the letters were published in the SPM magazine SP and shorter excerpts were collected and published by Unruh in 1944.

- Visiting his relatives and friends among the Nubians that are living in Daraw.

SAH had to be wise in his movements during his visits since the property of the SPM was under the tight supervision of the Public Custodian for foreign property in Cairo (Unruh 1944:19). Although SAH would have liked to visit Daraw more often, the lack of finances prevented him from doing so. In January 1921, the property of the SPM in the Edfu station was sold in a public auction since the mission was unable to pay the rent. Although the Enderlins and Wolter visited SAH in Aswan in March 1923 on their way to Palestine, there was almost no hope regarding the return of the missionaries. The British government insisted that the property had to be handed over to the Property Trust.<sup>273</sup> The AM had already shown sincere interest in taking over the SPM property in Aswan and Daraw. In June 1923, SAH initiated a petition that was signed by many Nubians that urgently requested the return of the SPM missionaries. The low point was reached when SAH was asked to hand over the keys of Aswan station to the local bank director by the public custodian (Unruh 1944:55-56). Totally unexpected, the situation was turned upside down when news from London came on July 19, 1924 saying that the trustee in Egypt had decided on an agreement with the English government to return all stations in Aswan and Daraw including all property to the SPM. Thus, the SPM was requested to take all the necessary steps in order to legally implement the transfer. During a visit of a delegation of the AM on March 15, 1924, the American missionaries had already declared that they had abandoned the idea to take over the SPM station. With great relief and joy SAH realized that the SPM had become an independent mission agency again without being under a foreign authority. The SPM was given the ability to resume its former work. SAH compared the return of the SPM to Aswan with its resurrection and with a victory. He continued saying that the SPM

“was for ten years in the throat of the terrible enemy, but since a living shoot was in it the enemy did not succeed to crush it totally with his teeth or to swallow it even. ... There is no doubt that the doors, that were closed for so long and behind which deep silence will be opened again. Praise and thanks to our Savior will come out of her and the beautiful gospel will be preached aloud inside these walls again and will be carried out through the whole of Nubia and beyond” (Unruh 1944:58-59).

### **7.2.13 SAH the peasant**

Although SAH was raised in a farming community (Hussein 1920:8) he did not gain a lot of inside knowledge about farming during his childhood due to his young age and his early

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<sup>273</sup> For the sequence of the events regarding the return of the property to the SPM cf 4.4.1.5.

departure with his grandmother to Edfu (:9). When his father arranged work for him on a big lemon farm and he had to operate the waterwheel, he escaped as soon as possible (:11-12).

During his education at the ELTI he was trained in farming in order to gain some experience in gardening, field work and agriculture (:50).

When, after all his education and academic studies, SAH returned to his Nubian home village he faced the challenge of having to live in a farming community. He began to learn agricultural work as done by his Nubian kinsmen (:78-79). He also started to plant palm trees and arrange new fields including irrigation devices, such as a waterwheel and shaduuf (:83-84).<sup>274</sup> It proved to be very exhausting for SAH to pursue the agricultural work. The material and financial outcome of his hard labor was not even enough to care sufficiently for his growing family which led to his decision to go to Cairo in 1898 to look for work (:90).

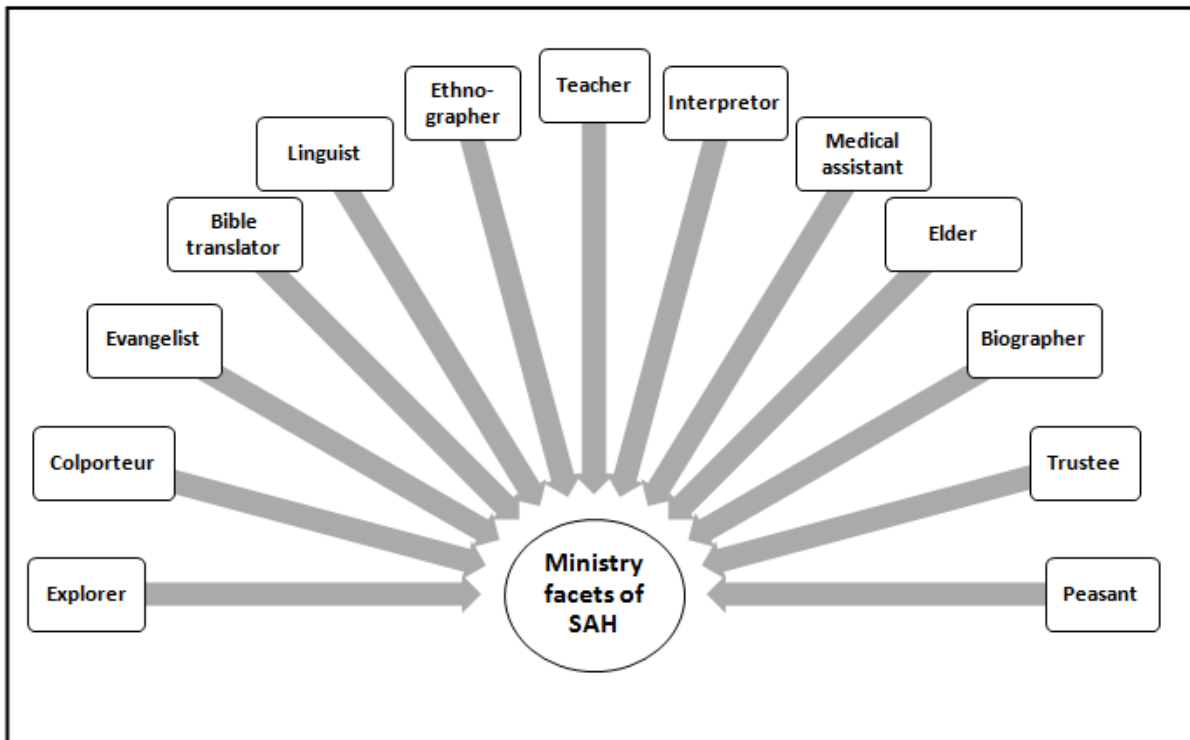
His next encounter with agricultural work was when he was given the assignment to build up a new mission station in Gizaira, north of Aswan. When Kumm realized the tensions between SAH and Kupfernagel, he asked him to move away from the Aswan SPM station in May 1901. The Gizaira station was intended to be self-supporting as it was surrounded by big fields. To be able to organize the agricultural work SAH had to employ additional workers for the farming. The location had two disadvantages. First, the soil was too sandy and did not produce enough yields and second, the soil needed more water than was available especially in the summers. The building and farming work and the supervision of the workers were so demanding that there was hardly any time to establish a fruitful evangelistic ministry. The Gizaira station had to be closed down in April 1902 (:108).

As all the missionaries had left Aswan by August 1915, SAH was the right person to supervise the garden work done by an employed gardener. But during the war when the money transfer was interrupted and SAH was no longer able to pay the gardener, he started to do the work himself in order to save the SPM's money (Unruh 1944:33).

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<sup>274</sup> A shaduuf is a counterpoised implement for raising irrigation water.

**Illustration 5: Ministry facets of SAH**



### **7.2.14 SAH the mature Christian**

SAH became a Christian in Switzerland and throughout his life he carried a deep appreciation for the Swiss Christians. When he was baptized, he experienced his call to serve God wherever he would send him. The training in England deepened his faith and equipped him for his ministry as an evangelist. His ministry skills were further developed in Beirut through his participation in evangelism among the Druze. Despite the disappointing news about the death of Th Necker, he returned in obedience to England to work as a teacher for the children of Necker's sister. Sticking to his call and keeping the vision alive, he happily gave up the luxurious life in Devizes as he finally was sent to Geneva for further medical education.

Despite not having been consulted, he returned to Cairo in obedience to the decision makers. Although in the capital he was overwhelmed by the temptations of sinful city life and the reality of the Egyptian culture he did not succumb to these temptations. He was also disappointed by the lack of care and fair treatment from the female missionary who had employed him and by being cut off from his Swiss friends that had supported his calling for many years.

When he went back to Nubia, he stood the most difficult test. In total isolation and separation from any Christian community, he endured for thirteen years in a totally Muslim society. In wisdom and humility he adapted to his original culture without denying his faith.

As time went by, he started to profess his faith openly and defend and proclaim the gospel. When SAH, as a response to his open Christian standing, was almost killed, he graciously extended forgiveness and reconciliation to the perpetrator which left a deep impact on his fellow men. A special challenge for him as the only Nubian Christian was the question of marriage. His relatives forced him into his first marriage with a young relative. Although he was legally married, he did not consummate this marriage and was divorced shortly afterwards. His second wife was a Muslim as well, but he loved and appreciated her and had four children with her. SAH had introduced her to the Christian faith and was convinced that she had become a Christian. Unfortunately, she died suddenly while he was visiting Switzerland in 1896, leaving him alone with the four children. The third marriage was arranged by Christians in 1906. Without having had the chance to get to know his new wife beforehand, he married a Christian from a Muslim background who was a student in the American School in Luxor. This marriage developed unhappily and ended in divorce. In 1916, SAH married for a fourth time. His wife was a Coptic Christian and relative of the SPM evangelist Rizk in Daraw.

The call to join the work of the SPM was the answer to SAH's understanding of his life's purpose. Now everything that had happened before and the training he had received made sense and fell in place. After an encouraging start with Guinness and Kumm that was characterized by mutual trust, respect and appreciation, SAH had to endure a number of failures, disappointments, tensions and tragedies. The promising Gizaira station had to be closed down, tensions with the first western SPM missionary mounted up, and his four children were kidnapped by his relatives. SAH was broken, but not crushed. His visit to Germany brought restoration and hope back into his life. The return of two of his abducted children deeply encouraged him. The work of the SPM developed well until World War I. SAH enjoyed the fellowship with the SPM workers and developed his skills as an evangelist and Bible translator. Although he suffered in his third marriage, his greater joy was the baptism and successful education of his children Maryam and Abbaas. Throughout the years of World War I, SAH remained a faithful steward who, with great loyalty and a sense of ownership, cared for the SPM stations in Edfu, Daraw and Aswan. He happily supported the local church in accepting the office of an elder. He proved to be an enduring Christian, deeply rooted in the promises of God. He never lost hope that the missionaries would one day come back. He kept faithful in his faith despite his own physical weakness and various illnesses and the loss of nineteen children. The early death of Abbaas in 1918 was his greatest setback.

SAH was a humble and unassuming person and did not want to be a financial burden on the mission. After the return of the missionaries in November 1924, SAH began to thrive again putting his remaining strength into teaching language to the missionaries and seeing the work growing and extending to Nubia proper. According to his will and as a strong expression of his enduring faith, his tomb was decorated with a wide stone cross and a tomb plate that bore witness to his faith in Christ and his faithful ministry with the SPM.

In summary, it seems that in the beginning of the twentieth century SAH was the only Nubian Christian who openly professed his faith and was involved in active evangelism in Nubia. When he joined the SPM, he was already a mature, tried and tested Christian. Many of his abilities can be seen as having their roots already in the preparation phase and were developed to a certain degree already prior to his work with the SPM. The scope of SAH's contribution to the work of the SPM shows a broad spectrum and has never been appreciated to the fullest extent.<sup>275</sup> Guinness realized his potential and Kumm saw in him the key stakeholder and gave him the freedom to develop his ministry. He was given full responsibility during the exploration trip and during the pioneer phase in Gizaira. It is striking that the assignments that Kumm gave to SAH during the exploration tour, complied and corresponded with SAH's main gifts of being an evangelist, Bible translator, explorer and promoter of literature. With the coming of the first sent missionaries from Germany and Switzerland, SAH was given a subordinate position within the SPM work. He was not ordained and sent to be a missionary as were Enderlin, Zimmerlin, and Gonnermann in October 1904 with whom he returned from Germany. He was called an "einheimischer Gehilfe", a native assistant, although he was much more than this. In the framework of the developing work under the supervision and encouragement of Rev Ziemendorff and the leadership of Enderlin, he was able to develop and apply his abilities.

SAH displayed a strikingly strong loyalty to the SPM. His being called by Guinness and then nurtured, encouraged, instructed and supported by Kumm let the roots go deep. He did not leave the SPM in the early years of tensions and crisis when the AM tried to employ him as a Bible translator. He did not leave the SPM when his children were abducted. Becoming the trustee of the SPM property in the three places was not only because the SPM had no other reliable national worker but because he was, beyond doubt, the only person that deserved the full trust and confidence of the SPM. When the Copts tried to win Maryam, his

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<sup>275</sup> In summarizing SAH's contributions between 1904 and 1914, Unruh says that SAH was a much appreciated co-worker in the polyclinic and in the hospital. He received many visitors, especially acquaintances from his Nubian homeland. He was an interpreter, language teacher and companion for village visits. His help was often needed and desired (Unruh 1944:7).



daughter, as their teacher and close down the SPM School, SAH refused due to his calling and remained faithful to the SPM (Unruh 1944:17). During the financial problems of the SPM in Germany, he showed empathy and decided not to leave the mission due to financial reasons (Unruh 1944:49). When the missionaries were absent during World War I and beyond, SAH showed himself as a trustworthy and faithful custodian of the SPM property. He readily did the work of a gardener, guard, doorkeeper and house servant (Unruh 1944:33). Moreover, he continued his ministry within his legal, financial and physical limitations.

SAH was a man of faith in spite of his physical challenges. He did not give up hope regarding the return of the SPM to Aswan. He was convinced that the return of the first missionaries would cause gratitude to God and would have a profound effect on the Nubians (Unruh 1944:51). He invested his life until his last breath into the mission's call to the Nubians. He was involved in a number of exhausting exploration journeys to expand the frontiers of mission work further to the south into Nubia proper. He translated the gospels and other parts of the Bible for distribution. He produced literacy material for Nubians and others to learn the language. He invested a lot of effort in some of the SPM missionaries to master the Nubian language. Deep in his heart, SAH was an evangelist who had a special passion for his Nubian people to be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## 8. The literary contribution of Samu'il Ali Hiseen

In the previous chapter the focus was on the various contributions of SAH to the SPM work during the period between 1900 and his death in 1927. Among the manifold activities and contributions, SAH's major and most significant contribution can be recognized in the field of linguistic work. So far, this aspect of SAH's work has not received a comprehensive description and the necessary appreciation.<sup>276</sup> His contributions in the linguistic field have only been partly published. But there are still a good number of manuscripts that are kept unpublished in the archives of EMO. The texts that were produced by SAH comprise biblical material, Christian texts and prayers, ethnographic descriptions, handwritten letters in the Kunuuzi vernacular<sup>277</sup>, linguistic tools and biographical material.

### 8.1 Lingual preparation prior to working with the SPM

It is of importance to describe the aspects and factors that shaped SAH's linguistic competence. Undoubtedly, his biographical development prior to 1900 set the stage for his impressive contribution to the scientific documentation of the Kunuuzi dialect. The Kunuuzi language was little researched and documented at the beginning of the twentieth century. This situation changed completely when SAH started to be involved with the Berlin and Vienna expeditions that took place between 1908 and 1911, being motivated, instructed and guided by the German scholars Schäfer and Junker (Schäfer 1917:14-15). The years prior to 1900 can be called the formative phase of SAH's linguistic ability that made him the kind teacher, instructor, and language assistant that Schäfer and Junker were looking for (:16). After some initial carefulness and hesitation, the European scholars soon discovered that SAH was unusually smart, linguistically gifted (:13) and driven by a deep love of his mother tongue that had grown in him since his return to Nubia in 1885 (:18).

#### 8.1.1 Language skills acquired prior to his time in Europe

As SAH spent his early childhood in the Kunuuzi speaking area of Nubia, in Abu Hoor, south of Aswan, he grew up with Kunuuzi as his mother tongue. When he moved with his

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<sup>276</sup> For some preliminary attempts cf Schäfer (1917:7-37), Dammann (1980:1-13), Werner (1985:33-34), Hofmann (1986:9-13) and Lauche (2004:325-331).

<sup>277</sup> As explained earlier in 2.7, the Nile-Nubians who inhabit the Nile valley between the First and Fourth Cataracts speak three distinct languages: Nobiin, Kunuuzi and Andaandi (Dongolaawi). Each of these languages can be subdivided into regional dialects. Until recently, Kunuuzi was regarded as a dialect that, together with Dongolaawi, constituted one language, the Kunuuzi / Dongolaawi. Since 2011 the Ethnologue has accepted the request of some Dongolaawi speakers to include their language, Andaandi, as a separate language in its own right.

grandmother to Edfu, he maintained his vernacular within the Kunuuzi speaking community that had settled there, but also came in contact with Arabic speaking Egyptians who constituted the majority group of the region. Further, he was exposed to Arabic as he was sent to a *kuttaab*, a Quran school, to learn classical Arabic and to memorize the holy book of Islam. When he escaped to Lower Egypt, he spent some time in Cairo, Benha, and Suez. During these years, he continued to speak Kunuuzi as many of his friends were Nubians, but he certainly improved his Arabic through his constant contact with native Arabic speakers. Thus, when SAH left Egypt in 1873, he was bilingual, speaking Kunuuzi, his primary mother tongue and Arabic, which had become his secondary mother tongue. During the formative years of his childhood, he was socialized first in Old Nubia and then in Edfu and Lower Egypt conversing in Kunuuzi and Arabic. It is likely that he also learned some Italian during his short time in Port Suez where he was employed in an Italian restaurant.

### **8.1.2 French and English language skills acquired in Europe**

SAH, being a student in the boarding school in Peseux, Switzerland, started to learn primarily French and English basically as an absolute beginner level. The emphasis was on French as English was taught as a second language. It seems that he mastered the two languages well and reached a fair level of proficiency. Whether he acquired some German during his time in the boarding school remains unknown. During his studies at the ELTI in London and Sheffield he improved his competence in English, since his daily life and all his academic studies were in English. It seems that he was taught some Greek and Latin, too.<sup>278</sup>

### **8.1.3 Arabic language skills re-acquired in Lebanon**

Since SAH stayed outside his original culture during his teenage years, he lost his proficiency in the two languages that he had acquired during his childhood. As his main supporter Th Necker wanted him to study medicine to become a physician in his country of origin, he had to re-learn Arabic prior to entering Medical School in Beirut. During his summer activities among the Druze of Lebanon he had ample opportunities to practice and improve his Arabic.

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<sup>278</sup> Although SAH indicated in his autobiography that he had studied Greek and Latin during his theological training, Schäfer comments that he did not show any knowledge of the two languages as they were translating the four gospels. Schäfer suggests that SAH, after the many years of not using any of these languages, may have forgotten them completely (Schäfer 1917:18 fn 29).

#### **8.1.4 English and French language skills improved in Europe**

When Th Necker passed away and the financial support stopped, SAH was called to Britain by Necker's relatives. After his return to Britain in 1884, he worked as a teacher in the Anstey family using English as the language of instruction. During his interlude in Switzerland in 1885, he had the opportunity to use and refresh his French again when he received medical training in ophthalmology in Geneva.

#### **8.1.5 Arabic language skills improved in Cairo**

Back in Cairo in 1885, he was employed as a teacher in the school of Mary Louisa Whately in the Faggala area of Cairo and, subsequent to it, in the Catholic school of a Syrian gentleman. He had to teach his subjects in Arabic and English and did so to the satisfaction of his employers.

#### **8.1.6 Nubian language skills re-acquired in Nubia**

Being back in his home country, SAH had to completely re-learn his Kunuuzi vernacular. As he was uninterruptedly living in Nubia among his kinsmen for eleven years, he acquired his mother tongue once more with satisfactory proficiency. It is likely that SAH used and improved his Arabic as well during this period. Certainly, during the early phase, he used Arabic as a support language to acquire Kunuuzi.

#### **8.1.7 English language used during the Mahdi war**

As SAH looked for work in Cairo, due to his desperate economic situation, he was hired by the English army through the mediation of a Syrian friend. His proficiency in English was so advanced that he was accepted to work as an interpreter for an English officer. He joined the Anglo-Egyptian army and participated in the final battle at Omdurman in 1898.

#### **8.1.8 Diverse languages used during his employment with the Postal Service**

After his return from the Sudan, SAH accepted a new position with the Egyptian Postal Service in Aswan and Shellaal. During his work in Aswan, his primary language of communication was Arabic, but he was certainly used his Kunuuzi as well. In Shellaal, Arabic, Nubian and English were required due to the fact that he had to deal with different people groups. He also was in contact with foreign tourists, army soldiers and workers that were involved in the construction of the Aswan Dam.

Thus, when Guinness and Kumm met SAH in the beginning of 1900 and asked him to join the SPM, he was well trained and educated and able to converse in Arabic, Kunuuzi, French and English. Schäfer, who was working closely with SAH between 1908 and 1911 rated his lingual competence as follows. He spoke Arabic better than his compatriots, he knew French well, had a fair command of English, understood German<sup>279</sup> and knew some Italian (Schäfer 1917:18 fn 29). SAH's strange and amazing life story in the years from 1863 to 1900 proved to be the most suitable preparation phase for his linguistic contribution that occupied some of his time during the second half of his life when he was involved with the SPM. His bi-cultural upbringing made him the appropriate person to bridge the gap between the western, Nubian and Egyptian cultures and able to act as a mediator between them (Werner 1985:33).

## **8.2 Linguistic contribution prior to working with the SPM**

SAH was exceptionally well equipped and acquired an outstanding educational level compared to most of his Nubian compatriots. It is needless to say that it is extremely rewarding to look into his linguistic and literary contributions from his time working with the SPM.

There is no evidence that SAH had produced any linguistic material prior to joining the SPM. When he returned to Nubia in 1885, after his period of socialization in Europe, he had become a stranger to his original culture. It was a wise approach to immerse into the Nubian culture, language and way of life. He put his focus primarily on culture and language acquisition. He participated holistically in Nubian village life and faced the daily struggles of a Nubian peasant besides caring for his growing family. It is a great achievement that SAH re-learned the Kunuuzi vernacular and acquired a deep understanding of Nubian customs and traditions. Further, he gained an inductive understanding of the religious life in Kunuuzi speaking Nubia. His insight into the traditional Sunni Islam and the prevailing superstitious practices proved to be an indispensable prerequisite for his future ministry among his people group. The insight that he gained into the reality of Nubian life through his immersion in silence and patience became a hidden treasure and made him the appropriate person to write

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<sup>279</sup> Regarding his German, he may have gained some rudimentary knowledge already in Switzerland, although he was trained in a boarding school in Peseux, Neuchatel, in the French speaking part of the country. It is likely that he learned some German during his joint work with Kupfernagel and certainly during his stay in Germany (1903-1904). During his cooperation with Schäfer and Junker, his German improved markedly (Schäfer 1917:18 fn 29: "... und verstand Deutsch, das er anfangs nur radebrechte, aber sichtlich vervollkommnete."). His visit to Berlin, Hamburg and Wiesbaden in 1911 may have given him a further boost in his German language acquisition.

the numerous and extensive ethnographic texts in the second decade of the twentieth century. It also goes without saying that he further improved his competence in Arabic as many of his fellow men knew Arabic due their school education, their religious education, their language contact with Egyptians in Aswan and through their employment in Lower Egypt.

SAH used his education and skills to improve the life and future prospects of his kinsmen who, among the Arabs, were regarded as ignorant, uneducated, second class people, only able to take on service occupations in Lower Egypt.

## **8.3 Translation of biblical texts into Nile-Nubian**

Throughout his years with the SPM, SAH was involved in the translation of biblical texts. He started with his first gospel in 1900 and continued to produce Scripture texts until 1925. It was his desire to introduce his Nubian fellow men with the Gospel in their own language, breaking the power of Arabic and its Islamic connotation. He also wanted to provide reading material for the Kunuuzi Nubians. In cooperation with the German scholars, SAH and the SPM wanted to make Nubian a written language again to preserve their endangered language and promote their identity. Nevertheless, it also has to be said in regret that after Kumm left the SPM, SAH was asked to be part of so many activities of the mission that he was not able to get deeper involved in linguistic work (Schäfer 1935:202 fn 3). This only changed when Schäfer and Junker came to Aswan in 1908.

### **8.3.1 A short history of Bible translation into Nubian prior to SAH**

Before we have a closer look into the translation work of SAH, we will put his contribution in the context of a short description of the history of Bible translation into Nubian that started in the middle of the nineteenth century. As research in Egyptology advanced, the people groups of the Nile valley came more into focus. The study of their languages was often connected with the translation of parts of scripture since biblical texts provided a known framework for linguistic research.

#### **8.3.1.1 K H Lepsius (1810-1884) – The Gospel of Mark and the Lord's Prayer**

Lepsius, a professor of Egyptology in Berlin<sup>280</sup>, conducted an extended Prussian expedition to Egypt and Nubia from 1842 to 1846 (Freier & Grunert 1984). During this expedition, he collected material for the grammatical description of three Sudanic languages, of which

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<sup>280</sup> Lepsius was appointed professor of Egyptology at Berlin University in 1842. He was the first scholar to present a systematic outline and historical interpretation of all known African people groups in genealogical order (Jungraithmayr & Möhlig 1983:144-145).

Nubian was one. His work on the Mahas dialect of Nobiin can be regarded as the beginning of serious scientific research on the Nile-Nubian languages. The results of his research were published in his *Nubische Grammatik* in 1880 (Lepsius 1880). Lepsius, while he was on his expedition, initiated and supervised the translation of the Gospel of Mark and the Lord's Prayer into Mahas (Lauche 1998:127-132), which he later included in his grammar reference (Lepsius 1880:201-236). With the translation of this gospel, he had produced the first coherent piece of modern Nubian literature. The first draft was done in Arabic script with additional signs for sounds that are not present in Arabic. After coming to a deeper understanding of the Nubian language and its phonology, he came to the conclusion that the variety of Nubian vowels could not be adequately represented by Arabic script. Consequently, he rewrote the whole gospel from Arabic into Latin script according to the Standard Alphabet that he had developed. The gospel and the Lord's Prayer were printed on thirty-seven pages as a separate booklet in 1860 in Berlin for the first time (Lepsius 1860). The second printing of the gospel and the Lord's Prayer was as part of the grammar reference that was published in 1880. It was a slightly revised version that was used as a proof text for Lepsius' grammatical description of Mahas (Lauche 1998:129). The gospel was translated a third time in Latin script in 1885 by the BFBS. Whereas the first two editions exclusively served scholarly purposes, the third edition was motivated by Christian intentions. It was supposed to be distributed by the Anglo-Egyptian army in the Dongola region as the army tried to deliver the Nile valley from the rigid Mahdist rule (Annual Report BFBS 1899:342). The third version was a reprint of the 1880 version. Due to the fact that this gospel version "did not prove of much service, as the people did not understand the Roman character in which it was printed" (:342), the BFBS decided to produce a new edition in Arabic characters (Annual Report BFBS 1900:333). This version was based on the 1860 text and published in 1899 in Alexandria. It was aimed at Nubians that were working in service occupations in Alexandria. In the beginning it was met with fanatical opposition, but later it found favour and was accepted with some kind of pride. Eventually, this gospel version reached Aswan, too. Some copies were sent by the BFBS to Ibrahim Musa, the evangelist of the American Mission, without any further explanation. Not knowing what language the gospel was in, he asked his co-workers to read some samples of the text to Armenians, Greeks, Turks and others in the market place. All declared the language as unknown to them until a young Fadija speaking Nubian recognized the words read as his vernacular. Ibrahim's co-worker returned full of joy, having identified the language of this portion of Scripture. They soon ran out of stock and ordered a big number for the many Nobiin speaking Nubians that resided in Aswan (SP

1901:109). When the first thousand copies were distributed among the Nubians, a second edition of the Arabic version was printed in Cairo by the NMP in 1906.<sup>281</sup> There are no indications in the society's minutes or annual reports concerning its reception or its range of distribution (Lauche 1998:130).

### **8.3.1.2 L Reinisch (1832-1919) – diverse Scripture passages**

Leo Reinisch became a professor in Vienna in 1868. His work constituted the beginning of Egyptology in Austria. He also was an outstanding scholar in African studies in Germany prior to World War I and is the founder of Cushitic studies. He wrote descriptions of Cushitic and northeastern African languages, among which was Nile-Nubian (Jungrathmayr & Möhlig 1983:201-202). In his research on Nile-Nubian languages, he included some short Kunuuzi texts that relate to biblical persons, such as Moses, Noah, David, Pilate, Herod, and Jesus (Reinisch 1879:157-159). In the Dongolaawi or Andaandi language he produced translations of Genesis 1:1-6, 27:1-41, and Ruth 1:1-22 in a literal and a free translation (:168-175).

### **8.3.1.3 K V Zetterstéen (1866-1953) – diverse NT passages in Kunuuzi**

The Swedish orientalist K V Zetterstéen (1866-1953), professor for oriental languages at the universities of Lund and Uppsala, published some scholarly works and articles related to the Kunuuzi language (Jungrathmayr & Möhlig 1983:274-275). In 1909, he published the New Testament passages that had been translated by SAH at the request of Schäfer (Zetterstéen 1909:76-88.237-246).

### **8.3.1.4 H B A Abel (1883-1927) – diverse NT passages in Fadija**

It was H Abel, by providing the very same New Testament passages in the Fadija vernacular, who has fulfilled the full request expressed by Schäfer. With the assistance of Muhammed Abdu Hamdun from Irminna, he was able to translate the passages and prepare them for publication at the onset of World War I (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 16).

With the exception of Lepsius, all translations were only selective and exclusively served as language samples in scholarly publications. There is ample evidence that it was with the work of SAH that a real effort of scripture translation began. To a great extent, through his translation effort, SAH provided such a quantity of language material in Kunuuzi that it became the best researched Nile-Nubian language of his time (Schäfer 1917:14-15).

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<sup>281</sup> Westermann, (Minutes BFBS 05.06.1912), makes an important suggestion that the language into which the Gospel of Mark had been translated should be called the Fadija dialect instead of Mahas, in the Annual Report of the BFBS.



### 8.3.2 Translation of the Gospel of John (1900-1901)

In February 1900, SAH became the first Nubian co-worker of the SPM. It seems that Kumm quickly grasped the lingual and linguistic potential of SAH. Kumm, being a pioneer and strategic thinker, either had some concrete knowledge of SAH's linguistic skills or presupposed them based on his training in Europe. Or perhaps he just gave it a try to challenge SAH with producing material in Kunuuzi since he was the only Christian mother tongue speaker available in this unreached people group. An additional inspiration for SAH might have come from seeing Kumm working on a sketch of Beja grammar (Sauer 2005:157 fn 148).<sup>282</sup> Shortly after SAH joined the SPM, Kumm commissioned him to go on an exploration and colportage trip to the south through Nubia up to Dongola. The trip took SAH about six months. Among a number of specified assignments<sup>283</sup>, Kumm obviously requested SAH to begin with the translation of the Gospel of John<sup>284</sup> during the trip. While in Dongola, SAH reported some progress regarding his translating the gospel (Guinness 1900:4; SP 1900:15). It seems that SAH was not able to finish the translation of the Gospel of John during the trip. After SAH's return from his exploration trip he started to get involved with the SPM work in Aswan. He was especially helpful to Girgis Ya'quub in the SPM School. It remains unknown when SAH continued his translation work on the Gospel of John that he had started during the journey between March and October 1900. When Kupfernagel, the first missionary sent by the SPM from Germany, arrived in January 1901 and joined the already present group of local workers, tensions began to rise, especially between Kupfernagel and SAH. There is no indication whatsoever that Kupfernagel was instructed by the SPM or Kumm to encourage SAH to continue his translation work after his promising beginning, which was supported by Kumm's stimulation and encouragement. However, at the end of April 1901, SAH was able to inform the SPM in Germany that he had completed, with the

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<sup>282</sup> Kumm had already started to work on a sketch of a Bishaari grammar during his stay in Aswan in 1900. He completed the manuscript during his visit to Aswan in spring 1901. This rudimentary grammar reference was expected to be the basis for work among the Bishariin (SP 1901:62). Kumm was obviously not aware of the already published Beja texts (1893), the phonology and grammar reference (1893) and the dictionary (1895) by Reinisch.

<sup>283</sup> The scope of this first exploration trip of the SPM to the south and the strategic goals of this journey are explained in more detail in 6.1.4.

<sup>284</sup> Schäfer (1917:13) erroneously spoke of the Gospel of Mark. This misconception may have been caused by Lepsius' translation of the Gospel of Mark and the widespread tradition to start any translation of the New Testament with the shortest of the four gospels that emphasizes the human nature of Christ. Schäfer later discovered his mistake by reading SP 1900:15 and SP 1901:79 and corrected it (Schäfer 1918/19:256). Unfortunately, Dammann (1980:6) followed Schäfer's first version in assuming that it was the Gospel of Mark that SAH had translated.

exception of a final revision, the Gospel of John (SP 1901:79).<sup>285</sup> It is possible that SAH wanted to hand over the gospel to Kumm and receive competent feedback from a scholar regarding his first attempt to translate a part of the word of God. Thus, when Kumm came to visit Aswan in March 1901, he most probably had taken the draft manuscript of the Gospel of John and the glossary with him to Germany or England. He then forwarded it to Fritz Hommel, who was a professor in Munich. Hommel, at first, had expressed his readiness to check the translation, but later apologized for not being able to revise the manuscript due to lack of time. He sent it back to Kumm on August 12, 1902, using the address of Cliff House, near Sheffield (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15). Since then it has disappeared. It seems that the gospel was lost in the process of sending it to England or was misplaced by Kumm after he received it. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the glossary that accompanied the gospel was with Hommel, who kindly passed it on to Schäfer, who used it in his *Nubische Texte* (:11 fn 15). Schäfer also remarks that the gospel may have been written in Arabic script by SAH, although he did not indicate anywhere that he saw SAH writing Kunuuzi in Arabic Script when he started to cooperate with him in 1908 (:11 fn 15). Most likely, this assumption was based on the fact that SAH, in his trilingual glossary, represented the Kunuuzi words in Arabic script. Another supportive argument could have been that the translation of the Gospel of Mark into the Mahas dialect of the Nobiin, supervised by Lepsius, was written first in Latin script and later transcribed into Arabic by the BFBS for better usage by the Nubians. Yet the strongest evidence for this assumption comes from a handwritten manuscript of the first five chapters of the Gospel of Matthew that SAH produced during his work in Gizaira.<sup>286</sup> In his Nubian letters to Schäfer, SAH sometimes inquires about the whereabouts of the manuscripts which can easily be explained by the inexplicable loss of his first translation product (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15).

### **8.3.3 Translation of the Gospel of Matthew (1901)**

During the author's work in the semi-organized EMO archive, he discovered SAH's unfinished manuscript of Matthew 1:1-5:48. The handwritten text was written on eighteen pages with ink in a lengthy copy book. The copy book is of the same kind that was used by SAH for his trilingual glossary. There is no indication of the date of the beginning of the translation, but on the inner side of the last page SAH recorded "Sudan Pionier Mission" and

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<sup>285</sup> It is not completely clear whether SAH planned to revise the gospel himself and sent it at a later time to Germany or whether he gave it to Kumm before he returned to Germany in May 1901, trusting that Kumm would find someone who was able to revise the text. In the beginning, it looked as if F Hommel, professor in Munich, was able and willing to revise the gospel (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15).

<sup>286</sup> The unpublished handwritten manuscript is preserved in the EMO archive.

underneath he continued with the indication of the place: “Jisaira station.” SAH had written the text in Arabic script following the same method he used to write the Kunuuzi words in the glossary. Based on this evidence, it might be correct to assume with Schäfer that the lost Gospel of John had also been written in Arabic script. It can be assumed that, after having finished the Gospel of John in Aswan, SAH continued with the translation of the Gospel of Matthew after he had moved to Gizaira (May 1901 until April 1902). The exact reason why he did not continue the gospel translation remains unknown. It might be explained by the scorching heat and heavy work load in the pioneering phase in Gizaira.

### **8.3.4 Discontinuation of Bible translation efforts (1902-1908)**

When Kumm came to visit Aswan in the second half of March 1901, he wanted to finish the purchase of a property for the SPM at the Corniche, located on the Nile between the station and the court.<sup>287</sup> He soon realized the tensions between SAH and Kupfernagel. In order to ease the conflict, Kumm, during his stay, decided without approval by the SPM board to set up a new mission station in Gizaira, north of Aswan.<sup>288</sup> The work in Gizaira started on May 1, 1901 (SP 1901:102). Most probably, Kumm had received the Gospel of John and the word list from SAH prior to his departure in order to pass it on to Hommel in Munich. It is highly likely that SAH, after Kumm’s departure from Aswan, started with the translation of the Gospel of Matthew, but was not able to continue. It seems that during the time in Gizaira (1901-1902), as expressed in his letter from June 6, 1901, SAH was overwhelmed with construction work, agricultural field work, supervising employed workers and caring for his children. For this reason he was unable to continue the Bible translation project at large (:101-102), although he was surrounded by Kunuuzi speakers. It also seems that the interpersonal conflicts with Kupfernagel prevented him from continuing the Bible translation project. In addition to this, SAH might also have been waiting for Hommel’s feedback and evaluation regarding his first draft in order to start with the revision process of the Gospel of John. After the work in Gizaira had to be closed down in May 1902 (SPM Board Minutes, 29.05.1902:45; SP 1902:59), SAH returned to Nubia in June 1902 and spent some months in Abu Hoor partly being sick. He returned to Aswan with his two younger children in August 1902 (SP 1902:84) to work with Kupfernagel under the supervision of the latter. Thus, no linguistic work is reported for the period from 1902-1903. When Giffen from the AM and Brown from the

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<sup>287</sup> The board of the SPM had sent Kumm to finalize the purchase of the new location since Kupfernagel seemed to have some problems completing the legal steps, which he was able to finalize in the end prior to Kumm’s visit.

<sup>288</sup> The SPM board confirmed Kumm’s decision to start the work in Gizaira in hindsight in his meeting on May 29, 1901 (SP 1901:76).

American Bible Society passed through Aswan on their way to the Sudan in February of 1902, they recognized SAH's skills and the crisis situation of the SPM during its founding phase and offered him to work for them on a Nubian Bible translation project, but SAH remained committed and loyal to the work of the SPM and declined the offer (Sauer 2005:288). In summer 1903, SAH experienced the biggest blow in his life so far when his four children were abducted by his relatives and not returned to him. In his emotional brokenness and depression, SAH travelled to Wiesbaden after he received a letter from a SPM board member that he interpreted as an invitation to visit Germany. In Germany SAH was allowed to recover emotionally, experienced the restoration of a trust relationship with the SPM board, taught the new group of potential missionaries in the Arabic language and culture and visited supporting churches of the SPM. At the end of 1904, SAH returned with the new group of missionaries under the leadership of Rev Ziemendorff to Egypt. The main target for the new phase was to begin, develop and consolidate the work of the SPM. All energy went into the new beginning, with no reports or indications of any linguistic work.

### **8.3.5 Renewed involvement in Scripture translation (1908)**

Following the initial years of rebuilding the ministry of the SPM, SAH came into contact with a number of leading German scholars that supported the SPM and promoted his translation work by way of their status and involvement as SPM board members and advisors. It is striking that during the formative phase of the SPM there was a close link between scholarly work in the fields of Egyptology, Nubiology, African and linguistic studies and missions exemplified by scholars like H Schäfer, H Junker, D Westermann, and C Meinhof. SAH's translation work, which was primarily done with the support of Schäfer and under his guidance and supervision, can be regarded as his most important life achievement (Schäfer 1917:37) and the primary legacy that he left behind.

When, in 1906, the discovery of some Old Nubian manuscripts was announced, they first were presented to the scientific audience by H Schäfer and K Schmitt (1906:774-785; 1907:602-613) and then integrated into a wider collection of all known texts and published by F L Griffith in *The Nubian Texts of the Christian Period* (1913). Among the manuscripts was a liturgical text that contained some New Testament passages.<sup>289</sup> It was Schäfer's expressed interest to have these Biblical passages translated into the modern Nile-Nubian languages, such as Kunuuzi and Fadija, and to analyse and compare them with the Old Nubian texts. In

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<sup>289</sup> The texts of the lectionary as identified by Schäfer were: Mt 1:18-25; Phil 2:12-18; Mt 5:13-20; Rom 11:25-31; Hebr 5:4-10; Jh 16:33-17:26; Hebr 9:1-5; Mt 1:18-25 (a second time); Gal 4:4-7; Mt 2:1-12; Rom 8:3-7. Cf also Griffith (1913:24-41).

his search for the appropriate person who could provide him with such a translation, Schäfer was brought into contact with the SPM by mediation of G Roeder, who was working with the Egyptian Antiquities Service. Roeder, who learned about SAH from the ophthalmologist Dr W Fröhlich, provided the link with Schäfer. Fröhlich released SAH for the translation work of these New Testament passages. Thus, SAH even before having actually met Schäfer started to cooperate with him by translating the requested parts of the New Testament and soon forwarded them to Schäfer (Schäfer 1917:11). SAH, according to Schäfer's request, wrote these Scripture quotations in Latin script.<sup>290</sup> They contained the following ten passages: Matthew 1:18-25,2:1-12,5:13-20; John 16:33,17:1-26; Romans 8:3-7; Romans 11:25-31; Galatians 4:4-7; Philippians, 2:12-18; Hebrews 5:4-10. Before travelling to Aswan in 1908, Schäfer sent these translated passages to Zetterstéen, the Swedish scholar of Uppsala, and left them at his disposal suggesting publishing them (Zetterstéen 1909:76).<sup>291</sup> SAH not only provided a simple translation of the texts, but in a letter to Schäfer he explained some rules for the pronunciation in English (:77).<sup>292</sup> In the first part of his publication, Zetterstéen presented the New Testament material as it was transliterated by SAH (Zetterstéen 1909:76-88) and then in his second part he added the same Scripture passages in a more scientific representation (Zetterstéen 1909:237-246).<sup>293</sup> Although SAH did not continue any translation work of his own within the next two years, his work for Schäfer in 1906 marks the silent beginning of a very fruitful and pleasant cooperation with leading German scholars such as Schäfer, Junker, Westermann and Meinhof waiting to unfold.

### **8.3.6 Translation, revision and publication of New Testament texts (1908-1912)**

SAH's second period of translating extensive gospel and scripture texts began with the coming of Schäfer and Junker to Aswan in September 1908. Motivated by the stimuli and guidance that he received from the two German scholars, he resumed the translation of New

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<sup>290</sup> Schäfer (1917:11 fn 15) presupposes that SAH had written the Gospel of Mark (i e John) in Arabic script. This may have been influenced by the BFBS who had changed the Latin script of Lepsius' Gospel of Mark into Arabic script. By doing so the gospel found a much better acceptance than the Latin version due to its readability. SAH may have followed this mode to make his gospel more acceptable by his future readers.

<sup>291</sup> Zetterstéen published almost the complete material in the *Le Monde oriental* (1909:76-88 and 237-246), but he omitted Hebr 9:1-10, because he was not able to explain some of the words (Zetterstéen 1909:76). From the time SAH provided the Kunuuzi translation of the NT passages, it still took more than eight years until H Abel published the same material in the Fadija dialect of Nobiin provided by his language informant Mohammed Abdu Hamaduun from Arminna (Schäfer 1917:11-12 fn 16).

<sup>292</sup> Zetterstéen changed SAH's remarks in so far that he established the alphabetical order of the phonetic representation and added the original Arabic words used in SAH's texts (Zetterstéen 1909:77).

<sup>293</sup> Schäfer (1917:11 fn 16) defines SAH's version as the „buchstäblichen Abdruck“ and Zetterstéen's version as „in der üblichen Umschrift“.

Testament texts even beyond the four gospels. The sequence and progress of this adventure will be described in some details in the following section. The exact history of the translation of the four gospels with all its aspects will be presented first, since the gospels were chronologically translated first and then also published, with the exception of the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>294</sup> Then, we will give a closer look to the translation of the other New Testament books from Acts to Revelation, which have not yet been published. Finally, we will describe SAH's translation of diverse Scripture passages, mainly from the Old Testament, that SAH translated and that are only preserved as handwritten or typed manuscripts in the EMO archives.

### **8.3.7 Translation of the four gospels with Schäfer und Junker (1908-1912)**

As the SPM had not given up its desire to present the gospel to the Nubians south and north of Aswan, the translation of scriptures was an issue in view (SP 1907:52). Nevertheless, the practical development of the SPM work and the consolidation and extension of it did not allow SAH to focus solely on Scripture translation. Unfortunately, his gifts in the linguistic field lay barren for a number of years. It took German scholars to help the SPM to see the unique linguistic abilities of SAH. Only due to their request was SAH set free to focus more on translation work, although a number of other duties were still expected from him.

When the building of the Aswan Dam was finished in 1902, it resulted in a considerable loss of land for the Nubians and in threatening the ancient Egyptian monuments south of Aswan. The threat was even more increased when construction work was started in 1908 to heighten the Aswan Dam by another seven meters. Schäfer initiated two Berlin expeditions in 1908/09 and 1909/10. He directed the first one with Junker on the team and Junker directed the second one with Schäfer not participating. The aims of the expedition were the documentation of Old Egyptian inscriptions, Old Nubian inscriptions and Modern Nubian (Schäfer & Junker 1910:579-590). When they realized the threat to the settlements of the Kunuuzi Nubians and their language, Junker was able to win the support for an Austrian sponsored Vienna expedition (Schäfer 1917:15 fn 23) to concentrate on the Kunuuzi language, Kunuuzi place names and the cultural heritage (Junker 1912:101-118).

When Schäfer and Junker came to Aswan during the first campaign of the Berlin Academy in the beginning of September 1908, Schäfer contacted SAH immediately to prepare for their cooperation (Schäfer 1917:11). Schäfer had asked the SPM to release SAH

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<sup>294</sup> SAH completed the translation of the Acts of the Apostles before he started the translation of the Gospel of Matthew (SAH, Letter to Schäfer on 27.05.1909 in Schäfer 1917:240).

for the translation project of the four gospels into the Kunuuzi language. The SPM agreed to release SAH for one day per week. Thus, SAH was stimulated by Schäfer to resume a task that he had already started in 1900, but that he was not able to pursue after the closing down of the Gizaira station with the exception of the ten NT passages that he had translated for Schäfer in 1906. The translation of the four gospels not only fitted Schäfer's interest, but was also, in his perspective, a strategic tool for the SPM (Schäfer 1917:13-14). They were meant to be an evangelistic tool in their missionary activities. Further, the gospels were supposed to provide a kind of text book for the schools in the process of reducing Kunuuzi to writing. The translation work took place in SAH's home on the SPM compound in Aswan and was then continued with Schäfer and Junker in the temple area of Philae, on the *dahabiyya* (house boat) of the archaeologists or in the hotel in which the scholars resided (Nubian Letter of SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909 in Schäfer 1917:238). The four gospels were translated by SAH, written down again by Schäfer and Junker after intense discussions according to SAH's dictation and revised by Schäfer and SAH between September 1909 and October 1911. During 1912 Schäfer again went over the gospels for a final revision to prepare them for publication which took place at the end of the same year. Schäfer was firmly convinced that Arabic was not suitable at all in the process of reducing Kunuuzi to writing (Schäfer 1917:14). For him there was no alternative to Latin script, although he was aware of the BFBS strategy regarding Lepsius' Gospel of Mark. It seems that no lengthy discussion was needed to convince SAH of this fact, although most probably his first version of the Gospel of John (1900-1901) was written in the Arabic script as were the first chapters of the version of the Gospel of Matthew (1901) and the glossary. SAH whole-heartedly promoted the Latin or European writing system.

### **8.3.7.1 Translation of the Gospel of John (1908)**

Until the actual linguistic cooperation between SAH, Schäfer and Junker started in the beginning of November 1908, SAH had chosen the Gospel of John again and began with its translation in September and October 1908 to provide a draft manuscript (:11-12). Since his first draft of the translation of the Gospel of John was lost in 1902 (:11 fn 15), SAH certainly wanted to make up for its loss and started his second attempt to translate this gospel. The original handwritten manuscript with pencil is preserved in two copy books in the EMO Archive.<sup>295</sup> His choice of the Gospel of John may also be due to the fact that SAH regarded the thought pattern of this gospel more attractive to his own mind set and that of Eastern

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<sup>295</sup> The first copy book contains the first part of the gospel (Jh 1:1-11:57) and the second copy book contains the second part of the gospel (Jh 12:1-21.25).

people than the presentation of the life of Jesus in the other gospels.<sup>296</sup> Schäfer does not hide their apprehension to start the translation project with the Gospel of John. In his and Junker's opinion the scope of John's vocabulary was too limited and the thought pattern too abstract and supposedly not attractive for the Eastern mind set. Yet as they followed SAH in his firm suggestion, they came to grow in appreciation of SAH's choice. The simplicity of the vocabulary and the variety in repeating the same line of thought in its intrinsic way were felt to be most appropriate as an introduction to Kunuuzi. In addition to these observations, language and comprehension checks with Muslims surprisingly showed that they were able to understand John chapter one without any difficulties due to the fact that the readers through their Islamic education were better prepared for abstract ideas than Schäfer and Junker had originally thought (:12 fn 18). By the beginning of December 1908, Schäfer had written down the gospel after SAH had dictated and discussed it with him. Then, he took it to Germany and went through another revision phase with SAH during his visit to Berlin in 1911 (:12 fn 18).<sup>297</sup>

#### **8.3.7.2 Translation of the Gospel of Mark (1908)**

It seems that after the completion of the Gospel of John, SAH continued immediately with the translation of the Gospel of Mark. He was so encouraged and motivated by the progress of the work on the fourth gospel that it took him only to December 1908 to produce the translation of Mark. SAH's handwritten original manuscript of the whole gospel (Mk 1:1-16:20), dated in 1908 and written with pencil, is preserved in one single copy book in the EMO archive. Schäfer met with SAH in the beginning of January 1909 to discuss the draft version of SAH that Schäfer did not write down himself (:12 fn 18). Schäfer thoroughly re-discussed Mark during SAH's visit in Berlin in September and October 1911 (:12 fn 18).

#### **8.3.7.3 Translation of the Gospel of Matthew (1909)**

Interestingly, after completing the Gospel of Mark SAH did not continue with one of the remaining gospels, such as Luke or Matthew, but chose to translate the Acts of the Apostles (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 25.05.1909). Since we are dealing in this sub-section with the translation of the four gospels, we will discuss the translation process of the Acts of the Apostles later, although it followed chronologically the translation of Mark. In May 1909, SAH started to translate the Gospel of Matthew (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on

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<sup>296</sup> It is important to notice that even at present many Muslims are more attracted by the Gospel of John than by any of the other gospels.

<sup>297</sup> The EMO archive also holds a revised version of Jh 1:1-9:20, written with ink. This might be an identical version of the one that Schäfer wrote down after SAH had dictated it to him. The copy in the EMO archive might have been SAH's own copy since it was found among the collection of his manuscripts and unpublished works after his death in March 1927.



27.05.1909).<sup>298</sup> When Junker came to Aswan in September 1909 for the second season of the Berlin expedition of 1909/10, SAH had already completed his translation of the Gospel of Matthew and was ready to start the revision work with Junker on it (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 09.01.1910). This time, Junker had come to Aswan and Nubia without Schäfer (Schäfer & Junker 1910:581-582). Nevertheless, he was committed to write down the Gospel of Matthew as SAH would dictate it to him, which was the chosen procedure that Schäfer and Junker usually followed. Thus, they started their work on Philae Island and by November 24, they had already worked through twenty-two chapters. Then, the work was interrupted by Junker's research trip to Kalabsha. When he returned to Aswan on December 23, he continued the work with SAH and wrote down the last six chapters by the end of the year (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 09.01.1910; Schäfer 1917:12 fn 18). SAH kept his copy in Aswan, but was a little confused by Junker's letter to him, most probably sent in March 1910 from Turah, which gave him the impression that Junker was also asking for the Gospel of Matthew. SAH was ready to send it together with the Gospel of Luke (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.03.1910). Yet it seems that this was not intended by Junker and that it can be assumed that Junker took his written version with him to Cairo where he was staying. At a later time, he may have handed it over to Schäfer. In his letter to Schäfer in June 1910, SAH confirmed that he had sent the old and the new writings, i.e. the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke, to Junker through the mail when he was still in Egypt (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 12.06.1910).<sup>299</sup> The original handwritten manuscript of SAH is not among the preserved manuscripts in the EMO archive and has not been traced so far.

#### **8.3.7.4 Translation of the Gospel of Luke (1910)**

In January 1910, after having completed the work with Junker on Matthew, SAH started translating the Gospel of Luke. When he wrote his letter to Schäfer on January 9, 1910, he had already finished the tenth chapter of the gospel with the hope to complete the whole gospel after another two months (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 09.01.1910). On January 27, 1910 SAH reported to Schäfer that he had completed eleven chapters of the gospel. He

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<sup>298</sup> Schäfer erroneously translated the information regarding the translation of the Gospel of Matthew in the Nubian letter of SAH with "the Gospel of Mark" instead of the Gospel of Matthew as the Nubian text of SAH clearly states (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909 in Schäfer 1917:240).

<sup>299</sup> This interpretation would confirm and harmonize SAH's statement in his letter to Junker on March 10, 1910 where he says that he has only the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.01.1910). Schäfer defines the old writings as the original manuscripts of SAH that are already available to him and Junker due to the transcripts that they wrote down after SAH had dictated the Gospels of John and the Gospel of Matthew to them. The new writings are the Gospel of Luke and may be the Acts of the Apostles (Schäfer 1917: 249-250 Remarks 1008:15). Yet, Schäfer's interpretation creates a contradiction to SAH's earlier statement as mentioned above in this footnote.

remarks that if it had not been for the workload he would have already finished the gospel by then (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 27.01.1910). As a SPM worker he was involved in various activities and certainly also involved in the completion of the new building that was inaugurated on December 25, 1909 but was still lacking final touches in various sections. At the same time SAH's children Maryam and Abbaas were in the preparation phase for their baptism that was planned for February 6, 1910 in the SPM Church in Aswan. On March 10, SAH reported to Junker that he had completed the translation of the Gospel of Luke (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.03.1910). Junker had obviously asked SAH about his progress with the translation of the Gospel of Luke. SAH was ready to send it to Junker, if he so wished and due to a misunderstanding he also offered to send his copy of Matthew together with the Gospel of Luke to him. He also assured Junker, that John and Mark were with Schäfer (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.03.1910). It seems that Junker indeed had asked SAH to send the gospels to him. In June 1910, SAH informed Schäfer that he had sent his old and new manuscripts of the gospels to Junker, who was temporarily living in Marie Lüthy's house in Turah near Cairo (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 12.06.1910). Schäfer explains the old writings as the original draft translations of SAH that were already present with Schäfer and Junker in a version that was dictated by SAH to them, i.e. John and Matthew. The new ones are those that have been translated since, i.e. the Gospel of Luke (Schäfer 1917: 249-250 text 1008:15). According to SAH's information, we tend to interpret the "old ones" with the Gospel of Matthew and the "new ones" with the Gospel of Luke. This is more in harmony with the expressions and facts given by SAH. The plural "writings" may be only understood as referring to one Gospel. In addition to that, SAH's statement in the March letter to Junker, that he has only Matthew and Luke with him in Aswan can be seen as correct, since he had handed over John and Mark already to Schäfer earlier. SAH was also curious as to whether the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke had reached Schäfer already. He again asked Schäfer about the progress of the project as it was his heart's desire to see the gospels printed (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 12.06.1910). On August 15, 1910, SAH informed Junker that he had received the twelve chapters of the Gospel of Luke and was continuously working on a new translation that in his opinion was an improved one (SAH Nubian Letter to Junker on 15.08.1910). According to Schäfer (1917:255 fn 1010:2), SAH had sent only twelve chapters to Junker and kept the other twelve chapters with him. As SAH was not pleased with his first draft translation, he had asked Junker to return the chapters one to twelve to him for further revision. He intended to go over chapters twelve to twenty-four as well as these were still in his hands and he hoped to finish them in winter 1910 (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on

15.08.1910). It is not completely clear when Schäfer received the revised draft version of SAH, but it was at least available to him by September 1911, when SAH came to Berlin, but most probably earlier. In the middle of August 1910, SAH in a letter to Schäfer noted that he no longer had any copy of the gospels, but that all four gospels were in the hands of Schäfer (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 13.08.1910). This statement is in clear contradiction with SAH's letter that he wrote to Junker two days later in which he explained the revision process of the Gospel of Luke. A further complication is added by the fact that a handwritten manuscript of the Gospel of Luke preserved in the EMO archive suggests the completion of the translation on August 13, 1910. The manuscript was written in three copy books with pencil.<sup>300</sup>

### 8.3.8 Translation process

Summarizing the translation process, it is safe to say that SAH translated the four gospels between September 1908 and the end of 1910. The first draft of the Gospel of Luke was completed in March 1910, but the revision of the gospel may have been completed in August or winter 1910. Taking into consideration that SAH was not given exclusively time by the SPM for translation work, it took him about two years to complete the translation of the gospels which included also the book of Acts that he translated between January and May 1909. The cooperation with Schäfer and Junker and the support of the SPM team in Aswan and the board in Wiesbaden helped him to not lose the focus and the goal of the project. It is remarkable though, that SAH did not pay a lot of attention to the translation project in the two parts of his autobiography. In order to revise the Gospels of John and Mark, Schäfer had suggested to the SPM board to invite SAH for a work visit to Berlin during summer 1909 (Minutes SPM on 06.05.1909:79).<sup>301</sup> The visit was cancelled due to the various construction projects in Aswan (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909). But Schäfer and SAH implemented this plan even more effectively revising all four gospels in September and October 1911. Otherwise it would have led to the revision of the Gospels of John and Mark only, maybe the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of Matthew. In the 1911 visit to Berlin, the prime focus was on the revision of the four gospels and their preparation for publication. It became obvious that SAH was very ambitious in his translation work as he sometimes requested his manuscript back to revise it again as he did with the Gospel of Luke and also with the book of Acts (Schäfer 1917:12 fn 17).

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<sup>300</sup> Copy book one contains chapters 1:1-11:54, copy book two chapters 12:1-21:24, copy book three chapters 21:25-24:53. At the end of the third copy book SAH has given the date of completion as August 13, 1910.

<sup>301</sup> Schäfer had also planned to cooperate with Meinhof during SAH's visit.

### **8.3.8.1 Basic Scripture text for SAH's translation work**

The primary text that SAH was using for his translation work was the Arabic van Dyke translation, seventh edition printed in 1907 in Beirut (:12 fn 17). But he often consulted the French Protestant translation that was published by E Staper (:12 fn 17). Schäfer remarks further, that SAH was using the revised English translation sometimes and the German translation rather seldom (:12 fn 17). SAH indicated in his autobiography that he had studied some Latin and Greek at the ELTI in Sheffield and thus certainly gained some introductory knowledge of the two classical languages (SAH 1920:50). Due to the fact that he most probably did not use either language for almost twenty-five years, it is not surprising that Schäfer did not notice any reference by SAH to these languages in the translation process of the gospels (:18 fn 29).

### **8.3.8.2 Revision of the four Gospels (1911)**

Before SAH came to Berlin in September 1911, all four gospel manuscripts were available to Schäfer (:12 fn 18; Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 13.08.1910). He had the transcript of the Gospel of John that was dictated to him by SAH in November and December 1908 in Aswan and which he had taken with him to Germany early in 1909. Then, Schäfer had SAH's manuscript of the Gospel of Mark that he had discussed thoroughly with SAH in January 1909 and taken with him to Germany when he left Egypt in early 1909. He also had the transcript of the Gospel of Matthew that SAH had dictated to Junker in December 1909 in Aswan which was forwarded to him by Junker sometime during 1910. Finally, Schäfer had received SAH's manuscript of the Gospel of Luke most probably by the end of 1910. It is not certain whether Junker had forwarded to Schäfer the first draft of the gospel that SAH had completed in March 1910, but requested back for revision with the perspective to complete it by winter 1910.

As Schäfer needed SAH for a final revision process of all four of the gospels, he asked the board of the SPM to allow him to come to Berlin in autumn 1911. The SPM agreed to this request (Minutes SPM on 30.05.1911:88). SAH agreed with Schäfer that it was worth putting enough effort into the revision process that the readers would have no reason to laugh at the outcome of their work. He also added that they should do the work with patience and not allow any hurry to drive them (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.07.1911)<sup>302</sup> Although the main purpose of this trip was the work on the revision of the gospels and their preparation for

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<sup>302</sup> In his letter to Schäfer, SAH uses his metaphorical and picturesque language when he says: "If we do not examine every word as one searches for a louse than all effort is in vain... Why shouldn't we choose the words with patience and put every stone in its place" (Letter of SAH to Schäfer on 27.07.1911).

publication under Schäfer's scholarly supervision (Schäfer 1917:37), SAH also worked with Westermann and Enderlin on a primer of Kunuuzi in October and November. He also recorded some Kunuuzi language samples at the Colonial Institute of Meinhof in Hamburg and visited friends of the SPM throughout Germany together with Enderlin until he returned to Aswan in December 1911.

At first sight, it seems from SAH's letter to Schäfer in July 1911 that Schäfer expected him to arrive in Berlin on July 1, 1911 (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.07.1911). SAH responded to Schäfer's letter that reached him on June 20, 1911 and indicated that he was suddenly faced with huge internal family difficulties that urgently needed to be solved before his coming. He expressed his intention to arrive in time, but regarded a delay of ten days as feasible and apologized in advance for this (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.07.1911). But since the July date would already have passed at the time of his writing the letter it seems that we have to regard this piece of information as a mistake from SAH's side. The two had obviously agreed on starting their intensive revision time of the gospels from September 1, 1911. Since Schäfer had agreed to join the Vienna Expedition 1911/12 to Nubia under the leadership of Junker, he was under a certain time pressure. The fact that SAH left Aswan on August 22, 1911 shows that he was able to solve the family conflict in due time to meet the agreed schedule with Schäfer (Nubian Travel Report SAH on 15.09.1911 in Schäfer 1917:208-237). He must have arrived on September 1, 1911 in Berlin-Steglitz (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 11.09.1911). Since the revision work was the main purpose of SAH's visit to Germany, it was given the necessary priority. Only a few hours after SAH's arrival, they started their work (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 11.09.1911). This was confirmed by Schäfer who continued his comment by praising SAH for his unique ability to continue for weeks performing this hard cognitive work and that he did not know any native who was able to do like him (Schäfer 1917:237 Remark 1003:272). SAH was hosted by Schäfer in his home in Berlin-Steglitz for almost six weeks until they finished the revision of the four gospels.<sup>303</sup>

As SAH arrived on September 1, 1911 in Berlin, Schäfer started immediately with the revision of the Gospel of Matthew which the two completed on September 11 (Letter of SAH to Junker on 11.09.1911). This was followed by serious discussions to improve the text of the other three gospels (Schäfer 1917:12 fn 18). During the hours Schäfer had to be absent from his home due to the scope of his duties, SAH followed Schäfer's advice to write longer

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<sup>303</sup> Schäfer once refers to five weeks (Schäfer 1917:13) and once to several months (Schäfer 1917:37), whereas the exact time for the revision lasted from September 1 until October 9, 1911.

cohesive texts on certain ethnographic topics or events (:37).<sup>304</sup> The two were able to finalize the revision process of the four gospels in the beginning of October, 1911. SAH left Berlin on October 9, to travel to Wiesbaden (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 10.10.1911) and later in October, Schäfer travelled together with his wife to Nubia to participate in the Vienna Expedition 1911/12 of Junker (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 14.11.1911; Nubian Letter SAH to Junker 1912:101-118). Westermann, being a committee member of SPM and BFBS expressed in one of the BFBS committee meetings that the translation was well done (Minutes BFBS 06.03.1912) and that he would meet Schäfer soon to go over the manuscripts again together with him (Minutes BFBS 08.05.1912) regarding him as “the best German authority on Nubian” (Minutes BFBS 05.06.1912).

### 8.3.9 Publication of the four Gospels (1912)

In the beginning it seemed that the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin intended to publish at least the Gospel of John (SP Supplement June 1909:3). But later the British and Foreign Bible Society expressed their readiness to publish all four gospels in Latin script (Minutes SPM 10.10.1911:89; SP 1911:88).<sup>305</sup> Eventually, the gospels were not published in a collection of four, but in four separate small booklets. The publication took place by the publishing house of the BFBS in Berlin in November 1912. The titles given to the Gospels were: *Enjil Yesu komisbuldi teran, hiran Mata (Markus, Hana, Luka gadisebul) bajsin nawite*.<sup>306</sup> Every gospel ended with a final statement that it was translated by SAH from Abu Hoor into the Kunuuzi tongue, saying: *Bajyum. Kunuzin bainidir terjimtakkisum Samuel Ali Hisen Abuhordiged*.<sup>307</sup> With this publication in the Kunuuzi vernacular, for the first time in modern history all four gospels became available in one of the Nile-Nubian languages. The publications of the four gospels were supposed to serve a double purpose. The translation and publication of the gospels was intended for Kunuuzi Nubians or people that knew Kunuuzi. They were also supposed to serve as text books and reading material in the SPM School in

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<sup>304</sup> These texts are introduced and described below in this chapter.

<sup>305</sup> The SPM board accepted the BFBS offer with gratitude and asked Westermann to conduct the additional negotiations with the BFBS. Further, the board decides to express their sincere gratitude to Schäfer for his unselfish contribution towards this translation (Minutes SPM 10.10.1911:89).

<sup>306</sup> The gospels comprise the following number of pages: Matthew 89 pp, Mark 57 pp, Luke 93, and John 70 pp.

<sup>307</sup> This shows Schäfer’s respect, appreciation and attitude towards SAH who for him was much more than a native helper” (einheimischer Gehilfe) (cf also Schäfer 1917:37). In the Minutes of the BFBS (03.07.1912) we find an enlightening remark saying that “Professors Westermann and Schäfer are anxious that the translator’s name should appear somewhere in the book. Mr Morrison suggests that it might be placed under the concluding line of the text in small type.” Schäfer’s perception of SAH was similar to that of Kumm and Enderlin. Unfortunately, it is obvious that in the years when the SPM was able to send missionaries to Upper Egypt, SAH was neglected at least in the publications of the Sudan Pionier. Likewise, the translation work of SAH was mentioned only in passing and did not receive the necessary and appropriate attention in the publications of the SPM.

Aswan (Schäfer 1917:13-14; Lauche 2002:327). Beyond this they were first of all regarded as evangelistic tools as can also be seen by the use of the gospels through Abbaas, the son of SAH, in his work among the Nubians in Cairo in 1915-1916 (Unruh 1944:11). At this stage the SPM was still far away from the phase in which the gospel translation in Kunuuzi could have been authorized for public worship. This would have certainly required another revision process.

### **8.3.10 Additional leaflet for European readers (1912)**

Schäfer wrote and added to each gospel a four-page leaflet giving some instructions in German for the right use by European readers. In this instruction leaflet, Schäfer on the first page introduces SAH shortly to the reader. Regarding the translation work he gives full credit to SAH adding that he revised the draft manuscript produced by SAH together with him and very carefully edited the printed version. In the orthography he remained as close as possible to the written version produced by SAH. Since the gospels are produced for Kunuuzi speaking Nubians or for people who knew the language well he omitted diacritical signs on the letters or markers of length and tone. Only when it was needed to prevent misunderstandings did he put signs indicating length, stress and tone. It was Schäfer's intention to produce a simplified form of writing for Nubian pupils of the SPM School or governmental schools that would enable them to write their mother tongue in a simple way.<sup>308</sup> Then, Schäfer used three of the four pages to explain orthographic and phonological details concerning vowels, general and specific Arabic consonants, and consonant gemination and assimilation (Schäfer 1912:1-4).

### **8.3.11 Reviews of the four Gospels (1912-1913)**

Soon after the publication of the four gospels, a number of appreciative, constructive and extensive book reviews appeared in scholarly journals by Zetterstéen, Roeder, Schuchardt and Westermann.

#### **8.3.11.1 Review by Zetterstéen (1912)**

Zetterstéen (1912:249-251) welcomes the translation of the gospels into Kunuuzi vernacular that had been studied thoroughly before by Reinisch and Almkvist. Then he introduces SAH who had already produced some specimens of New Testament passages that were published by Zetterstéen in 1909. He regards the quality of the gospel translation of higher quality than the first selected New Testament passages (1906) adding that the gospels had been revised by

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<sup>308</sup> Specifically for this purpose, SAH was the major language assistant when he and Enderlin prepared under the guiding supervision of Westermann a Nubian Primer in November 1911 in Berlin which was published in 1913.

Schäfer. Zetterstéen deals for most of his book review with the phonetics and the orthographical representation of the consonants and utters some constructive criticism. Regarding the grammatical and lexicographical aspects he acknowledges that the translation contains much interesting material. Although he does not comment in depth on the contents and quality of the translation he concludes by saying:

“It is, however, a matter of course that there are several inconsistencies in the language of Samuel, but as his purpose was not to work out a translation of the Bible that could be authorized for the public worship, but only to afford his fellow-countrymen an opportunity of reading the Holy Scripture in their mother tongue, this is not to be disapproved of. A certain fluctuation is never to be avoided in rendering a modern language, and for the philologist such inconsistencies are often very valuable” (:251).

### **8.3.11.2 Review by Roeder (1913)**

Roeder was the scholar that asked SAH to translate into Kunuuzi some NT passages of an Old Nubian document that had been discovered in 1906 (Schäfer 1917:11). In his review (1913:297-298) he draws attention to the existence of the four gospel booklets, because he quite pessimistically anticipates that no European scholar might pay attention to them. Roeder expresses appreciation to the effort of the hard work of Schäfer who supervised the whole translation process and designed the orthography together with SAH who was the prime translator so that it can be used for the SPM school and governmental schools. He states that the Nubians still suffer from a feeling of inferiority regarding their vernacular and prefer Arabic in official and religious matters. Roeder expresses hope that the booklets may mark the beginning of a new use of the Nubian language which was the intention of the SPM. He expects that after having used the Old Nubian alphabet and the Arabic script the Nubians may have some advantage in using the Latin script as they deal in the official offices with the languages of the Europeans admitting that the general development in the next decades will have an impact on this issue.

### **8.3.11.3 Review by Westermann (1913)**

Westermann (1913:1052) introduces SAH as translator and Schäfer as reviser and creator of a unified, practical orthography. In his opinion, the translation is successful because the native Nubians can understand their language read to them without problems. The choice of Kunuuzi is meaningful, since it is the most widespread language spoken in the area south of Aswan until Korosko and also in Dongola with its 130,000 inhabitants. For Westermann it is feasible that Kunuuzi could be introduced as written language and language of instruction in schools in the whole of Nubia. He is of the opinion that Kunuuzi will gain an advantage over the other Nubian languages and dialects due to the fact that it will be introduced by the mission schools



that are planned by the SPM. Thereby, he believes that Kunuuzi will gain a dominant position in the eyes of the natives. The translation, although the first attempt, has reached a good level of communication without becoming vulgar. Due to the fact that Schäfer studied Nubian life and collected numerous Nubian texts, he had gained the competence and ability to check the translation in detail.

#### **8.3.11.4 Review by Schuchardt (1913)**

The most extensive review was presented by Schuchardt (1913:97-118). After a short introduction of the translator and his supervisors, Schuchardt justifies his intensive analysis of the gospels as a meaningful contribution for the possible improvement of the publication of the other texts that are still to come (:97-98). Thus, he deals with misprints, the presentation of vowels and consonants, the verbal system and various inconsistencies (:99-118). Schuchardt's book review is the most critical and the least appreciative response to the gospel publication. Nevertheless, for the sake of improving the quality of the language material that still was to be published by Schäfer, Schuchardt presents this extensive catalogue of questions and remarks.

#### **8.3.11.5 Comments on transcription system by Junker (1963)**

Junker comments shortly in his autobiography on the cooperation with SAH during his first expedition in Nubia in 1909. He regrets that Schäfer had used the method of SAH's transcription system in the publication of the gospels which he regarded as not helpful for the students of Nubian (Junker 1963:17).

#### **8.3.11.6 Comments on cultural aspects of the Gospel translation by Hofmann (1985)**

Inge Hofmann, in her paper *Akkulturationsversuche in der Evangelienübersetzung des Nubiens Samuel Ali Hisen aus Abuhor (1863-1927)* (1985:358-362) draws the attention to a number of examples in SAH's gospel translation through which he tried to acculturate certain concepts and make them more understandable for his Nubian readers. She states that beyond SAH's ambition to provide his own people group with a written language again he had the desire to introduce them to the gospel. Therefore, he tried to include in his translation of the gospels ideas and cultural aspects that reflect his Nubian way of thought. He also chose sometimes theological terms that were more attractive to the Islamic mind set of his readers.

SAH's language is saturated with metaphors derived from the agricultural and domestic life to allow an easier approach to the gospel texts by his fellow Nubians (:362).<sup>309</sup>

### **8.3.12 Translation of other New Testament books (1909-1913)**

After SAH's death on March 8, 1927, a number of NT books beyond the four gospels were found in his literary remains. In an amazing effort, SAH had translated the majority of NT books. G Noack typed SAH's handwritten manuscripts starting in 1933 and finished them on April 18, 1934. She arranged them in NT order and compiled all books in a mimeographed version of fifty copies. At the bottom of the last page of the collection, after Revelation 22:21 which is followed by the Kunuuzi term *bajsum* (to be the end) Noack adds the statement *Kunuuzin bainidir terjimtakkisum Samuel Ali Hisen Abuhordiged* indicating that the translation was done by SAH from Abu Hoor (Noack 1934:166). By doing so she followed the way Schäfer and Westermann had suggested for the publication of the four gospels to give credit to the tireless work of the Nubian translator. In the preface (Noack 1934:preface) of the collection, she states that among SAH's manuscripts were all the books of the New Testament except the four gospels and the two Epistles of Peter, the Epistle of James and the Epistle to the Hebrews. According to her observation, the translation of these nineteen books was conducted between April 1912 and June 21, 1913. The Acts of the Apostles was present in two versions, obviously his first draft and a revised version (:preface). This collection has never been published, but most probably only distributed inside the team of the SPM and among scholars. Due to the fact that in all books, there were a number of mistakes, e.g. wrong numbers, Noack suggested a thorough revision preferably done in Egypt prior to doing a print run. She tried to be as exact and close to SAH's original in order to fully keep SAH's vocabulary and style. Nevertheless, she corrected some unclear transcriptions and put SAH's version in parenthesis to allow a precise check later. Regarding the orthography, Noack did not choose the writing system that was used for the four gospels, but followed the rules that were put forward by Schäfer in his *Nubische Texte* (1917:22-32).

It is quite puzzling that Schäfer stated in 1916 that he did not know how far SAH has come with the translation of the rest of the New Testament (:12 fn 17), although he knew from the Nubian letters of SAH that he had continued his translation efforts and produced almost the whole New Testament corpus. It might be possible that Schäfer's statement only indicates that he had not yet seen the manuscripts of SAH or any revised final version.

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<sup>309</sup> It seems that Hofman was basically stimulated by Schäfer (1935:202 fn 4) and depended in her argument on Schäfer's analysis.

In the text below we will try to reconstruct the chronological order and sequence of SAH's continuing translation effort taking into consideration SAH's own indications in his *Nubian Letters* and our observations during the analysis of the handwritten manuscripts that are preserved in the EMO archive.

### **8.3.12.1 Translation of the Acts of the Apostles (1909)**

It seems that Schäfer and SAH had plans to meet in Berlin some time during 1909 for revising the Gospels of John and Mark to prepare them for publication (Minutes SPM 06.05.1909:79).<sup>310</sup> Due to the fact that SAH had to build his own house in Aswan and the SPM was in the process of building a new house including the church, school rooms and accommodations for SPM workers, SAH was not able to travel to Germany in 1909 (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909). Nevertheless, despite the heavy work load and the great heat SAH had not forgotten the translation project, but was using the hours around midnight to pursue it (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909). SAH even before continuing with the next gospel had started the translation of the Acts of the Apostles sometime in January 1909, after Schäfer's departure from Aswan. He reported the completion of its translation in the last week of May 1909 (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909). As Schäfer was asking SAH to send the Acts of the Apostles to him, SAH was hesitant to meet this request for two reasons. First, he was not sure whether Schäfer would understand Acts on his own without his support and explanations.<sup>311</sup> Second, he was curious about Schäfer's progress regarding the Gospels of John and Mark. He wanted to see them printed first before starting a new project. Nevertheless, SAH had no doubts and expressed his full confidence that Schäfer would complete the project and he did not see any practical problem in sending the manuscript of the Acts of the Apostles to him (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909). But whether he in fact did so and when remains unclear. Schäfer had seen SAH's manuscript, but indicated that SAH requested it back for revision (Schäfer 1917:12 fn 17).<sup>312</sup> It is likely, that SAH had sent it despite his initial hesitation to Schäfer by post some time in 1909, since he indicated in his letter to Junker in March 1910 that he had no manuscripts except those of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.03.1910). Nevertheless, it is also possible that SAH had taken his copy with him to

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<sup>310</sup> The SPM board had agreed to Schäfer's request for SAH to send SAH to Berlin for linguistic work with him and Meinhof, but left further negotiations regarding the details of the trip to their chairman Rev Th Ziemendorff.

<sup>311</sup> For SAH this letter is the first letter that he had sent in Nubian and he was curious whether Schäfer would understand it.

<sup>312</sup> There is clear evidence that SAH put high standards on his translation. In the same way he requested the first draft of Acts back for revision, he later did with his first draft of the Gospel of Luke and was quite critical with his translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Berlin in September 1911 and shown it to Schäfer regarding it as yet unfinished. The handwritten manuscript preserved in the EMO archive suggests that SAH started the revision of Acts in April 1912 and completed it on June 12, 1912. This would be in line with Noack's statement that she had found two versions of Acts in SAH's collection of remaining manuscripts.<sup>313</sup> In 1923, Westermann reported to the committee of the BFBS that SAH had also prepared the Acts of the Apostles in Kunuuzi and expressed his readiness to prepare the manuscript for the press (Minutes BFBS 06.06.1923), but suggested only a very small printing due to the limited number of literate Nubian men (Minutes BFBS 04.07.1923). Only a month later, the decision to print the Acts of the Apostles was withdrawn after Westermann shared with the committee that there was only little hope that the government would approve the return of the SPM to its original field. Despite the discussion that the American Mission was trying to add the field of the SPM to their working field and would benefit greatly from the availability of Kunuuzi Scripture material, Westermann advised not printing further parts of the New Testament, since the gospels and the primer were laying useless (Minutes BFBS 15.08.1923). In its September meeting the committee decided to delay the publication of Acts in view of Westermann's information (Minutes BFBS 05.09.1923).

### **8.3.12.2 Translation of the Epistles of John, Jude and the Book of Revelation**

After having completed the translation of the first draft version of the Book of Acts in May 1909 (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 27.05.1909), SAH continued the translation of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. He completed the Gospel of Matthew prior to the coming of Junker in winter 1909 and finished a first draft of the Gospel of Luke in March 1910 (Nubian Letter SAH to Junker on 10.03.1910). In June 1910, SAH reported to Schäfer (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 12.06.1910) that he is not able to sit idly, but that he had tried to translate the three Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude and the Book of Revelation. Most probably he had started the translation process in the middle of March and had completed the first draft of these books on June 11, 1910. According to the dating of the handwritten manuscripts in the EMO archive, SAH provided a second draft of these five New Testament books most probably in the first half of 1913.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> I was not able to trace back a second version of Acts among the manuscripts preserved in the EMO archive. The dates that SAH had written on the manuscript that is available in the archive suggest that this version is the revised version that later was included by Noack in her mimeographed collection. It seems that the first draft is lost.

<sup>314</sup> SAH had completed a second draft of Romans 1:1-8:39 between June 12, and September 11, 1912. After September 11, 1912 until June 21, 1913 he had worked on the translation of Rom 9:1ff to Rev. Since he had finished the translation of Jude on June 6, 1913 he only needed two weeks for the revision of Revelation.

### **8.3.12.3 Translation of the Epistle to the Romans**

After having finished the above mentioned books of the New Testament, SAH had new plans. He informed Schäfer that he, after a short break, had the intention to start the translation of the Epistle to the Romans, provided that this is God's will and that he will equip him with health and mental strength. SAH regards the Epistle as very difficult, especially since the Kunuuzi language lacks many adequate words and expressions for which he will of course have to borrow words from the Arabic (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 12.06.1910). The archive material provides evidence that SAH continued to work on a revision of Romans immediately after he had completed the second draft of Acts which he had finished on June 12, 1912. He started to work on the revision of Romans on the same day, i.e. 12 June 1912 and finished the Epistle until chapter 8:39 on September 11, 1912. Without any written date on the handwritten manuscript, we assume that SAH continued the revision process of Romans in September 1912.

### **8.3.12.4 New Testament books not translated**

In the middle of August 1910, SAH wrote to Schäfer that he had almost completed the translation of all NT books, except the Letters of James and 1 and 2 Peter (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 13.08.1910). In the same letter SAH told Schäfer that all the Epistles that he had written after Schäfer's departure in January 1909 were still with him in Aswan. SAH did not make any statement regarding his intention as to when he wanted to translate the three remaining Epistles to finalize the translation of the whole New Testament. After thorough examination of the archive material and SAH's correspondence, we may suggest that SAH for whatever reason never started a translation of those books. Yet, concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews SAH made a number of remarks. He was greatly challenged and found the translation of the Epistle very difficult. He was also convinced that his draft contained innumerable mistakes which he hoped to discover and to analyze during his next meeting together with Schäfer (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on 13.08.1910). It is important to note that the original draft of the Epistle is lost and that there was no revised version of the Epistle to the Hebrews among the remaining documents of SAH. For that reason, Noack in her preface to the mimeographed collection of the NT books, included the Epistle to the Hebrews among those books that SAH had not translated (Noack 1934:preface). Thus, the short indication towards a first draft translation of the Epistle in SAH's letter to Schäfer in August 1910 is the only evidence that SAH had also translated Hebrews. SAH was greatly motivated by Schäfer and Junker not only to translate the four gospels (September 1908-March 1910),

but to continue independently with the translation of almost all of the remaining NT books (April 1909-August 1910). After completing a first draft translation of all these books and after revising the four gospels with Schäfer in September and October 1911, he produced a second draft of all remaining books of the New Testament between April 1912 and June 1913 with the exception of the Epistle to the Hebrews, taking into consideration that he had obviously never attempted to translate the two Epistles of Peter and the Epistle of James. The complete translation process of the New Testament books bears clear evidence that SAH was committed to accuracy and meticulousness which led him to take the first draft of the Acts of the Apostles from Schäfer, to ask Junker to send back to him what he had already received of the Gospel of Luke and to go over the remaining books of the New Testament a second time.<sup>315</sup>

### **8.3.13 Translation of diverse NT passages**

It seems that at an earlier or later date SAH again translated diverse passages from the New Testament. The handwritten manuscripts in the EMO archive consist of the following passages: Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 John 3:1-13, 4:7; Romans 12:9-13 and the Sermon of the Mount (Mt 5:1-48). The texts do not have any indication to a date nor the specific purpose of their translation.

### **8.3.14 Publication of Bible tracts based on SAH's translation**

Unfortunately, only the four gospels were published in Kuuuzi in 1912. Although SAH had completed the translation of almost the whole corpus of the New Testament, there was no opportunity to begin a revision process with Schäfer or anyone else. The political developments due to World War I prevented this undertaking. After the return of the SPM missionaries at the end of 1924, SAH was involved with a number of other limited activities. Yet, it was obvious that SAH had become weak due to unresolved health problems, numerous losses of family members and the emotional tension regarding the impending loss of the SPM property to the American Mission. In later years, after the death of SAH, G von Massenbach used SAH's gospel material for the publication of small Bible tracts containing selected verses of the gospels. She had asked permission from the BFBS to transliterate the material

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<sup>315</sup> Noack's collection was the compilation of the revised drafts since she dates them to the period beginning with April 1912 until June 21, 1913. The dates that are mentioned in SAH Nubian letters are referring to his very first drafts. The Manuscripts preserved in the EMO archive are identical with those that were available to Noack and confirm exactly the time frame indicated by her.

from Latin into Arabic script and had it printed by the Nile Mission Press (Minutes BFBS 14.05.1930).<sup>316</sup>

### 8.3.15 Translation of OT passages

It seems that SAH at the end of his life put some emphasis on the translation of OT passages. He provided us with two different narrative accounts of the Joseph story which are not meant to be exact translations of the Joseph story of Genesis (37-50). The shorter version comprises seventeen pages and the longer one twenty-seven pages and was completed on August 25, 1925. The translation of the Book of Esther contains forty pages and was with the Book of Jonah and the Ten Commandments completed on July 21, 1926. The complete flood story (Gen 6-9), the complete Book of Ruth, Psalm 139:1-24 were translated without any reference to the exact date. Chapters two, three and six of the Book of Daniel were completed in June 1926. All these texts are preserved as original manuscripts in the EMO archive.

## 8.4 Personal letters in Kunuuzi

The actual working relationship between SAH and Schäfer and Junker began in November 1908. After the two scholars had left Nubia early in 1909, they started to communicate by letters and exchanged ideas about a number of issues, but especially about the progress of the translation of the gospels and the NT books. In order to enhance the benefit of this communication, Schäfer had asked SAH to write to him in Kunuuzi and he occasionally would answer to SAH in Kunuuzi as well.<sup>317</sup> SAH followed this request and Schäfer regarded this exchange as a successful undertaking (Schäfer 1917:14). The original letters and postcard are partly preserved in the EMO archive. Twelve letters and one postcard were written between May 27, 1909 and January 24, 1912 and were discussed by Schäfer and SAH<sup>318</sup> and published in Schäfer's *Nubische Texte* (1917:238-267 = Texte 1004-1016). Those letters can be regarded as the first letters in modern Nubian after the Old Nobiin had been replaced by Arabic following the Islamic conquest (:14). In the process of the practical exchange of information, requests and ideas, silently and unintentionally the genre of Kunuuzi Epistolary Literature was born. There are even more letters written by SAH. The manuscripts of those

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<sup>316</sup> For more detailed information cf chapter 9 on the linguistic contribution of G von Massenbach.

<sup>317</sup> Almost all of these letters are available in the EMO archive except one letter that may have been lost, cf the list in the appendix. The letters were first kept by Schäfer and then discussed by him with SAH. Schäfer had obviously handed them over to the SPM at an unknown date.

<sup>318</sup> It is not clear when Schäfer discussed these letters with SAH. As SAH planned to meet Schäfer at the end of January 1912 (Nubian Postcard SAH to Schäfer on 24.01.1912) this may have been the actual occasion. It is possible that during this meeting the two discussed the plan of their future cooperation including a second visit of SAH to Berlin in 1914 that was prevented by the circumstances leading up to the beginning of World War I.

letters that SAH wrote after January 1912 were kept by Schäfer<sup>319</sup>, since he did not want to publish them without thoroughly discussing them with SAH. Therefore in autumn 1913, Schäfer had asked the SPM board to allow SAH to come to Berlin again in summer 1914. The SPM board agreed to this trip (Minutes SPM 17.10.1913:184). Yet, the realization of this plan was thwarted by the outbreak of World War I (:14 fn 21). The Kunuuzi letters of SAH were written with a triple purpose in mind. First, they were a very natural means of communication between SAH and Schäfer and Junker. Second, SAH drafted them by purpose in such a style<sup>320</sup> that they served as a practical demonstration of the language and thereby could educate the reader of Nubian and improve his language skills and competency (:14).<sup>321</sup> Third, they were to be included in Schäfer's published collection of texts and thereby served the scholarly community at large as learning and teaching material. According to Schäfer the letters contain excellent language material (:14). They are not only real letters, but they are the expression of a "smart and loving personality" that sometimes was hidden behind his almost grumpy facial expression (:14).

In analyzing the letters and postcard, the contents can be summarized as follows. The letters, which are often answers to letters written by Schäfer are kept in a formal style and display the respect and admiration towards to two scholars, Schäfer and Junker<sup>322</sup>, and his submission to them<sup>323</sup>, which is expected from people that are socialized in high context cultures (Lanier 2000:79-86). They also show a harmonious and friendly personal relationship that goes far beyond a working relationship. SAH repeatedly expresses his concern about the health and the family situation of the addressees. Yet, his main focus is on reporting his progress in the translation project regarding the gospels and the other New Testament books. His letters allow for a fairly precise reconstruction of the chronological progress of the translation work concerning his first drafts. SAH repeatedly expresses his curiosity whether Schäfer has continued to work on the revision of the gospels and whether he understands his letters. He even answers Schäfer's question regarding the meaning of a Kunuuzi word<sup>324</sup> by writing a postcard. In his letters SAH gives some indications of the activities in Aswan, especially about the construction work and the subsequent delay for the translation work

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<sup>319</sup> It remains unknown where these undiscussed letters of SAH are now or whether they got lost.

<sup>320</sup> SAH did not write his letters in an oral style, but rather in a well considered through literary style that was comprehensible by the reader and student of the language.

<sup>321</sup> The "reader" may have meant Schäfer in the first place and then any other student of Kunuuzi. This idea was disclosed by SAH to Schäfer at a later time during their linguistic work (Schäfer 1917:14).

<sup>322</sup> SAH addresses the scholars as: honorable mister, wise and royal professor, greatest of the professors, professor of professors, king of languages. The letters are also kept in a tone of respect.

<sup>323</sup> SAH concludes with "Your always obedient SAH", "always yours".

<sup>324</sup> In his card he explains the various meanings of the word "oligaad" (SAH Nubian Postcard of SAH to Schäfer on 24.01.1912).



caused by this. Reference is made to natural and political events.<sup>325</sup> His rich use of metaphors shows how deeply he was rooted in the Nubian culture and the farming and domestic life of his kinsmen.<sup>326</sup> SAH closes his letters by writing his name using mostly “S A Hissein”, once with “S H” and once with “S A Hisseen”.<sup>327</sup>

When the SPM missionaries had started work in Koshtamne in March 1926, SAH from time to time corresponded with the G von Massenbach by sending postcards in Nubian following the example of his earlier correspondences with Schäfer.

## 8.5 Ethnographic texts

SAH was a Kunuuzi Nubian, born in Fichchikol, Abu Hoor and spent the first six years of his childhood in the northern district of Nubia. After having moved to Edu, north of Aswan, he was still strongly connected with Nubian relatives and friends who shaped his socialization process and kept the aspects of original Nubian culture and tradition alive. Nevertheless, during his time in Lower Egypt, SAH was also strongly exposed to and influenced by the Egyptian language and culture. During his years of absence from Egypt, he underwent an enculturation process in Europe for about ten years.<sup>328</sup> When he returned to Nubia in 1885, he had to re-adapt to his original culture which he did. He decided to stay and immerse into the Kunuuzi Nubian life and become one of his people group again. For about twelve years, he prudently observed their daily life, traditions, rituals and their religious expressions from the inside in a participatory approach and gained the acceptance and recognition of his fellow tribesmen. When SAH became one of the first co-workers of the SPM in February 1900, he had acquired profound knowledge of the diversity of Nubian culture and an amazing level of language competency. He had developed a deep love for his people and country and identified with them, except with their Islamic religion and superstitious practices.

### 8.5.1 Ethnographic texts in English

As the SPM published its regular journal, *Der Sudan Pionier*, they were in need of interesting information from the field. In 1905 SAH produced a vivid description of the Nubian wedding

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<sup>325</sup> In his letters to Schäfer in June and August 1910, SAH described the fear of his people due to the appearance of a comet (SAH Nubian Letter to Schäfer on 12.06.1910) and the unrest in Egypt that followed the assassination of the Coptic Prime Minister Butrus Ghail (SAH Nubian Letters to Schäfer on 12.06.1910 and 13.08.1910).

<sup>326</sup> SAH referred to the cool weather in Vienna by saying: “cold as the load of camels – dt: “Kälte kamellastenweise” (SAH Nubian Letter to Junker on 15.08.1910) and described his severe hunger during a train ride with “the hunger of a crocodile gripped me by my ribs” (SAH Nubian Letter to Schäfer on 10.10.1911).

<sup>327</sup> The latter version of writing his name is the one that best corresponds the Nubian phonology and pronunciation of his name by Kunuuzi speaking Nubians.

<sup>328</sup> He was educated in Switzerland and England for about ten years. In between he spent about one and a half years in Lebanon being exposed to life in the Middle East.

in English. This was translated into German and published for the friends of the SPM in 1905 (SP 1905:75-77.87-92).

### 8.5.2 Ethnographic texts in Kuuuzi

In 1908, SAH had the privilege to be invited for a close cooperation with the German scholars Schäfer and Junker. Very soon the two scientists discovered the outstanding gifts and abilities of SAH and regarded him as an ideal informant on the Kuuuzi Nubian culture, traditions and language due to his profound insider knowledge. Yet until September 1911, SAH focused completely on the translation of the four gospels and the other NT books. When he was invited by Schäfer to Berlin in September 1911 to work on the revision of the four gospels, Schäfer further encouraged SAH to try to produce language material outside the field of Biblical texts. There were a few reasons for this request. First, Schäfer was not able to spend his whole time with SAH to do the revision work. In between their work in Schäfer's home, the latter had to pursue his official duties and leave SAH on his own. Thus, he asked SAH to write some compositions to make the best use of his precious time (Schäfer 1917:13). Second, Schäfer wanted to see the extension of Kuuuzi material beyond separate words, short expressions and sentences. He wanted to understand the function of Kuuuzi in the context of longer cohesive texts (:13).<sup>329</sup> Third, the ethnographic texts would provide the scientific and non-scientific world with an insider perspective and knowledge of Nubian life. Fourth, Schäfer saw in the production of such texts a great benefit for the missionary work of the SPM<sup>330</sup> and urged the mission to encourage SAH to pursue this kind of work. In his opinion, SPM workers would benefit much from the ethnographic output of SAH, being a native Nubian and a mother tongue speaker (Schäfer 1917:13 fn 19). As a matter of fact, during Schäfer's times of absence, SAH began to write down free cohesive Nubian texts on certain topics (:13). Schäfer regarded the result of SAH's effort as the most vivid and descriptive of ethnographic texts. Among other material, SAH wrote precise descriptions of the Shaduuf<sup>331</sup> (:97-106), on the Henna plant (:122-129), a hiding game (:57-59) and the distribution of the Kuuuzi tribes and tribal groups (:38-46). While SAH was still in Berlin, Schäfer partly wrote down the texts after SAH had dictated them to him but SAH's transcripts were only partly

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<sup>329</sup> Schäfer did not go into discourse analysis, but the material that SAH produced would fit the requirement.

<sup>330</sup> It was of utter importance for Schäfer that the SPM workers had a profound understanding of Nubian life. In their cross-culturally communication of the gospel the workers need to understand the worldview, beliefs, values, and behavior of their audience.

<sup>331</sup> This is an ancient irrigation device that could be operated by man, different from the waterwheel.

discussed. Schäfer was very pleased with the outcome of this trial (:13)<sup>332</sup> and included these texts in his *Nubische Texte* (1917).

Even after SAH had left Berlin, he followed Schäfer's and Junker's advice and continued the writing of descriptive ethnographic texts. He wrote extensive descriptions about the making of bread, the Kunuuzi wedding, birth and child raising and the waterwheel of the Kunuuzi (Schäfer 1917:13 fn 19).<sup>333</sup> During the expedition of the Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien in November and December 1911 under the direction of Junker and the cooperation of Schäfer, some of the above mentioned texts were prepared for publication according to the preliminary report about the expedition (Junker, Anzeiger der phil hist Klasse der kaisl Akademie von 1912 Nr.XVIII).<sup>334</sup> SAH had chosen the themes of his texts to a large extent by himself (Schäfer 1917:15 fn 23). After World War I, Junker and Schäfer began to publish part of the results of their expedition in *Wiener Texte* in 1912. Their first volume included children games and poems (Junker and Schäfer 1921:7-45), the big events in life (:49-102) and descriptions of the duties of daily life (:105-245). SAH's ethnographic material includes a description of the bokki-bokki game (Junker & Schäfer 1921:26-29), a petition for rain (:38-39), a description of scarecrows (:45), a description of building a waterwheel (:145-171), and a description of the ingredients for bread (:214-223).<sup>335</sup>

Eleven years later, Junker and Schäfer published the second part of their *Wiener Texte* in 1932. The volume contains place and tribal names (Junker and Schäfer 1932:3-58) and historical traditions (:59-117). No texts from SAH were included, but the recorded data were compared a number of times with those that had been provided by SAH earlier, especially in the description of the district of Abu Hoor (:31-36).<sup>336</sup>

In spring 1925, Schäfer came to Aswan and revised some texts with SAH for later publication. Finally, in 1935, Schäfer published the rest of the ethnographic material that he had gathered during the two Berlin expeditions to Nubia between 1908 and 1910. They are understood as a supplement to the *Nubische Texte* published in 1917 and the *Wiener Texte* published in 1921 and 1932. The material of SAH that was presented in this volume includes

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<sup>332</sup> Schäfer writes: "Auch dieser Versuch ist vortrefflich geglückt" (1917:13).

<sup>333</sup> Schäfer clearly acknowledged that the texts are owned by the Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien. They can only be published after they were revised together with SAH. But he was allowed to include some of the material in his *Nubische Texte* (1917). In addition to this SAH also produced and collected phrases, words and grammar paradigms that have been included selectively in *Nubische Texte* (:13 fn 19).

<sup>334</sup> In his *Nubische Texte* Schäfer announced that a small part of the collected texts, children games and songs were published already by Junker and Schäfer as *Wiener Texts* in 1913 and that other texts are prepared for print (Schäfer 1917:15 fn 23). Unfortunately, I was not able to verify this information and trace back the publication. It seems that the publication was intended, but that plans to do so had to be postponed until 1921.

<sup>335</sup> The last two long texts are dated to February 22 and 27, 1912 in Aswan. This may be the date of a revised version since the expedition took place in November and December 1911.

<sup>336</sup> The authors refer to SAH's data provided in Schäfer (1917:866-867).

descriptions of the Kunuuzi wedding (Schäfer 1935:206-249), the birth and upbringing of a child (:249-278), the life and duties of a Nubian women (:278-290), and the date palm (:290-298).

In the end of 1909, G von Massenbach came to Aswan to join the SPM team in its work. She was a student of SAH and was instructed by him in the Arabic and Nubian language (Massenbach 1962:XIII). The time of her direct contact with SAH was limited to the years 1909-1914 and from 1924-1927. Although Massenbach had received an introduction to the Nubian languages already prior to World War I, only after the publication of Schäfer's and Junker's Kunuuzi text collections (1917, 1921) did she start to learn the language seriously (:XIII). When she returned to Aswan in November 1924, she used the opportunity to study Kunuuzi with SAH and attended the discussions between Schäfer and SAH in spring of 1925.

In 1931, she published her first scientific contribution as she had collected and written down some folk tales of the Kunuuzi (1931:197-208). Two years later, she completed her Kunuuzi dictionary (1933:99-227) that she had thoroughly discussed with SAH in its beginning stage (:103). In 1962 she issued a fine collection of Kunuuzi and Dongolawi narratives. Some of the Kunuuzi stories go back to SAH. Massenbach presented two texts that she was able to discuss with SAH and another text was available as the only typed copy of his unpublished works. The first text describes the making of textile for clothes (Massenbach 1962:76-79). The second text is a lengthy explanation of the Kunuuzi word *hib* for salt production, part of the draft of SAH's reader (:79). The third text presents a lamentation of the dead (Massenbach 1962:80-85).

By writing ethnographic texts, SAH has made a meaningful contribution to the scholarly community and mission practitioners and enhanced knowledge and insight into Nubian daily life. At the same time he helped to preserve Nubian customs and traditions before they would be lost forever. Schäfer expressed his appreciation in the following words (1935:202):

“This splendid man, whose pure and firm personality and mental ability I remember with deepest respect, in fervent but not in blind love for his people, he has done more than anyone else for his people in order to teach us about the life of his brothers and to save their increasingly fading culture for posterity.”<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> „Der ausgezeichnete Mann, dessen reiner und fester Persönlichkeit und geistiger Fähigkeit ich mit größter Hochachtung gedenke, hat in heißer und doch nicht blinder Liebe zu seinem Volk mehr als irgend ein anderer getan, um uns über das Leben seiner Brüder zu unterrichten und dessen immer mehr schwindende Eigenart für die Nachwelt zu retten.“

## **8.6 Kunuuzi Nubian songs**

Music and songs play an important role in Nubian culture and social life, especially during the wedding celebration. It is significant to point out that SAH, during his many years in Abu Hoor, did not develop much sympathy, interest and love for them (Lauche 2004:328; Schäfer 1917:18). That is why we do not have a single indication that SAH began at any time during his work with the SPM to write lyrics for indigenous songs. Without being able to give an exact reason for SAH's attitude towards Nubian music, we may suggest three possible answers. First, his early and long absence from his home environment may have caused a cultural alienation and prevented this aspect of socialization in the young SAH (:18). Second, during his years in Switzerland, England and Germany he became used to Western tunes and texts of Christian songs that were used during church services and evangelistic gatherings. Thus, he may have had some difficulties to develop an appreciation for Nubian music. Third, SAH's spiritual life was formed and influenced by the fellowship and ministry with the SPM missionaries. This may have created in him a new understanding of the role and meaning of songs. Fourth, his Christian worldview of morals and ethics seem to have led him to refuse Nubian songs that very often included strong erotic connotations (:18). For that reason, Nubian music was for him not an appropriate means to convey the Christian message to his people. Thus, a chance was missed to bring the gospel closer to the Nubians by way of a cultural aspect that had a great value among the Nubians. When the SPM began to work in Aswan, Daraw, Edfu, Koshtamne, Gerf Hiseen, Dakke and Gharb Aswan, they tried to use Christian songs while teaching the children in their schools, treating patients, teaching knitting to girls and women and visiting people in their homes. Yet, the songs were not indigenized. They were using German songs with their original tunes and translated the texts into Nubian. The general response of the female audience was positive.

## **8.7 Cohesive texts**

In September and October 1911, SAH came to Berlin to work with Schäfer on the revision of the gospel texts. Schäfer asked him to use the time during which he was not available for revision work to produce cohesive texts about different topics (Schäfer 1917:13).

### **8.7.1 Travel report**

SAH followed this request immediately and produced a first text. On September 15, 1911, he completed a vivid and extensive travel report about his journey from Aswan to Berlin since his memory was still fresh (:208-237). SAH had started his trip together with his daughter

Maryam on August 22, 1911. He brought her back to her school in Luxor and continued his trip on the same evening to Cairo. On the next day he reached Cairo, purchased necessary items and took the train to Alexandria. There, he boarded a steamer, by the name Dalmatia, and went to Brindisi which he reached after three days. With the same steamer he continued to Triest. From there he took the train for a long and exhausting ride to Berlin, went to Schäfer and started the revision work immediately in the beginning of September 1911.

### **8.7.2 Nubian history**

After the missionaries had come back in November 1924, SAH slowly regained strength and motivation to pursue his linguistic work. It was Schäfer who encouraged SAH to write texts in Kunuuzi. There is information that he had started to write a Nubian history, but was not able to complete it (Unruh 1944:39).

## **8.8 Literacy material**

### **8.8.1 Compilation of a word list (1900-1901)**

During his colportage trip through Nubia to New Dongola (Dongola al-urdi), SAH started to compile a Kunuuzi word list with translation into Arabic and English.<sup>338</sup> It seems that SAH wanted to finish the word list before the expected visit of Kumm in October 1900 (Guinness 1900:3; Sauer 2005:157 fn 148). As with the translation of the Gospel of John, SAH may have been inspired to start this trilingual glossary by Kumm who was working on a grammatical sketch of the Beja language. The compilation of the glossary took place parallel to his translation of the Gospel of John using the material as his first basic source. In addition to this, SAH may have collected a number of words during his personal encounter with Kunuuzi speaking Nubians as he visited the different villages. The Kunuuzi vocabulary of the glossary displays a much stronger influence of Arabic than SAH's later translations (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15). The Kunuuzi words of the glossary were written in Arabic. This fact led Schäfer to assume that the Gospel of John was also written in Arabic script (:11 fn 15).<sup>339</sup> Whereas the gospel was lost in Europe most probably in 1902<sup>340</sup>, the glossary came back to

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<sup>338</sup> When exactly SAH started with the collection of words is unknown. He may have started right at the outset of the journey.

<sup>339</sup> SAH may have known the publication of the Gospel of Mark in the Mahas dialect of Nobiin by Lepsius that was transliterated from Latin into Arabic script by the BFBS and published twice in 1899 and 1906. In order to attract more Nubian readers SAH may have followed the philosophy of the BFBS.

<sup>340</sup> Hommel, for time reasons, was unable to commit to the revision work of the gospel and sent it back to Kumm to Sheffield on August 12, 1902 (Schäfer 1917:11 fn 15).

Hommel<sup>341</sup> and was kindly handed over by Hommel to Schäfer (:11 fn 15). Schäfer found the collection so interesting that he intended to occasionally share the material that was worth knowing (:11 fn 15). As the glossary is available in the EMO archive, Schäfer may have passed it on to the SPM at a later unspecified time.

### **8.8.2 Writing a dialogue book (1901-1902)**

During Kumm's visit to Aswan in the spring of 1901, he assigned SAH with starting a new ministry in the Nubian village Gizaira, north of Aswan. This new place was officially occupied in May 1901. Since it was planned to build a school on the compound for the children of Gizaira, SAH started in April 1901 to put together a kind of dialogue book in English, Arabic and Kunuuzi. He was challenged by this task, but expected it to be useful for the learning and teaching of the three languages (SP 1901:79). In the beginning of June 1901, SAH regretfully reported to the SPM that his work in Gizaira occupied all his time and that he had to take the hot early afternoon hours that are taken by his workers as noon break, to work on the continuation of his dialogue book. Yet, he was about to finish this kind of grammar or dialogue book and envisioned it to be a suitable tool for the missionaries as they were going to teach Arabic and Kunuuzi at the school for the children in Gizaira (SP 1901:102)<sup>342</sup>.

### **8.8.3 The primer (1913)**

It was the expressed goal and intension of the SPM to reduce Kunuuzi to writing. The translation of the four gospels was produced for the use of Kunuuzi speaking Nubians or people that knew Kunuuzi (Schäfer 1912:1), such as scholars or some of the SPM missionaries. In order to teach the Nubian children in the SPM elementary school in Aswan how to read the gospels and how to write their vernacular, a primer had to be produced as a preparatory teaching and learning tool (Schäfer 1917:13-14.37). Schäfer and Westermann followed the same philosophy in preferring the Latin over the Arabic script which they did not regard as suitable (:14). When Schäfer left Berlin in October 1911 after he and SAH had completed the revision of the gospels, SAH went to Wiesbaden. Most probably, SAH together with Enderlin travelled to Berlin in the last week of October for two weeks (Nubian Letter SAH to Schäfer on November 14, 1911). Westermann, a recognized scholar of African

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<sup>341</sup> Schäfer does not explain details how, why and by whom the glossary was returned to Hommel. It may also be possible that Hommel had not sent the glossary with the Gospel of John to Kumm in August 1902, but simply had forgotten it and later handed it over to Schäfer at a convenient occasion.

<sup>342</sup> The dialogue book is preserved in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden. The archive also holds a draft of a Nubian reader which contains fifty pages of greetings, stories, grammatical remarks and an introduction as to how to read Kunuuzi.

languages, who was professor at the *Orientalische Institut* in Berlin and later SPM board member<sup>343</sup>, had invited SAH and Enderlin<sup>344</sup> to work on a primer under his supervision. Westermann had written down the material that was dictated to him by SAH. He made the manuscript available to Schäfer who included some of the sentences in his *Nubian Texts* (Schäfer 1917:14). The primer, although its material was collected and completed in 1911, was not published until 1913 by the SPM<sup>345</sup> under the title *Gerayana kitab-Nubian Primer-Nubische Fibel*. On thirty-nine pages the primer comprises single letters, syllables, words, sentences, interrogative sentences, small texts and prayers. It is arranged according to the Nubian sounds and the letters and words are written partly in italics and partly in bloc print.

## 8.9 Christian material

In the years 1908 until 1914, SAH had his most productive phase regarding the translation of New Testament texts and the writing of ethnographic texts. There is evidence that during the years of World War I SAH continued his efforts to produce material for evangelism among the Kunuuz (Westermann 1920:135).

### 8.9.1 Nubian leaflet on salvation

Among a number of other responsibilities, SAH worked in the SPM bookshop. When there were no customers during business hours, he was involved in translation work (Unruh 1944:19). It seems that during the same period, SAH wrote a four-page leaflet in Latin script that was meant to be an evangelistic tool. He combined two small essays under the title *Immediate Salvation in Nubian*. The first text dealt with the *Lehda noosar* (immediate salvation) and the second text explains the *Artiin doleen gissa dool* (the great story of God's love). The tract was published by the Nile Mission Press in Cairo, but no date of publication was given (Schäfer 1935:203 fn 1).<sup>346</sup> It remains unknown when Schäfer saw this leaflet for the first time. Probably, he was introduced to it during his visit in spring 1925 in Aswan.

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<sup>343</sup> Westermann had become a SPM board member in 1912. He played an important role regarding the future strategy and policy of the SPM and encouraged the publication of Bible material in Kunuuzi. He was also a committee member of the BFBS.

<sup>344</sup> Enderlin was on his home assignment in Germany and was granted some time to pursue diverse studies.

<sup>345</sup> Dammann (1980:7) draws attention to the front page of the primer where it says: "Printed for the Sudan Pioneer Mission, Wiesbaden, Germany 1913." In this remark Dammann sees an indication that the primer was also going to be used in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, since the SPM had plans to begin missionary work in that region. Unfortunately this plan was thwarted by the outbreak of World War I.

<sup>346</sup> Unfortunately, we were unable to trace the NMP catalogue which would have allowed us a more precise dating for this publication.



Schäfer is the only person that refers to this evangelistic tract.<sup>347</sup> It is less likely, that Schäfer had seen a copy of the tract in 1911 in Berlin or in 1912 in Cairo. In this case, a reference to it would have been expected in his *Nubische Texte* (1917). Nevertheless, it could have been published during the war and thereby had become a tool in the hands of Abbaas who was working among his fellow Nubians in Cairo during his study time at the theological seminary of the AM.

### **8.9.2 Nubian leaflets**

In 1915 SAH wrote or translated a tract in Nubian with the title *ai annewerti tirtiererin* (I am my own Lord). Another short leaflet deals with the *ogijna miligid* (sin of man) without indicating a date. Both manuscripts are preserved in the EMO archive.

### **8.9.3 Prayers before operations**

Without indication of any date, there is a collection of Nubian prayers available in the EMO archive. SAH may have prepared them during 1926 at the request of the missionaries that had gone to Koshtamne to open a new station in March 1926.

### **8.9.4 Christian catechism**

In the archive of EMO, there is a manuscript that contains an introduction into the Christian faith by using questions and answers. It is possible that this dates back to SAH's time in Gizaira.

## **8.10 Biographical text**

The first part of SAH's autobiography was written by him in English in the year 1910 covering events of his life between his birth in 1863 until the baptism of his children Maryam and Abbaas in February 1910. The English version was translated into German and published in 1920. The second part of his autobiography included the exploration trip with Enderlin to Dongola in 1913 until the return of the missionaries of the SPM at the end of 1924. It is striking that SAH wrote the text in Kunuuzi, explained it to H Schönberger, a new SPM missionary, who produced a German version (Feller 1932:3). The original, handwritten manuscript of the Kunuuzi text is preserved in the EMO archive and represents the only modern written autobiography in Kunuuzi.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Dammann (1980:7) and Hoffmann (1986:13) depend in their reference completely on Schäfer's information and do not add new details.

<sup>348</sup> Cf details on SAH's autobiography in 7.2.11.

## 8.11 Summary

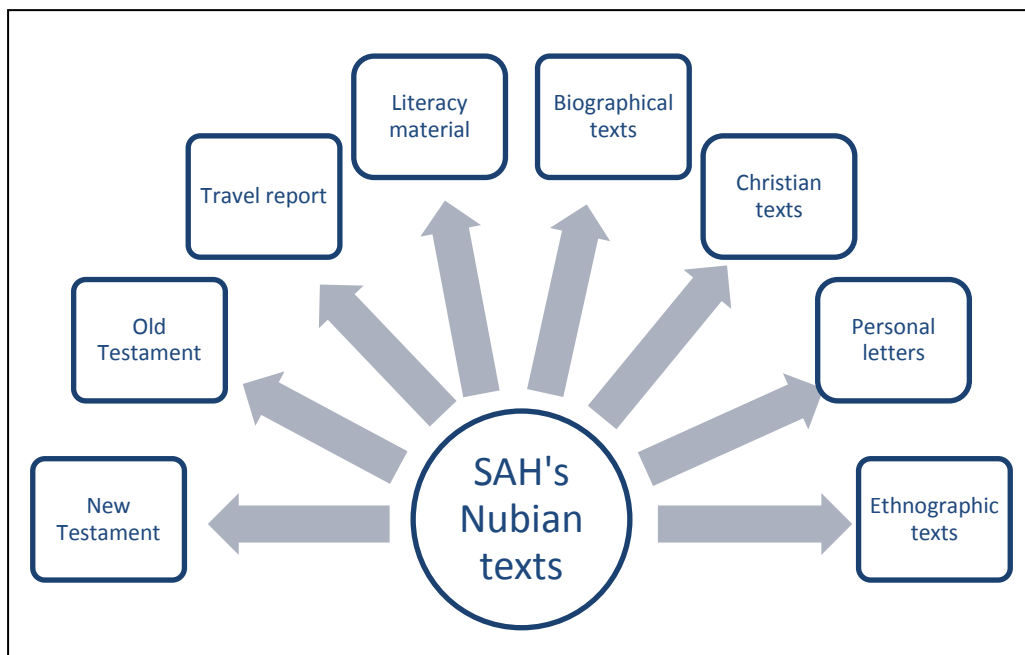
When SAH started his work with the SPM in spring 1900, he had been immediately given a linguistic task during his exploration tour in 1900. Kumm saw the potential in SAH that had substantially developed in the years prior to 1900. After a good start translating Biblical texts and a word list, SAH discontinued this work due to various internal and external reasons for more than five years. The SPM was not aware of the great gift it had received in SAH regarding the linguistic field. It needed the interest of the scientific world and the coming of European scholars to Egypt and Nubia to shed more light on this fact. A fruitful relationship and cooperation developed between the scientists and SAH. He had the privilege to work with outstanding German scholars during his life time. He profited a lot from their expertise and vice versa. Schäfer, Junker, Westermann and Meinhof who were strongly related to the SPM, participated in field studies, translation work and the recording of language material. Under their leadership and assistance, SAH produced Biblical, Christian, ethnographic, and biographical texts, personal letters and literacy tools and thereby provided the basis of modern Nubian literature. Yet, the attempt to make Kunuuzi a written language was doomed to fail for several reasons. First, the SPM realized the potential of SAH in the linguistic field far too late. He should have been set free for the language work much earlier. Second, the SPM was not able to set up or continue the schools in which the material could have been used. Third, the beginning of World War I hindered the scientific work on the language and the extension of the SPM work into Dongola. Fourth, strategically it proved to be a misconception to represent Nubian in Latin script at the beginning of the twentieth century. The publication of the Nobiin Gospel of Mark and later, the Bible tracts have shown that material in Arabic script was by far more favorably received by the Nubians since they were more familiar with the Arabic characters. Fifth, the SPM and the German scholars were not part of an indigenous Nubian movement that had promoted the desire for Nubian literacy, but this was a foreign attempt that lacked the necessary support of the people group itself.

Yet, regarding the abilities of SAH in the linguistic field, the German scholars unanimously expressed their satisfaction with his painstaking linguistic effort and their appreciation for his contribution to preserve his mother tongue and the attempt to reduce it to writing (Lauche 2004:328-329). Schäfer and Junker after their initial apprehension developed an increasing appreciation for SAH's skills. Junker remarked that "Samuel was especially suitable as teacher of his language" and "that his education in Europe and his love for the mother-tongue enabled him to immediately realize what was important in recording the language" (Junker 1963:27). He also regarded him as modernizer of Kunuuzi and purifier of

the language replacing Arabic loanwords with proper Kunuuzi terms (:27). Westermann stated that SAH “is a reliable man and master of his own mother tongue” (Minutes of BFBS 05.06.1912). Meinhof shortly expressed that “he is an excellent man” (Meinhof 1919:94). Schäfer, who felt privileged to cooperate with such a competent mother tongue speaker, is the most appreciative scholar by saying:

“It was a lucky accident that when we approached the Nubians language during our Berlin expedition we met a man from Abu Hoor first... Only during the Vienna expedition did we come to a real appreciation of the quality of Samuel as a teacher... What we have learned and understood from Samuel has been confirmed almost always” (Schäfer 1917:16-18).

**Illustration 6: SAH’s Nubian texts**



## 9. Missionary methods of the SPM and stakeholders of the Nubia vision

In this chapter we will describe the missionary methods that were used by the SPM in its approach to Muslims in general and to the Nubians in particular. Then we will examine more intensely the life and work of three SPM workers who model some of the methods that were used.

### 9.1 Missionary approach to Muslims

In his overview of missions to Muslims, G W Peters indicates the importance of history when he says that “In history lie buried the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of the past ages and sages for our instruction, guidance and warning” (1979:390). He continues to warn against a one-sided critical attitude and evaluation of past missionary work. Instead he asks for a focus on the many reasons that lead to appreciation of the tireless effort of past generations and the heritage that they left to us (:390). “As we stand on the shoulders of our predecessors let us be careful and not step on their heads” (:391).

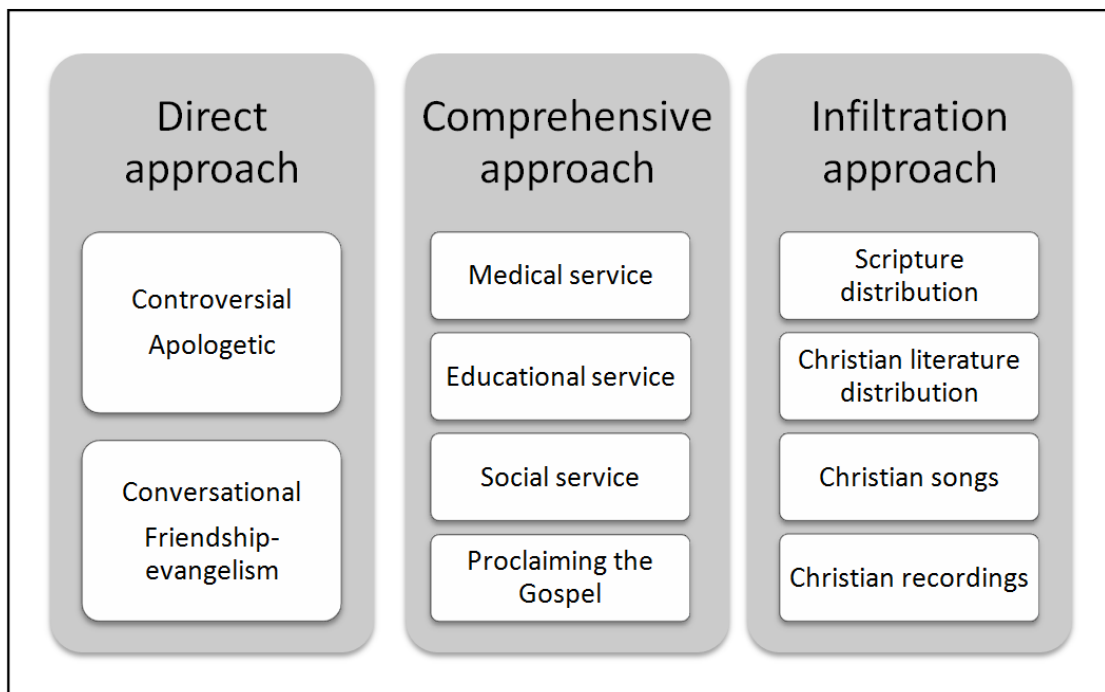
The missionary work towards Muslims in the Middle East had to face a basic question. Should Muslims be reached by way of the already existing historic churches or should an independent approach be chosen? For those agencies that chose the first option, much effort was spent in the attempt to bring new spiritual life to existing groups of Christians. Sometimes, lack of success led to a shift towards reaching out to the Muslim community as can be seen with the CMS in Egypt. But there is also another development that can be observed. There were mission agencies that concentrated primarily on the aim to reach Muslims with the gospel such as the AM in Egypt. But after a lack of success they changed their focus mainly to the Coptic Church without totally abandoning their work among Muslims. Other organizations remained faithful to their initial vision regardless of their success rate. Regarding the methods that were employed, we can clearly discern three main directions that are summarized by Peters (: 392-399).

First, there is the *direct approach* that was applied in different forms. Henry Martyn and Karl Gottlieb Pfander were advocates of the controversial method. French and S Zwemer were agents of the conversational form as they developed personal friendships and dialogue in presenting the gospel in a non-aggressive and loving way. This direct approach presupposes a certain freedom of speech in a given society.

Second, there is the *comprehensive approach* that was pursued by a number of denominational mission agencies, such as the Presbyterians and the Anglicans. This method included the proclamation of the gospel, medical services, basic education, academic and occupational training and the establishment of institutions that addressed urgent needs of the respective societies at a certain time, such as orphanages and shelters for the destitute and abused. This approach was in some places the only method that was permitted and on which basis the presence of an organization in certain countries could be maintained.

Third, there is the *infiltration approach* that has been proven as a helpful and complementary method in supporting the comprehensive approach and the direct approach. This approach includes the wide distribution of whole Bibles, the New Testament or the gospels and selected portions of Scripture and the circulation of a broad variety of Christian literature, addressing pressing religious, theological and social issues from a Christian perspective. Literature can become the silent and ubiquitous evangelist that enters closed doors and witnesses effectively without being offensive.<sup>349</sup>

**Illustration 7: Diverse missionary approaches**



<sup>349</sup> For examples of applied missionary methods cf Reifler (2005:497-514).

## **9.2 Missionary methods used by the SPM**

Guinness was only initially involved in the choice of the methods that were to be used by the young mission. Although he encouraged and initiated the employment of Girgis Ya'quub, the teacher, and of SAH, the evangelist, it was Kumm who practically set the structural stage of the SPM work. Obviously, Kumm was influenced by his training at the ELTI prior to his becoming a missionary, by his experience with the NAM, and by the methods that were used by the various organizations of his day. He set the system and developed the core structure although he never gave up his pioneering attitude which included the mobility towards the south (SP 1900:7). In its work among Muslims, including Nubians, the SPM was using the comprehensive and the infiltration approach.

### **9.2.1 Translation and production of Nubian literature**

The SPM was the only mission agency that became involved in translating and producing Nubian literature.<sup>350</sup> This can be explained by four reasons. First, K Kumm was inspired by the vision to reach out to the Sudan Belt and had started to do work on a grammar primer of the Beja language (SP 1900:61). Second, the SPM was in the unique situation that the Kunuuzi Nubian Christian SAH was a loyal co-worker for twenty-seven years (1900-1927). He was inspired by Kumm and gifted to do translation work. Third, SAH was encouraged and inspired by the interest and expertise of German scholars. Fourth, the SPM missionary G von Massenbach who had learned Kunuuzi from SAH became involved in linguistic work and the production of Nubian Scripture tracts.

#### **9.2.1.1 Bible translation**

The four gospels of the New Testament were translated by SAH under the supervision of Schäfer and Junker. They were printed by the BFBS in Berlin in 1912 and distributed among Kunuuzi speaking Nubians. Later, Massenbach transliterated some NT passages, based on SAH's translation, into Arabic script for publication and distribution.

#### **9.2.1.2 Literacy material**

The SPM hoped to reduce Kunuuzi Nubian to writing. Therefore, a primer was produced in 1911 by SAH and D Westermann. It was published by the SPM in 1913. Unfortunately, it was

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<sup>350</sup> The BFBS did not translate the Nobiin Gospel of Mark, but only transliterated it into Arabic characters and printed it in 1899 and 1906. It was based on Lepsius' translation.

never used because the Nubian primary schools that the SPM intended to establish were never started.

### **9.2.2 Educational work**

Educational work was also part of the initial vision and strategy of Kumm (SP 1900:7). The SPM started schools for boys and girls in Aswan (1900), Daraw (1907) and Edfu (1911). But these schools had to be closed down again due to lack of personnel, the deportation of the SPM missionaries at the beginning of World War I or due to external circumstances and competitive pressure (Sauer 2005:289-292). The projected schools in Gizaira and Dongola were never established. In Aswan or Daraw, no school was opened after the return of the SPM to Egypt in 1924, although informal education was continued in Aswan and combined with knitting classes. When Enderlin started the “German-Swiss Club for Nubians”, he offered language classes to attract young Nubian men in order to discuss religious matters with them. Educational work provided the platform for Christian education and sharing the gospel through Bible stories. It also enabled the children to become literate to read the Bible and Christian literature. The school work also provided relational access to the families of the children.

### **9.2.3 Literature distribution**

Another application of the infiltration approach is the distribution of Christian literature including Bibles, Scripture portions, and Scripture or Christian leaflets. Throughout the SPM work this approach was applied in four different forms. First, it took the form of colportage connected with wide itineration. This has the most extensive character. It was immediately applied by Kumm when he sent SAH on his colportage tour in 1900 (SP 1900:7). Second, it took the form of literature distribution during regular or sporadic visits in homes or villages. This was practiced continuously by the SPM missionaries over the decades. Third, it took the form of a fixed place, such as a bookshop. In 1910, the first SPM bookstore was established at the Nile road and put under the responsibility of SAH. In later years, the bookstore was placed on the compound of the mission. Fourth, the literature ministry also took the form of a reading room or a lending library. This way was chosen by the mission during the 1930s and after World War II.

## 9.2.4 Medical service

When in the beginning Kumm designed the ministry areas of the SPM in 1900, the medical work was already an indispensable part of his strategy. The first SPM missionary J Kupfernagel also called for the beginning of medical work. For personnel reasons this intention could not be implemented from the beginning (Sauer 2005:293).<sup>351</sup>

### 9.2.4.1 Development of the medical work

Aswan was a winter resort and attracted many tourists. Dr Schacht a German physician spent the winter months in Aswan and treated the foreign tourist. He contacted J Kupfernagel and offered the SPM his services to treat local poor patients on the condition that he was offered accommodation and a clinic. Thus, he examined poor patients twice a week in the winters 1903/04 and 1904/05 and was assisted by E Gonnermann.

In October 1906, the long awaited first physician of the SPM W G Fröhlich, an ophthalmologist, arrived in Aswan. Kumm's vision finally came true. Fröhlich developed the medical work in Aswan, won the trust of the population and made the medical work an essential part of the SPM work. The number of patients continuously increased and about one hundred patients were examined daily. A room was built to be able to admit some patients and was called the "small hospital". In 1912 the urgently requested hospital was built and inaugurated on January 27, 1913.

Fröhlich also went to Daraw starting in 1907 and established medical work in a rented building. When the mission bought a piece of land in Daraw in 1912 and built its own station, Fröhlich continued his medical work in the new clinic. Fröhlich enjoyed working with SAH as his medical assistant and translator and developed a true passion for evangelistic medical village outreach. Fröhlich furthered the ministry among the Nubians, acquired some Nubian language competency and went to visit Nubian villages by boat with SAH in 1908. Fröhlich was actively involved in evangelism. Since Fröhlich was of Swiss nationality, he was able to continue his work when all Germans had to leave Egypt in September 1914. But in July 1915 he and his family had to leave Egypt too. He went to Wiesbaden to work with the famous Dr Pagenstecher and later opened his own private clinic in Herisau, Switzerland. Fröhlich remained in close contact with the mission and was appointed a board member of the Swiss branch in 1928.

After the medical work had been discontinued for more than ten years, Dr Alfred Kallenbach and his wife joined the SPM team in Aswan in autumn 1926. Kallenbach was

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<sup>351</sup> For the development of medical mission in the nineteenth century cf C H Grundmann (1992).



made responsible for the medical work in September 1926 and the hospital was re-opened in January 1927. Unfortunately, Kallenbach had to return to Germany due to health problems of his wife in 1930.

On November 4, 1926, Dr Elisabeth Herzfeld arrived in Aswan. She was asked to participate in the beginning medical work with much flexibility. In the years 1927-1929, she moved to Koshtamne to support the female missionaries there and establish the medical service. When Dr Kallenbach returned to Germany, Dr Herzfeld had to come back to Aswan to take over the responsibility for the hospital. She remained the director until 1939 and went to Nubia whenever she had the opportunity. During her time, the extension of the hospital was built and gradually completed in 1931-1932. After World War II, Dr Herzfeld was the first German missionary who was allowed to come back to Aswan in 1950. She served as medical director until 1957 and continued to work in Dakke until 1964. Until she started a new station fulltime in Gharb Seheel in 1965, she practiced medicine in Aswan and Daraw and twice a week in a private place in Gharb Seheel. In May 1966, the SPM clinic in Gharb Seheel was finally closed as Dr Herzfeld had to return to Germany due to her deteriorating health.

In 1952, Dr Georg Trüb from the Swiss mission came to Aswan. But since he was not granted an official work permit, he left Egypt in 1954 and continued together with his wife Maja Trüb in Omdurman, the Sudan until 1979.

In 1956, Dr Elfriede Schmitt, a surgeon and gynecologist, came to Egypt to become the successor of Dr E Herzfeld in Aswan. She was required to re-take the Egyptian medical exam and passed it in summer 1957. As she was now in the position to practice medicine and become the hospital director, Dr E Herzfeld joyfully handed over the responsibility to her and went to Nubia again. In the years 1959-1961, a new nursing home was built and the old hospital in Aswan was replaced by a new fifty-bed hospital including three wards, modern operating rooms, a delivery room, and an X-ray department.

**Table 3: Ministry years of physicians**

1906-1915	Willy Gersom Fröhlich (1880-1957)
1926-1930	Alfred Kallenbach (1887-1956)
1926-1939; 1950-1966	Elisabeth Herzfeld (1890-1966)
1952-1954	Georg Trüb (1917-2012)
1956-1989	Elfriede Schmitt (1918-2001)

#### **9.2.4.2 Forms of the medical service**

The SPM has practiced its medical work in basically four ways. First, there was the work through an outpatients' clinic as in Aswan and Daraw. In addition, a small room was added to the clinic so that a limited number of inpatients could be received in case of emergency or after surgery, as was the case in Aswan and Dakke. Second, the SPM doctors visited patients at home in case they could not move or moving them was too dangerous for their life. Third, the doctors practiced in a mobile clinic. A team would visit a village and examine patients in an open place or a private home. Forth, a hospital with a number of facilities was built, such as operating rooms, a pharmacy and a laboratory.

Regarding the missionary work it can be stated that the medical work provided unique opportunities to share the Gospel and Christian love. However, institutional medical work can hinder the mobility of missionary work as it absorbs a lot of energy and distracts from the evangelistic focus.

#### **9.2.5 Evangelism**

SAH was employed as an evangelist. During his exploration tour he distributed literature and evangelized. Kupfernagel and SAH visited some villages to evangelize. When the medical work started, the gospel was preached to the waiting patients and their relatives or friends. The itinerant medical work was combined with an evangelistic message. The *laterna magica* meetings attracted many listeners as the gospel was explained using Bible stories drawn on glass and displayed by a projector. Discussion meetings with educated men, the so-called Efendi meetings were scheduled. Through Christian celebrations the parents of the students of the SPM School were reached with the gospel. Knitting classes were combined with Bible teaching. During home visits the gospel was shared. Using the SPM owned motorboat, the missionaries visited villages north of Aswan to preach the gospel. Sometimes, Muslim men attended a Bible study meeting. The work among women and girls had a strong evangelistic focus. In addition to the missionaries, local Christian women were employed to share the gospel. After World War II, hospital inpatients were met individually by a missionary when they were discharged from the hospital. Next to preaching the gospel, presenting a Bible study or telling Bible stories, some also liked to employ a debating style, especially when educated Muslims came for discussion in Aswan or Cairo. Songs and prayers often accompanied the verbal message of Christ. The majority of the evangelistic conversation was done in Arabic, but especially SAH, his son Abbaas, Massenbach, Herzfeld and Bühler were able to address the Kunuuzi Nubians in their own vernacular. The workers of the SPM saw their evangelistic

work as part of the sowing phase. The beginning of a church was desired but was not seen as imminent.

### **9.3 Stakeholders of the Nubia vision**

In chapters six to eight we have described SAH's life and contributions in the ministry with the SPM towards the Nubians. He was the primary stakeholder of the vision to the Nubians and the first Nubian Christian evangelist being true and faithful to his calling until he died in 1927. The question arises: Who carried on the legacy of SAH? Were there missionaries who took ownership of the SPM's mandate to the Nubians and promoted the vision of the SPM regarding its ministry towards the Nubians? This question can be answered in the affirmative. As an example we will concentrate on short descriptions of the life and contribution of three SPM missionaries. This is not meant to undervalue the contribution and impact of the other missionaries. It is also not meant to devalue the contribution of those missionaries who served for only a few years or concentrated in their efforts towards the Muslim community at large, such as those working in Edfu, Daraw and Aswan.

### **9.4 The life and work of Samuel Jakob Enderlin (1878-1940)**

S J Enderlin, who joined the SPM in 1903, became the senior missionary and most prominent missionary of the SPM in the years until 1939. He joined the SPM after the initial critical years and was part of the first group of missionaries that were part of the new beginning. Under his wise leadership, the work developed positively in regards to quantity and quality.

#### **9.4.1 Biographical data**

Enderlin was born on May 11, 1878 in Triest. His father was from Lörrach, Germany and his mother was Swiss. He attended schools in Triest, Mosbach, Ludwigshafen and Strassburg. In 1895 he completed his middle school certificate in Strassburg. In 1898 he finished three years of commercial training at an insurance agency in Strassburg. During this time, he accepted Christ as his savior during an evangelistic campaign by the German evangelist Elias Schrenk. After his life changing experience, he became involved in the City Mission (Stadtmission) and its work among alcoholics (Unruh 1942:11-12).

In September 1, 1898 he began his theological training at St Chrischona. After the founding of the SPM in Aswan in spring 1900, Guinness and Kumm went to visit the Bible School at St Chrischona and explained their vision for the Sudan Belt to the students. Following this meeting Enderlin became part of a Sudan prayer group at the bible college that

was led by L Zimmerlin. After his theological training, he was appointed for the missionary service on July 27, 1902 (:12-13). Yet he still had to fulfill his one year military service beginning in autumn 1902.

Immediately after he had completed it, he was accepted by the SPM, joined the mission and began his preparatory course in autumn 1903.<sup>352</sup> In December 1904, Enderlin arrived in Aswan to be part of the new team. In October 1910, he completed his language training with the final examination before the committee of the Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem (Feller 1933:1). In 1911, he studied Islam and an introduction into the Bantu languages at the Kolonial-Institut in Hamburg (:1). This first ministry phase ended in 1914 with the beginning of World War I.

During the war years, Enderlin first found work as interpreter in a prison camp in Limburg (Unruh 1942:48). Then he was called into diverse spiritual duties in the Middle East. He became field chaplain for the Army “Kommando F” and for the German department in Nazareth. He was discharged from the army on February 15, 1919 and returned to Germany via Italy (Feller 1933:1). In the years 1919-1920, he was given the opportunity to study Christian theology and Islam for two semesters at Leipzig University (:1). From February 1923 until autumn 1924, he was seconded to the Karmel mission to start a new work in Akko, Palestine (Unruh 1942:52). After many negotiations, Enderlin was allowed to visit Aswan in March and April 1923 before he commenced his work in Akko.

In November 1924, Enderlin returned with the first missionaries to Aswan. At the end of 1925, he initiated the expansion of the SPM work to the south. In 1928, he re-opened the station in Daraw with his wife and L Götte and stayed there until his call to Cairo in 1932 (:68-72). In May 1932, he moved to Cairo. He worked as a lecturer at the School of Oriental Studies and established a club ministry among Nubian men in the capital (:72-75). During his time in Cairo, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Philipps University in Marburg (:74). In spring 1939, he returned to Germany for health reasons and died on July 15, 1940 in Eschwege, Germany (:75).

#### **9.4.2 Enderlin’s contribution to the SPM work**

Enderlin responded to the request of Ziemendorff to become a SPM missionary in July 1903 (Unruh 1942:11) and went to Wiesbaden to start his pre-field training. He was also involved in visiting SPM supporters during this year. On October 7, 1904, he was ordained in

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<sup>352</sup> Ziemendorff had intended Zimmerlin when he asked St Chrischona to send a missionary, but mistakenly mentioned the name of Enderlin.

Wiesbaden and started his journey to Egypt together with SAH, Zimmerlin, Gonnermann, Ziemendorffs and M Hoffmann on November 11, 1904. On December 8, 1904, he arrived with Zimmerlin in Aswan and was joined by SAH later in December 1904.

#### **9.4.2.1 Enderlin the scholar**

S J Enderlin, who was a diligent student, started to study Arabic with SAH in Wiesbaden, continued with him in Aswan and completed his formal education with the final examination in Jerusalem at the Syrian Orphanage in October 1910. He was tested according to a native speaker level (Feller 1933:1). In 1911, Enderlin went to the Kolonial-Institut in Hamburg to take courses in Islam and Bantu languages. He also went to Berlin to receive an introduction into the Nubian languages by D Westermann. After the war, he attended courses in theology, Islamic studies and linguistics during the 1919/20 Winter Semester and the 1920 Summer Semester (:1-2). His outstanding Arabic language competence and his profound knowledge of Islam and the Middle East led the Intermission Council to appoint Enderlin as lecturer of Arabic and Nubian language and history at the SOS in 1932. This position included also the supervision of the Arabic language assistants who were Azhar graduates. On August 15, 1933, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of theology by the Theological Faculty of the Philipps University in Marburg, Lahn through its dean Dr Hans Freiherr von Soden, who was professor for NT Studies, Church History and Christian archaeology (Personnel file Enderlin).<sup>353</sup>

#### **9.4.2.2 Enderlin the evangelist**

Enderlin, who as a child had the desire to become a missionary, confirmed this impression when he made a clear faith commitment to follow Christ (Unruh 1942:11). The more he was able to communicate the gospel, the more he participated in sharing the word of God with Muslims in Aswan and Daraw. Highlights in his life were certainly the baptism of Maryam and Abbaas, the children of SAH, in 1910 and Yuhanna Shakir in 1932. During the *laterna magica* meetings, the Efendi meetings and the medical outreach visits, Enderlin was involved in proclaiming the gospel.

#### **9.4.2.3 Enderlin the pioneer**

Similar to Kumm, Enderlin had a pioneering spirit. He was eager to explore the situation in Nubia in order to extend the work. This is evidenced by his trips to the south in 1905 with Ziemendorff, in 1908, 1913, 1925 with SAH, and in 1926 with Rippert. But he was also

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<sup>353</sup> The personnel file is preserved in the EMO archive.

looking for open doors towards the north. In 1907, he started a new work in Daraw which was moved in 1912 to a new location that was owned by the SPM. When there was an invitation to start a school and work among women and girls in Edfu, 105 kilometers north of Aswan, he immediately responded positively and prepared the place for the opening in November 1911. It was a great joy for him to finalize the beginnings of the work in the Kunuuzi village Koshtamne in early 1926. Since the doors to the south still seemed to be closed, the SPM entered Nubia proper permanently for the first time. Finally, in April 1910, a bookshop was opened and the literature ministry was added again to the SPM work.

#### **9.4.2.4 Enderlin the building supervisor**

In order to begin to consolidate and develop the ministry in different places, houses had to be built. In 1909, the SPM house, including the church, school rooms and accommodation was built. In 1911, the rented compound in Edfu had to be prepared. The next year was a year of very special construction. In March 1912, Enderlin started to build the SPM house with an attached clinic. Then, he was called to Aswan to start the hospital project. The twenty bed hospital was inaugurated on January 27, 1913.

#### **9.4.2.5 Enderlin the networker**

Enderlin was gifted at representing the mission in meetings with other organizations. Even as a young missionary, he attended the first Muslim mission conference in Cairo in 1906 and the following conference in Ramallah in 1908. In 1909 he attended a conference for Egyptian evangelists. He also went to the important conference in Luknow, India in 1911. For the conference in Branama, Syria in 1924, he was allowed to attend as an observer for the German press. Prior to World War I, Enderlin was asked to become a member of the steering committee of the Cairo Study Center that was led by S Zwemer (AM) and T Gairdner (CMS). It turned out to be a great blessing that Enderlin had established a good contact with these two missionary statesmen. When the return of the SPM to Aswan was at stake after World War I, it was partly due to the mediation of these two influential missionaries that the SPM was allowed to come back and resume its work. After the war Enderlin was also called to become a member of the Central Literature Committee for Moslems, a sub-committee of the Near East Christian Council for Missionary Cooperation in Cairo. Enderlin was made responsible for the Nubian section (Feller 1933:2). When the SPM became an official member of the Near East Christian Council in 1925, it was represented by Enderlin. During his ministry in Cairo, Enderlin was also elected as a board member of the German church in the Bulaq district of Cairo. Without asking him, the German legate appointed Enderlin to be the chief negotiator in

the negotiations with the English government regarding the return of property to the German church. The appreciation of Enderlin's wisdom in negotiations can be seen in the fact that he, in 1937, was invited by the German board to participate in the meeting between the EMM, the SEMM and Basler Mission to form a partnership.

#### **9.4.2.6 Enderlin the writer**

Enderlin has contributed numerous articles to the publications of the SPM and EMM. In these articles he has described the development and events of the ministry between 1905 and 1939. He has also written many articles and essays about topics related to Islam. Since Enderlin had the chance to participate in the most important mission conferences that dealt with missions in Islamic countries in his time, his reports are important missiological documents. Regarding the missionary work among the Nubians, Enderlin contributed four articles that were published between 1926 and 1931. When Enderlin returned to Germany in the beginning of 1939, he was given time to recover from exhaustion caused by his heart problems. It was hoped that Enderlin's rich knowledge and experience in mission work would find their reflection in a rich literary output. Unfortunately, his deteriorating health and early death in July 1940 did not allow him to produce the expected wealth of literature (Unruh 1942:75).

#### **9.4.3 Enderlin's contribution to the work among Nubians**

Until his return to Germany in 1939, Enderlin continuously motivated, stimulated and led the work among Nubians. Despite his broad responsibility for the SPM work at large, Enderlin constantly pursued the initial vision of the SPM.

##### **9.4.3.1 Initial contact with the work among Nubians**

Enderlin's first contact with the need for missionary work among the Nubians dates back to the visit of Guinness and Kumm in St Chrischona in spring 1900. Following this encounter, Enderlin joined a Sudan prayer group at the Bible school that was led by L Zimmerlin. The constant concern with the need of the unreached Sudan Belt and the region around Aswan resulted in his call to serve as a missionary with the SPM. He was released by St Chrischona to become a missionary. He immediately contacted the SPM and expressed his desire to join the mission. After he had completed his compulsory military service, he went to Wiesbaden to start his internal training with the SPM. There, he was privileged to meet his first Nubian. SAH had come to Wiesbaden to recover from his disappointing experience of the previous three years. He taught Enderlin and the small group of new missionaries the Arabic language and culture. SAH developed a respectful and loving relationship with Enderlin and the others.

#### **9.4.3.2 Pursuing the vision of work among Nubians**

In March 1905, Ziemendorff and his daughter Hanna took Enderlin with them on the first exploration trip through Nubia up to Wadi Halfa. As SAH was his Arabic teacher, Enderlin was constantly reminded of the task ahead of the SPM. As the door to the south was still closed and some Nubians moved from their original settlements south of the Aswan Dam to the Daraw area, Enderlin established a new work in Daraw and started to live there with SAH and his wife in 1907. In autumn 1908, Enderlin made his second exploration trip through Nubia and took SAH as a companion with him. Enderlin recognized the importance of the study of the Nubian vernacular. In 1911, he joined D Westermann and SAH in Berlin to work on a Nubian Primer. The time there after was primarily filled with setting up Edfu station (1911) and building projects in Daraw (1912) and Aswan (1912-1913). After Enderlin had married E Gonnermann on January 11, 1913, they moved to Daraw. Yet in autumn 1913 the Enderlins were again called back to Aswan to plan and implement the expansion of the work to the south. Suggestions for the expansion of this work were the purchase of a new houseboat, frequent evangelistic trips to Nubia and the establishment of new mission stations in Nubia. This new mandate resulted in the most important and successful exploration tour that took place in October and November 1913. Enderlin and SAH visited Wadi Halfa, Abu Hammed, Merowe and Dongola and were able to report a new openness for missionary work in the Sudan. The results of this journey encouraged the SPM to set up the first mission station in Nubia proper, in Wadi Halfa in autumn 1914. The English government approved the plans of the SPM. Yet, the advance to the south was thwarted by the beginning of World War I.

#### **9.4.3.3 New horizons in the work among Nubians**

November 4, 1924 marked the unexpected new beginning of the SPM. Enderlin was among the first four missionaries that returned to Aswan after ten years of absence. The reunion with SAH who had remained a faithful steward of the SPM vision and property was overwhelming and shocking at the same time. The eventful and challenging years since 1914 had brought a lot of changes into SAH's life. He had become an old and weak man. Enderlin realized that he had to use his time with SAH as best as he could. Thus, he resumed his Kunuuzi studies with SAH in 1925. In 1925 Enderlin was appointed a committee member for Christian literature and made responsible for the Nubian section. In autumn of the same year, Enderlin took SAH for a trip to Nubia to explore the possibility to finally start a mission station south of Aswan. It needed a second trip to finalize the implementation of a long standing dream. In March



1926, the work was started in Koshtamne. Although the Intermission Council in Cairo had asked the SPM to second Enderlin as teacher to the SOS at the AUC in 1926, the request was only answered positively in 1932. In May 1932, the Enderlins left the SPM work in Upper Egypt and moved to Cairo. Enderlin was given a double task. First, he was appointed as a lecturer at the SOS for Arabic and Nubian language and history. Second, he was requested to finally start missionary work among Nubian men in Cairo and to establish a Nubian Club. In this he was infrequently supported by the young SPM missionaries W Höpfner and W Müller. Yuhanna Shakir, a convert that Enderlin had baptized in Aswan before his move to Cairo in spring 1932, was the administrator of the place. The evangelistic work among the Nubian men, who were far away from home and overwhelmed by the city life in Cairo, proved to be very demanding and challenging. The gospel was shared through language lessons, discussions, private conversations and Christian celebrations. The few Nubian believers they met or heard about in the place were not directly the result of the SPM work. Enderlin left for Germany due to health reasons in 1938. “The German and Swiss Club for the Nubians” was closed and abandoned in 1939 due to the beginning of World War II.

#### **9.4.3.4 Literary contributions related to the Nubians**

Enderlin was an able writer and had contributed countless articles and reports to the SPM publications. He also wrote four articles related to the Nubians. His first article was published in *The Moslem World* under the title “The Nubians in Egypt” in 1926. In this short essay, Enderlin describes the name of the Nubians, the geographical distribution of their settlements, their population, and their languages. He gives a short historical review, highlights the Christian traces in old Nubians ruins and religious beliefs, and describes some of the peculiarities of Nubian daily life. He closes the article with a short summary of the SPM work among the Nubians and the role of SAH in it (Enderlin 1926:221-237). A similar article, “What does the Nubian (Berbereen) think?”, describing the Nubian intellectual outlook, their moral standards, social ideals, theological convictions, and family life and the missionary situation was published by the *Diocesan Review* of the Anglican Church in Egypt and the Sudan in 1928. Basically the same material was used by Enderlin in his third article “The Nubians past and present” that was published in the SOS Bulletin in April 1930 (Enderlin 1930:1-16). All three articles are the result of two earlier lectures that Enderlin had delivered at the SOS in 1926 (:1). In a fourth article Enderlin draws the attention of the missionary community in Egypt to “A still unoccupied mission field in Egypt”. He calls the agencies to

cooperate in order to reach the unreached Nubian men that were living in the capital city of Cairo.

#### 9.4.4 Summary

Enderlin was a multitalented missionary with a pioneering spirit. He was exactly the person the SPM needed when it started its work again after the initial crisis years. Enderlin studied hard to gain an excellent command of Arabic. He was an eager evangelist who longed to see the word of God touching and changing people's heart. With his scholarly mind, he reflected on theological questions, mission strategy and Islam. He wanted to see the work expanding. Thus he helped to develop the work in Aswan and he opened the work in Daraw, Edfu, Koshtamne and Cairo. Enderlin organized the purchase of land in Daraw and Aswan. He supervised the construction work in Aswan and Daraw. Enderlin looked for partnership and cooperation with other mission agencies and was appreciated by them. He was a man of broad horizons as he participated in the major mission conferences of his time that dealt with work among Muslims. As a visionary he never lost sight of the initial vision of the SPM which led to a number of exploration trips to Nubia. Enderlin was the SPM missionary that for the longest period had worked with SAH and therefore pursued the Nubian cause. He had studied Nubian from SAH and taught Nubian and Nubian history at the SOS. Enderlin being a scholar and teacher was awarded with an honorary doctorate. After the death of Enderlin, S Zwemer commented on his life: "Dr Enderlin's death two years ago ended a long life of utter devotion to the Nubian people with whom he first came in touch in Cairo, and afterwards in Aswan. He contributed articles ... and was an excellent Arabist as well as an ardent evangelist" (Zwemer 1944:68). E Kellerhals (Unruh 1942:76) writes in his obituary:

"D Samuel Jakob Enderlin was not only the leading man of the Evangelical Mohammedan Mission in Egypt, but maybe the most important figure of the contemporary German mission to Muhammedans. ... His excellent gift, especially for languages, his easy adaptability, his captivating friendliness, his iron diligence and his personal modesty let him appear particularly suitable for the setting up of a new work on the hot ground, both literally and figuratively, of Egypt. He has experienced the development of the work in the early stages, its abrupt breaking off due to the World War and the pleasant reconstruction of the work in the post-war years. Within the fellowship of the Egyptian mission agencies and throughout all of the Near East, he enjoyed high respect because of his knowledge, his experience and his inner nature that was constantly ready to be of service."<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> "D. Samuel Jakob Enderlin ist nicht nur der führende Mann der Evangelischen Mohammedaner-Mission in Ägypten gewesen, sondern vielleicht überhaupt die bedeutende Gestalt der gegenwärtigen Mohammedaner-Mission deutscher Zunge. ... Seine hervorragende Begabung vor allem für Sprachen, seine leichte Anpassungsfähigkeit, seine gewinnende Freundlichkeit, sein eiserner Fleiß und seine persönliche Anspruchslosigkeit ließen ihn für den Aufbau einer neuen Arbeit auf dem in doppelten Sinne heißen Boden Ägyptens besonders geeignet erscheinen. Er hat die Entwicklung der Arbeit in der Anfangszeit, den jähen Abbruch durch den Weltkrieg und den schönen Neuaufbau der Nachkriegszeit miterlebt. Im Kreis der ägyptischen Missionen, ja im ganzen vorderen Orient genoss er um seiner Kenntnisse, seiner Erfahrung und seines innerlichen, stets dienstbereiten Wesens willen hohe Achtung. ..." (Unruh 1942:76).

**Table 4: Samuel Jakob Enderlin (1878-1940)**

<b>Early Years</b>	
1878	May 11: Born in Triest
1884	Receives school education in Triest, Mosbach, Ludwigshafen, and Strassburg
1895	Obtains Middle School Certificate in Strassburg
<b>Education</b>	
1895-1898	Commercial education in Strassburg
1898-1902	Studies at St Chrischona Bible School
1900	Visit of Guinness and Kumm at St Chrischona
1902	July 27: appointed for missionary work by St Chrischona
1902-1903	Military Service
<b>Serving with the SPM (1904-1914)</b>	
1903-1904	Accepted as candidate of the SPM and begin of training in Wiesbaden including language lessons with SAH
1904	December 8: Arrival in Aswan
1904-1907	Language studies and work in Aswan
1905	Exploration trip to Wadi Halfa with Ziemendorff
1907-1909	Establishment work in Daraw
1908	Exploration Trip through Nubia with SAH
1909-1914	Construction work in Aswan, Daraw, and again in Aswan
1909	Builds mission house with church in Aswan
1910	February 6: Baptism of Maryam and Abbaas
1910	April 1: Opening of Bookshop in Aswan
1911	January: Participation in the Muhammedan Conference in Lucknow, India
1911	Studies at the Kolonial-Institut in Hamburg
1911	Inaugurates new mission station in Edfu
1912	Builds a new mission house in Daraw on SPM owned property
1912	Builds a new hospital
1913	January 11: Marries E. Gonnermann
1913	January 27: Inauguration of hospital
1913	October-November: Exploration trip through Nubia to Dongola
<b>World War I and beyond (1914-1924)</b>	
1914-1918	World War I: Service in diverse spiritual duties in the Middle East with the

	German army
1919	February: Arrival in Germany via Italy
1919-1920	Studies at Leipzig University – Theology and Islamic studies
1923-1924	Seconded to Karmel Mission in Akko, Palestine
1923	March and April: Visits Aswan
1924	Participates in the Conference for Mohammedan Mission in Jerusalem
<b>New beginnings (1924-1939)</b>	
1924-1928	November 4: Arrival and work in Aswan
1926	March: Begin of work in Koshtamne
1928-1932	Re-opens and develops work in Daraw
1932-1939	Starts new work in Cairo
1932	May 1: Appointed lecturer for Arabic and Nubian and Nubian History at SOS
1933	August 15: Receives an honorary doctorate from Theological Faculty of Marburg University
1937	Participates in the negotiations between EMM, SEMM and Basler Mission to form a partnership
1938	Autumn: Terminates his work with SOS due to health reason
1939	Spring: Returns to Eschwege, Germany to produce literature
1940	Dies in Eschwege on July 15

## 9.5 The life and work of Gertrud von Massenbach (1883-1975)

Another outstanding stakeholder of the Nubian vision was Gertrud von Massenbach. She was sent by the SPM to Aswan in 1909 and had the privilege of living in community with and working with SAH who was intensively working on the translation of the gospels into Nubian. In the beginning SAH was partly teaching her Arabic. Although G von Massenbach was not involved in any Nubian language studies in the beginning, she was certainly inspired by SAH's vision and work. Massenbach's involvement with the SPM in Upper Egypt can be divided in two phases. The first phase was between 1909 until 1914 and the second phase between 1914 and 1939. Even though Massenbach did not resume her work with the mission after World War II, she remained committed to the work among the Nubians until her death. The Nubian women loved and appreciated her and called her gently "Sitte Mamas"

(Dammann 1975:66).<sup>355</sup> In their opinion she was one of them as she knew their language (Werner 1984:7).<sup>356</sup>

### 9.5.1 Biographical data

Gertrud von Massenbach was born on 6 January 1883 as the sixth child of Baron Georg von Massenbach in Pinne, Posen province of Germany (Personnel file Massenbach; Fritz 1976:6-9). She grew up in a family that supported the world wide mission and made their castle available for regular mission events which were well attended. Two of her sisters were married to clergymen that served in Brazil. Before she finished her school education, her father and mother died. In 1898 she moved to Berlin and completed her school education in the private school of Miss Willich. In the years 1899-1902, she was trained in Miss Prox's seminary for teachers in Berlin. In 1902, she successfully finished her studies and became a registered teacher for preparatory and secondary schools. For a nineteen year old lady of noble origin, this was quite a strange and unusual step in her time. After some time with her siblings in Pinne, in June 1904 she accepted the position of a housemistress and home teacher for the daughter of Wilhelm and Beatrice von Polenz in the Lausitz, Saxonia. W von Polenz was a well-known writer and had died before she begun working for the family.

After four years, Massenbach offered herself to the SPM for missionary work in Egypt. From childhood on, the missionary thought was nurtured in her home and had created in her the desire to serve as a missionary. Later, the vision became clearer and was further deepened by the fact that her relative, Amelie von Massenbach, was working in the home office of the SPM in Wiesbaden. As she became familiar with the great task of the SPM, she applied for becoming a missionary with the SPM. In October 1908, she was accepted (Minutes SPM 09.10.1908:71). After she had completed her assignment with the Polenz family at Christmas 1908, she was ready to move to Wiesbaden and joined the SPM in 1909.

She was sent to Aswan in 1909. Her initial focus was on learning Arabic, practically supporting the team and assisting the Egyptian head teacher, Sitte Lulu in the SPM School that had grown to about eighty pupils. It was considered that Massenbach who had already acquired the needed language standard in Germany would teach mathematics, Arabic writing, knitting and sports. She was privileged to intensively study Arabic with a group of teachers

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<sup>355</sup> As Massenbach was difficult to pronounce for the Nubian women they called the German missionary simply by a name of the small Nubian village, Masmās, since it sounded similar. An alternative explanation could be that Massenbach's name inspired them to call her Masmās as her name reminded them of the Kunuuzi verb *masmas* "to whisper" (Massenbach 1933:195).

<sup>356</sup> Language competence is regarded by the Nubians as a strong identification marker. When the author visited the Kunuuzi village Gharb Seheel in 1983 he was told the same expression in regards to Dr E Herzfeld: "She was one of us, because she knew our language."

among them the Nubian evangelist and Bible translator Samuel Ali Hiseen (SAH). She supported E Gonnermann during the Sunday school classes. In 1913, she passed her language examination at the Cairo Study Center (CSC) in Cairo and was asked to teach the new female missionaries Arabic. In March 1914, she went to Edfu to work as a teacher and replace G Noack who had become sick. The beginning of World War I forced her to leave Egypt in autumn 1914.

During the years of absence from the mission field from 1914-1924, she served in various capacities in the home office of the SPM in Wiesbaden. She trained women for ministry in Germany, taught in the many girls' Bible study groups and visited supporting friends and churches of the SPM.

After the uncertainty of whether the SPM would ever be allowed to return to Aswan, Massenbach was part of the first group of SPM workers who arrived in Aswan on November 4, 1924. Until World War II interrupted her work again in 1939, Massenbach put a clear focus on the work among the Nubians. After her involvement in Koshtamne in 1926, she returned to Aswan and was part of the newly started ministry in Korrer in 1934. While the evangelist Rafla began a Bible study group for Coptic men, Massenbach ministered to the women.

During the war (1939-1945), Massenbach worked as a vicar with the Protestant Church in her original home region in Posen. As the war activities came close to Posen with the Russian troops advancing, she had to leave the area in January 1945. Via a short stay at a refugee camp in Prenzlau, Berlin she finally was reunited with her sister in Bad Oeyenhausen, Westfalia. In May 1945, they moved to Löhne, Westfalia where they were received by relatives.

In Löhne, she was involved in various activities with the "Bahnhofsmission", care for needy rail travellers and the "Frauenhilfe", church work among needy women. In 1952, she went for a three month linguistic research trip again to Egypt. At the age of eighty-one, in 1964, she moved a final time to the old people's home "Ludwig-Steil-Hof" in Espelkamp, Westfalia where she died on March 5, 1975 after a very rich and fulfilling life at the age of ninety-two.

### **9.5.2 Massenbach's contribution to the work among Nubians**

In her application form, Massenbach wrote in 1908 that the mission field that was put on her heart were the Muslims in general (Personnel file Massenbach). But even during her first work period with the SPM (1909-1914), the shift of her focus was slowly introduced.

### **9.5.2.1 Contacts with Nubians**

While she was helping E Gonnermann in the clinic work, she surely had come into contact with Nubian patients. Among the Egyptians that helped her study Arabic was SAH, the Nubian evangelist and major stakeholder of the work among Nubians. Through visiting some of her former female pupils in their home villages, her relationship with the Nubian people grew constantly.

### **9.5.2.2 Introduction into the Kunuuzi language**

During her home-leave in 1913 she had the opportunity to go to Berlin and receive, together with the Fröhlichs and von Oertzens, an introduction into the Nubian language through D Westermann. Back in Aswan she was privileged to continue her studies of Kunuuzi Nubian with the native speaker SAH, who was an excellent teacher and had a profound knowledge of the vernacular.

Due to the outbreak of World War I in autumn of 1914, the activities of the SPM came to a halt and she and all other Germans had to leave the work in Aswan and return home. Next to her work with the SPM in Germany, Massenbach used the years during the war to make herself more familiar with the Kunuuzi Nubian language and the Nubian history.

### **9.5.2.3 Serious studies of the Kunuuzi language**

When she was back in Aswan in November 1924, in addition to sharing Bible stories with waiting clinic patients, she increasingly visited Nubian families giving knitting lessons and studied Kunuuzi Nubian in the afternoons and on days without medical work. In 1925, she worked intensively on Kunuuzi, making the best use of SAH's presence. She studied the whole summer, revised material with SAH and spent time with H Schäfer who came in the same year to revise some texts with SAH (Schäfer 1935:201). When, in the beginning of 1926, the SPM succeeded in opening its first mission station in Nubia proper, Massenbach was sent to Koshtamne from May until October 1926 to lead the team. After that initial period, she returned to Aswan. In addition to her devotional speeches to the waiting patients and her knitting classes, Massenbach visited up to sixty houses, not fearing the scorching heat. Her missionary contacts were increasing although a general opposition against the Christians and especially against the foreign mission agencies became obvious (SP 1933:45).

### **9.5.2.4 Linguistic work in the Kunuuzi language**

During the following years, Massenbach saw the most productive phase regarding her literary output and her linguistic contribution. When Massenbach got to know a Fadija speaking

Nubian woman in 1936 and was invited by her to start a knitting class for a Fadija speaking ladies group, Massenbach even began to study some Fadija which is a dialect of the Nobiin Nubian (SP 1938:104).

After World War II, although no longer a SPM missionary, Massenbach resumed her linguistic work and was given a grant via D Westermann by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Fellowship) which allowed her a three month research trip to Egypt and the Sudan. She was asked to examine how similar the Dongolaawi and the Kunuuzi dialects were and whether SAH's Gospel translations could be used in the Dongola region without major problems. Although she was not given a visa to travel to the Dongola region, she was able to meet with Dongolaawi speakers in Cairo, Aswan, and Dakke and visited Khartoum.

When she moved to an old people's home in Espelkamp, Westfalia in 1964, encouraged through the young scholar Dr Armgard Grauer, she remained active in producing Kunuuzi tape recordings with Bible stories to support the work of her former colleagues Herzfeld and Bühler who were still active among the Kunuuzi Nubians.

### **9.5.2.5 Literary contributions**

In order to come to a full and comprehensive appreciation of Massenbach's contributions, we need to look at her rich literary contribution (Lauche 2010:8). Besides her involvement in teaching, social work and Bible storytelling, Massenbach was an excellent writer. In order to keep its supporters, adults and children, adequately informed about the developments of the ministry in Egypt and the spiritual situation of the Islamic world, the SPM issued three different periodicals. Their names were: *Der Sudan Pionier* (The Sudan Pioneer), *Wasserquellen* (Springs of Water), and *Aus dem Land der Moscheen* (From the Land of the Mosques). During her missionary involvement with the SPM between 1909 and 1939, Massenbach contributed numerous vivid reports about her work, informative articles and interesting stories to these publications. As we are concerned about her literary output related to Nubia, we will list her most important literary products. The literature that was produced by Massenbach helped the supporters of the SPM and the audience that was interested in missions to be adequately informed about the yet unreached people group of the Nubians.

In 1927, the SPM published her concise essay "Nubien in Geschichte und Gegenwart" (Nubia in history and present) in several sequences (SP 1927:101-103; 114-118; 123-127; 135-139; 147-151). In this article Massenbach describes the Nubian culture, their daily life



with the passages of rites, their history, their religious expressions and the development of the SPM work among them.

Massenbach's first book, with the title: "Als Mohrenland noch christlich war ... einst ... jetzt" ("When the Land of the Black was still Christian ... once ... now"), was published by the SPM in 1930. In this account she presents the historical facts regarding the rise and demise of Christianity in Nubia in a vivid, attractive and readable way. At a time when Nubian Christianity was virtually unknown to the average reader in the west, she wanted to introduce her audience to the tragic episode of African church history. More than fifty years later, in 1984, at the occasion of her hundredth birthday, the book was republished by the EMO under the title "Nubien unter dem Kreuz" ("Nubia under the Cross").<sup>357</sup>

In her productive phase Massenbach wrote an article titled "Nubia, the Land of Shadows" in which she presents a realistic overview about the various aspects and challenges of rural and urban Nubian life in her day (1931:46-58).

Another literary contribution is the travel account about her three month research trip in 1952. The booklet was given the title "Mohrenland wird seine Hände ausstrecken zu Gott" ("Kush will lift up her hands to God") and describes her activities in Alexandria, Aswan, Old Nubia and Khartoum. The report was printed by the EMM in 1952. A special value of this account lies in the fact that it contains a lot of up-to-date information about SAH's daughter Maryam and her family. This data would have been lost otherwise (1952:18-23).<sup>358</sup>

### 9.5.2.6 Linguistic publications

Beside the more popular literature that was produced by Massenbach, it is her contribution to the linguistic research of the Kuuuzi language that stands out and continues the legacy of SAH (Lauche 2010:8-9). Massenbach was privileged to learn and study the Kuuuzi vernacular under the supervision of SAH, the reliable language assistant of H Schäfer and H Junker. Through her contact with Kuuuzi women in Koshtamne and other places she was put in a unique position to practice the language. She gained proficiency in speaking it and started to collect additional language material. Her first scholarly piece of work was published under the title: "Volkssagen aus dem Gebiet der Kuuuzi-Nubier" ("Folk Tales from the region of the Kuuuzi Nubians") in 1931. She wrote this twelve-page contribution in a time when the construction work for the second heightening of the Aswan Dam was already under way.

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<sup>357</sup> The booklet was edited by E Troeger and revised and enlarged with comments by R Werner who expresses his amazement about the relatively precise picture of the Christian period by Massenbach despite the limited data that was available to her at the time she had written this account (1984:8).

<sup>358</sup> Unfortunately, Maryam was not present but had travelled to Aswan to see after the house that her father had once built in 1909 and that her sister Ruqaiya had sold to her.

When the dam was completed in 1934, it resulted in the loss of additional Nubian land, this time even affecting the area of the Fadija Nubians. In the first section, Massenbach explains the loss of identity that Nubian men away from their original home land experienced in Lower Egypt. Further, Massenbach describes the tribal organization of the Nubians and their attempt to trace back their Arab ancestral roots. Nubians are convinced that their Arab ancestors had adopted Nubian life, language and traditions (Massenbach 1931:197-198). In the second section, Massenbach explains the importance of the Sheikhs, the Holy Men in Nubian religious life. As evidence she provides a traditional story about Sagrosmaan whose main task is to discover thieves (:198-201). In the third section, she deals with the animistic concept that the soul of a twin changes into the form of an animal (cat, dog, and bee) during the night. Massenbach provides four stories that express this understanding (:201-204). Finally, in the last section she explains another animistic phenomenon, the water spirits. This concept goes back to the Nubian understanding that the Nile, as the source of life, contains all sorts of enigmatic creatures. The so-called "essin buruwii" (water girls) help women during their childbirth. Massenbach gives two examples for this belief (:204-208).

Due to the scientific work of Schäfer and Junker with SAH and others, the Kunuuzi language material had immensely increased. But there was still no introduction to the Kunuuzi grammar and no concise dictionary. In 1933, Massenbach filled this gap and published a dictionary of the Kunuuzi language with a grammatical introduction "Wörterbuch des nubischen Kunuuzi-Dialektes mit einer grammatischen Einleitung" (Massenbach 1933:99-227). In the first part of her work, Massenbach gives a comprehensive overview of the Kunuuzi grammar (Massenbach 1933:105-140). This is followed by a dictionary (:140-227) with about 3,300 entries which is the result of many years of work. Massenbach explains that the genesis of her work started with a list of words that she had collected herself. Then she enlarged the list by words from already existing dictionaries of L Reinisch (1879) and H N Almkvist (1911). In the years prior to the death of SAH, she revised and verified the material together with his assistance. Later, she added words from the unpublished manuscripts of her teacher. When Massenbach was working for almost six months in Koshtamne in 1926, she benefited much from the remarks, indications, and word lists of her colleagues that were involved in medical work. Finally, she added her own collection of words resulting from her extensive contacts with Kunuuzi Nubians in and around Aswan. The creation of this much-needed tool was supported and supervised by Schäfer (Lauche 2010:9).

When Massenbach returned to Germany in 1939, she terminated her work with the SPM. During World War II, she was heavily engaged in church work in Posen before she had

to escape to West Germany in 1945. Despite her renewed involvement in Christian ministry in West Germany, she never lost her passion for the Kunuuzi Nubians and their language. Through the support of D Westermann, she was given a grant by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for a six-week research trip in spring 1952. This time she was to examine the similarity between the two dialects of Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi. Yet she was not allowed to travel to Dongola. The situation was more or less solved through her former EMM colleagues who provided her with the needed language assistants in Cairo, Aswan and Dakke. The first scholarly result of this research trip was the publication of “Eine grammatische Skizze des Dongolawi” (a grammatical sketch of Dongolaawi) in 1961 (Massenbach 1961:229-323), which was similar in structure to that of the Kunuuzi dialect sketch published in 1933 (Lauche 2010:9). In this fine work Massenbach covered the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, and dialectal differences. This sketch was a concise, well-structured introduction to the Dongolaawi dialect and provided a practical tool for the student of Dongolaawi. With regards to the question of tone in the Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi vernacular, Massenbach suggested that they had been tonal languages at an earlier time, but had obviously lost their tone with a limited number of exceptions. Communication was possible without paying too much attention to tone (Massenbach 1961:242).

Only one year later, in 1962, Massenbach’s masterpiece of linguistic analysis was published. In the “Nubische Texte im Dialekt der Kunuuzi und der Dongolawi” (Nubian texts in the dialect of the Kunuuzi and the Dongolaawi), she presented a collection of forty-three Kunuuzi and forty-three Dongolaawi texts<sup>359</sup> with a glossary of all the words used in the respective texts (Massenbach 1962). The stories recorded describe the daily Nubian life with its duties, folk-traditions, and tales. Among the Kunuuzi texts, Massenbach included three ethnographic texts written by SAH. All the other Kunuuzi stories were collected by herself prior to the outbreak of World War II. When Massenbach had to return to Germany in 1939, she left all her texts behind in Aswan - unedited. As Schäfer and Junker were only able to record stories from men, Massenbach had filled a gap that Schäfer had drawn attention to. She had collected most of her material during her house visits over a period of time from women. Thus, the texts showed a different character from those recorded by Schäfer and Junker. With this publication Massenbach provided “a genuine contribution to the preservation of Nubian tales which she thought would possibly be lost due to the relocation of the Nubians following the second heightening of the Aswan Dam” (Lauche 2010:9).

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<sup>359</sup> After her return to Germany in 1952, Massenbach began to work on the texts. She appreciated that she could turn with all her questions to M Bühler and C Peters in Aswan (Massenbach 1962:XV-XVI).

### 9.5.2.7 Production of Gospel tracts

Massenbach not only wrote for the SPM publications and for the scholarly world. As she was a missionary, she longed to see the gospel distributed among the Kunuuzi in Egypt. This led her to the preparation of Nubian Bible tracts in Arabic script. The first tract was printed by the Nile Mission Press in 1930 and contained eight pages (Lauche 2010:10). It was given the heading *in weerji* (The Only One) and was a collection of Scripture quotations from the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John (Lk 15:4-7.11-24; Jh 10:12-16.27-30; Mt 5:3-9.21-26.27.44.46.48; 7:24-27; 11:28). The Nubian texts that had been transliterated by Massenbach were taken from SAH's gospel texts printed in 1912 and were only slightly modified. This assumption is confirmed by the minutes of the BFBS saying: "Miss G von Massenbach of the German Mission, Aswan, asks permission to transliterate selections from the Gospels into Arabic character for a leaflet to be printed at the Nile Mission Press" (Minutes BFBS 14 May 1930). This tract was re-printed and received the additional remark "Kunuuzi Portionette, No 684" (Lauche 2010:10).

When Massenbach learned that some Nubian men tried to write their vernacular in Arabic letters, she took the initiative and produced another Nubian gospel tract in Arabic script at her own expense. Enderlin who reported about this project mentioned that the tract contained parables and was printed in a high number (P 1933:46). Another leaflet that only contains parables of Jesus has not been traced so far (Lauche 2010:10). The solution to this enigma could be the possible identification of this tract with the Scripture leaflet that was printed by the Nile Mission Press without any indication of a printing date.<sup>360</sup> It bears the title *in ilaahina weera taran* (God's Only One), consists of eight pages and contains passages from the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John (Lk 5:12-14; Mt 9:3-8; Lk 15:1-7; Jh 10:11-12.14-16; Lk 24:46-47).

After World War II another Kunuuzi Scripture leaflet was printed in Arabic characters. This time, it was printed at the request of the Scripture Gift Mission (SGM) by the Nile Mission Press in Cairo. This tract also consisted of eight pages and carried the title *ayar damandi* (Eternal Life). The print run of this tract was supported by Clara Peters from the SVEMM and approved by the SGM. G von Massenbach who was asked to prepare the manuscript. 2 000 copies were printed in September 1954 (:10). The leaflet begins with a concise introduction into the pronunciation of certain letters for the reader and contains Scripture verses from the Gospels of Matthew and John; the Pauline letters of Romans,

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<sup>360</sup> This assumption is in agreement with the relatively high number of tracts that the author found in a cupboard of the mission station in Aswan and that are preserved by him now. Copies of this tract are also available in the EMO archive in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Ephesians, and 1 Timothy; and the books of 1 John, 1 Peter, and the Acts of the Apostles (Mt 9:13; Rom 5:13, 3:23, 5:6; 1.Pt 3:18; 1.Jh 2:2; Acts 4:12; 1.Tim 1:15; Eph 2:8; Jh 3:16; Mt 11:28; Jh 6:37; Rom 5:8; 1.Jh 4:10; Acts 16:30.31).

Regarding the publication of Kunuuzi Scripture leaflets, we can note a change in strategy. The four gospels that SAH had translated with Schäfer and Junker had been printed by the BFBS in Latin characters in 1912. Nothing is known about the extent of their distribution or about their impact on the life of the potential readers. It can be assumed that the literacy among Nubian men regarding Latin characters was very low at the time. That is why the BFBS and the SGM dismissed the option to print the tracts in Latin characters. The BFBS may have remembered the positive response of the Fadija Nubians when they had printed Lepsius' Gospel of Mark in Arabic script in 1899 and 1906 after the Latin version seemed of little value.

In addition to this observation, there are still two questions that remain unanswered. First, why did Massenbach not pursue the publication of the remaining unpublished New Testament books that had been translated by SAH prior to World War I? And second, why did she not attempt to translate the New Testament books, such as 1 and 2 Peter and James, which had not been translated by SAH? One possible answer is that although she had a good command of the language, she may not have had the language assistant that she needed for this responsible task.

Surely, the linguistic work on the Kunuuzi and the Dongolaawi languages in the first six decades of the twentieth century was dominated by the brilliant work of H Schäfer, H Junker, H N Almkvist, and C H Armbruster. Nevertheless, Massenbach's scientific contribution did not go unnoticed by the scholars of her day as can be seen by the positive reviews her publications received (Zyhlarz 1934/35:318; Stevenson 1963:145-146; Hetzron 1963:379; Vycichl 1964:305-309; Jungraithmayer 1964:221-223; Höftmann 1965:208-209; Thausing 1967:124-126). Massenbach has produced useful tools for the student of Kunuuzi or Dongolaawi and certainly for the missionary that is committed to work among the Nile-Nubians of that vernacular. Massenbach was a person that would not have called herself a Nubian scholar, but nevertheless throughout her lifetime she made valuable contributions to the study of Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi Nubian. On the occasion of her death, E Dammann reminded the scholarly world that her linguistic contribution has enhanced their knowledge of these languages. In closing Dammann (1975:66) wrote:

“She would have refused to be put on the same level as scholars like R Lepsius, R Reinisch, H Abel, H Schäfer or C H Armbruster, but through her we were given different pieces of scholarly work that have

enhanced our knowledge. She served the Africans with all her strength; therefore she paid much attention to their language and thereby became an appreciated co-worker in the linguistic field.”

**Table 5: Gertrud von Massenbach (1883-1975)**

<b>Early Years</b>	
1883	January 6: Born in Pinne, Posen
1888	Receives school education at home with her siblings
1893	December 20: Death of her father
1898	April 2: Death of her mother
1898	Receives school education under Miss Willich in Berlin
<b>Education and work</b>	
1899-1902	Studies at Teacher’s Seminary of Miss Prox
1904-1908	Works as housemistress and teacher for daughter of Beatrice von Polenz in Obercunewalde, Saxonia
<b>Serving with the SPM</b>	
1908	Accepted as SPM candidate
1909	Sent to Egypt and arrival in Aswan
1909-1914	Studies Arabic and works in Aswan and Edfu
1913	Receives introduction into the Nubian language by Westermann in Berlin
1914-1924	Continues with SPM as travel secretary
1924-1926	Involved in linguistic work with SAH and Schäfer in Aswan
1926	Begins work in Koshtamne, Nubia
1926-1939	Works as missionary in Aswan and surrounding region; intensifies literary and linguistic work
<b>Back in Germany</b>	
1939-1945	Serves in different positions in the Protestant Church in Posen
1945	Flees to Löhne in Westfalia
1945	Works with “Help for Women” and “Bahnhofsmision”

1952	Study trip to Nubia
1952-1962	Publication of the results of her linguistic work
1964	Moves from Löhne to “Ludwig-Steil-Hof” old people’s home in Espelkamp
1964-1975	Continues linguistic work and records Nubian texts with Dr A Grauer
1975	Dies in Espelkamp, Westfalia on March 5

## 9.6. The life and work of Elisabeth Herzfeld (1890-1976)

E Herzfeld stands out as a prominent medical missionary of the SPM. It seems that she did not come to Egypt with a clear vision for the Nubians. She was only able to meet with SAH, get to know him and be inspired by his spiritual desire towards his people for about three months. It remains unknown to what extent he had an impact on her life regarding the work among the Nubians. A stimulating factor was certainly the opening of the first SPM mission station in Koshtamne, Nubia in March 1926. It is clear though that she saw herself in line with those that were supposed to carry on the legacy of SAH (P 1933:37-41).

### 9.6.1 Biographical data

Anna Klara Helma Elisabeth Herzfeld was born on March 2, 1890 in Heddesdorf, Neuwied. Her father was a judge and her mother was a teacher. She grew up in a family in which education was highly esteemed for boys and girls alike. Priority was given to the acquisition and transmission of knowledge. All of their children graduated from university and acquired academic professions (Bachmann 2002:15). Herzfeld received her primary school education in private institutions and at the school of the Moravians in Neuwied. Due to a new position of Herzfeld’s father, the family moved to Greifswald in 1899. Here, she went to the Kaiserin Victoria Gymnasium for secondary education from 1899-1905. In 1910, Herzfeld graduated from the teachers’ seminary in Greifswald. In 1912 she successfully completed her secondary education (:18-21).

As one of the first female students, she started to study medicine in Greifswald in 1912 which included one external semester at Leipzig university (:23-24). In the year 1916, during a conference for female students<sup>361</sup> in Tambach, Thüringen, she realized God’s call to missionary service. During this conference she came in contact with M Unruh, who had been a full time worker with the SPM since 1922 in Wiesbaden (Unruh 1966:3). In November

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<sup>361</sup> The Deutsche Christliche Vereinigung studierender Frauen (DCVSF) was founded in 1905 in order to further the Christian faith among female students.

1917, she graduated with an “excellent” grade from medical school and was awarded a medical doctorate in April 1919 (Bachmann 2002:24-25). After two years of work as a physician in various clinics in Leipzig, she opened a private clinic in September 1919 in Leipzig. Thus, she became one of the first female doctors to open a clinic in Leipzig (:30.41-42).

In 1925, Herzfeld, nine years after her initial call, realized her desire to become a missionary doctor by applying to the SPM. Thus, she became only the sixth German female physician in German medical missions (:50). After almost one year of theological and medical preparation, she was sent to Egypt and arrived in Aswan on November 4, 1926. She started her work together with Dr Kallenbach who was the director of the mission hospital in Aswan (:56-57). After an introductory period in 1927, she went to Koshtamne in Nubia to develop the medical work in the newly founded station. She was the only medical doctor in the surrounding region (:58-60). As Dr Kallenbach had to return to Germany and terminate his work with the mission in 1929 for health reasons of his wife, E Herzfeld had to return to Aswan in order to direct the medical work (:61-65). During her time the extension of the hospital was established. In the years prior to World War II, Herzfeld often went to Nubia during the summer months to support the work in Koshtamne and later in Gerf Hiseen and participated in itinerary medical work in other Nubian villages. Due to World War II, she had to return to Germany.

In the years 1939 until 1950, she worked in different hospitals in Germany. During this time she completed her specialization as surgeon. Having Jewish ancestors she miraculously escaped internment by the Nazis (:66-68). When the doors in Egypt opened again for Germans to participate in missionary work, she was immediately ready at the age of sixty to leave her work at the Martin-Luther-Krankenhaus in Berlin-Zehlendorf to resume her work with the EMM in Aswan. In Aswan she dealt with 200-250 patients daily plus inpatients, operations and home visits. In 1956 she was decorated with the order of merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. When Dr E Schmitt was ready to take over the responsibility for the medical work in Aswan in 1957, she returned to Nubia after her home leave in 1958 (:69-75). The “al-doktoora al-kabiira” (the old female doctor), as she was called, joined the ongoing ministry in Dakke, 125 kilometers south of Aswan, until the rising waters of Lake Naasir made a complete resettlement of the Egyptian Nubian population there necessary. In December 1963, the station in Dakke had to be abandoned. As the Egyptian government did not welcome the starting of a clinic by the German Mission in the resettlement region, Herzfeld went to Daraw for medical work and went to Gharb Seheel to



offer medical services twice weekly. The Kunuuzi Nubians appreciated her work and offered to provide her a house for a permanent polyclinic. Thus, in March 1965, one day before her seventy-fifth birthday, the station in Gharb Seheel north the Aswan Dam was opened. Together with M Bühler she was able to work there until May 1966 (:75-77). Already suffering from terminal kidney disease, she left Egypt in May 1966 and died on September 16, 1966 in Tübingen.

### **9.6.2 Herzfeld's contribution to the work among the Nubians**

After a short time together with A Kallenbach in Aswan, Herzfeld was free to move to Koshtamne and joined the team. Herzfeld was confronted with a different country, language, religion, extreme climatic conditions, and low social and medical standards. But she chose to live among the Nubians as closely as possible. Thus, her first contribution was her presence as a Christian among the Nubian Muslim villagers. She showed great flexibility as she was ready to live among the people and identify with the simplicity of their life. This sacrificial life style included loneliness, lack of cultural life and lack of fellowship with the rest of the missionary community. She gave high priority to the acquisition of the he Nubian language in order to communicate adequately with the locals.

It seems that Herzfeld's commitment to the Nubians developed as she met the women in Nubia and saw their educational, emotional, physical and spiritual needs. The lack of rights for women was leading them into and leaving them in dramatic situations. There was low life expectancy, high infant mortality and a 95% illiteracy rate. Thus, Dr Herzfeld's second contribution was her extremely needed medical service. She became the only doctor available in the radius of one hundred kilometers. Herzfeld was a passionate physician and had the prerequisites that were needed for the task. She had studied and worked hard and obtained her medical doctorate at the age of twenty-nine. She gained experience by working in many different clinics in Germany. She worked herself into the field of surgery through practical training times in 1926 and 1933 in Wiesbaden and finally received her diploma as a surgeon 1944 in Berlin. She liked to examine, treat and operate on her patients and medically educate people. She treated her patients wherever they were: in the hospital in Aswan, in the outpatient clinics in Aswan, Daraw, Koshtamne, Gerf Hiseen, Dakke and Gharb Seheel and during her home visits in many villages. She was ready to work hard and see up to 200 patients a day. For Herzfeld, the medical work was a visible act of Christian love to meet the needs and to overcome the rejection towards the gospel and the suspicion towards the mission. At times, the Nubians despite their partial religious ignorance displayed more

fanaticism than the mainstream Egyptian Sunni Muslims. But often the initial and sporadic skepticism gave way to confidence and open appreciation for the missionary work.

Yet Dr Herzfeld's presence and her medical work served the overall purpose to proclaim the message of life and freedom in Christ. Although in her opinion the medical and spiritual work were complementing each other, the gospel proclamation was to be given the priority. Next to the physical need, Herzfeld was especially struck and saddened by the influence of folk Islam and occult practices that burdened the daily life of the village women. Thus, her third contribution was that she shared the gospel of freedom simply by telling Jesus stories, especially the parable of the Prodigal Son, by singing and teaching them Christian songs, and by praying for them.

As Herzfeld was a hard worker and constantly challenged by the great work load and the demands of her patients, she did not have the time to contribute a lot of written work. Yet she knew that the supporters of the SPM who were praying for her and the work among the Nubians needed information and reports to identify with the work and support it. Thus, her fourth contribution was that she made the Nubians and their desperate situation known to the western world, especially to the Christians of the German speaking countries. Herzfeld brought Christ to Nubia and Nubia to the west. During her two work phases (1926-1939 and 1950-1966) with the SPM / EMM / EMO, she contributed numerous reports and articles to the mission's publications. In 1934 a collection of her articles were published with the title *Missionsärztin in Nubien* (Female mission doctor in Nubia) (Herzfeld 1934).<sup>362</sup> Another collection of her articles was published in about 1940 and given the title *Als Ärztin am Nil* (As female doctor at the Nile) (Herzfeld s a). Immediately after Herzfeld's death in September 1966, a booklet with the title *Das Kreuz am Rande der Wüste* (The cross at the edge of the desert) was published in memory of her ministry with the mission. It contains extracts of her former articles and contributions by her colleagues (Herzfeld 1966).

Herzfeld made a lasting contribution through her sacrificial presence among the Nubians, her tireless and competent medical work, her loving and passionate sharing of the Gospel and her vivid depiction of the daily Nubian life with its diverse challenges to a western Christian audience.

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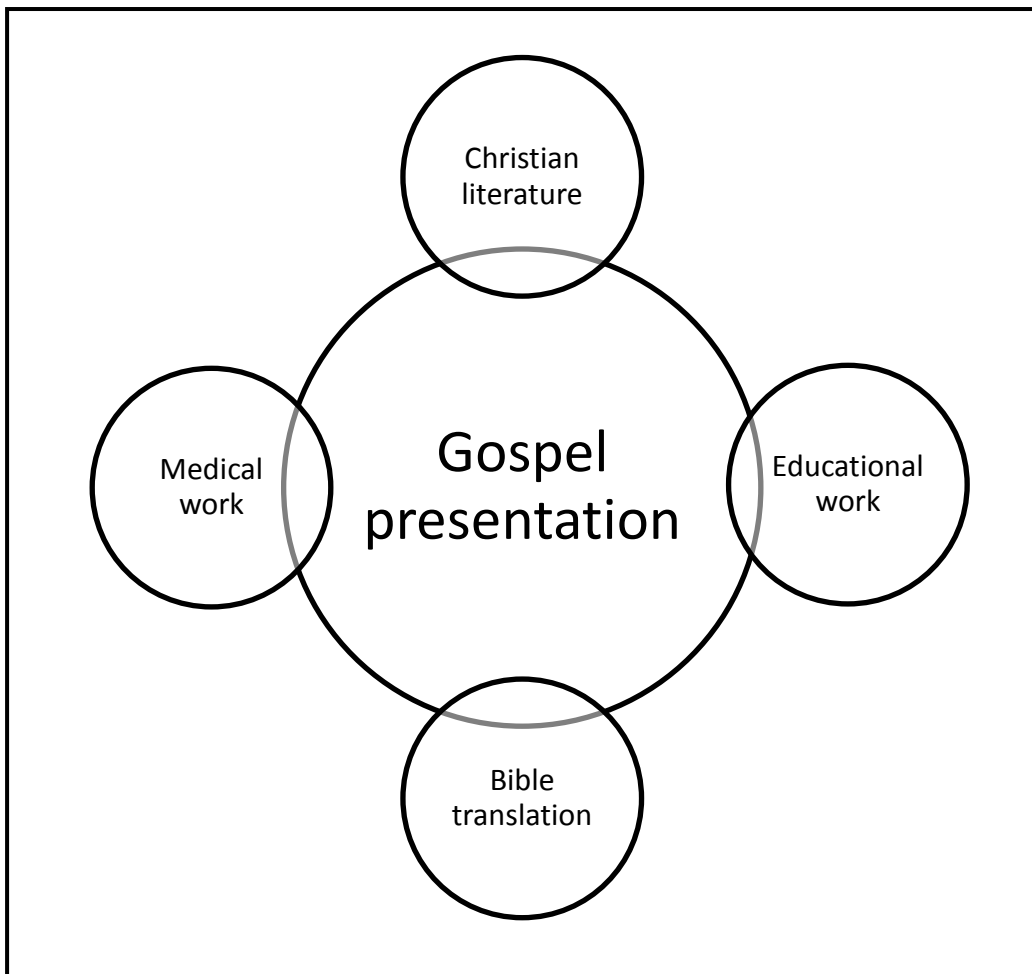
<sup>362</sup> The booklet was published a second time in 1937 under the same title, but an article about the work in Gerf Hisen was added (Herzfeld 1937).

**Table 6: Elisabeth Herzfeld (1890-1966)**

<b>Early Years</b>	
1890	March 22: Born in Heddesdorf, Neuwied
Until 1899	Receives primary education at School of the Moravians in Neuwied
1899-1905	Receives secondary education in Greifswald
<b>Education</b>	
1907-1910	Completes female teaching training in Greifswald
1912	Finishes high school diploma in Greifswald
1912-1917	Studies medicine in Greifswald and Leipzig
1917	Passes medical exam in Greifswald
1918	Receives approbation
1919	April 25: Rewarded doctorate degree in medicine
1916-1920	Completes clinical practice
1920-1925	Begins private Clinic in Leipzig
<b>Serving with the SPM</b>	
1925	Applies for missionary service with the SPM
1926	Works in Paulinenstift in Wiesbaden
1926	November 4: Arrives in Aswan
1926-1927	Works in SPM Hospital in Aswan
1927-1929	Works in Koshtamne
1929-1939	Becomes medical director of the mission's hospital in Aswan Works during summer months in Koshtamne until 1934, in Gerf Hiseen 1935-1939, Abu Hoor 1937
<b>World War II and beyond</b>	
1939-1950	Works in hospitals in Berlin-Zehlendorf, Hermeskeil, Schwiebus
1944	Specializes in surgery
<b>New beginnings</b>	
1950-1957	Returns to Aswan and becomes medical director of the mission's hospital
1956	Receives decoration with the Order of Merit of the FRG
1958-1964	Works in Dakke, Nubia
1964	Works in Daraw
1965-1966	Works in Gharb Seheel, Nubia
1966	Dies in Tübingen on September 15

In this chapter we have seen that the SPM workers have imbedded their gospel presentation in the comprehensive and the infiltration approach. Through their sacrificial and persevering presence, their concern for the needs of the people, their simple, credible lifestyle, their practical medical service and their educational efforts, they have prepared the ground for sharing the gospel in a loving way. Beyond their work among Muslims in general, part of their effort was especially directed towards the Kunuuzi Nubians. The outstanding contribution of the SPM in this respect was that they approached the Nubians as they established a permanent presence among them. Having developed a deeper understanding of their culture and the ability to communicate the gospel in their vernacular were the prerequisites for having an impact on them. The SPM made the four gospels and some Scripture tracts available in the Kunuuzi language. Accompanied by their medical and educational services, the missionaries were shared the gospel women, children and men. The communication of the gospel took place through telling Jesus stories, teaching songs, reading Bible passages, using sketches, and prayer.

**Illustration 8: Methods used in the work among Nubians**



## 10. Conclusion

In the final chapter we will summarize and present the main findings of this research which describe the history of the *Sudan Pionier Mission* (SPM) and analyze comprehensively its development into a mission among the Nile-Nubians from its beginning in 1900 until 1966. We will place the SPM in the context of wider mission history and describe its consecutive historical phases. We will further depict the modification and adaptation of its initial vision and present the key stakeholders of the “Nubia vision”. Further, we will summarize the factors that impacted the “birth” of a mission to the unreached people groups of the Nile-Nubians. In closing, we will highlight the unique features of the SPM, summarize the contribution of this study and suggest topics for further research.

### 10.1 The SPM in the context of wider mission history

The advance of the gospel in modern times through Protestant missions has seen three major stages. The inception of the SPM took place in the second era when the main concern was on the unreached areas of this world, the “regions beyond”. In the nineteenth century, which was called “the Great Century” of Protestant missions, the focus for evangelism shifted to the inland areas that were still untouched by the Gospel.<sup>363</sup> Before that, the Gospel was proclaimed mainly by European missionaries in coastal regions and the coastal trade cities that were occupied by the colonial powers. Thereafter, the middle of the twentieth century saw another shift from the unreached regions to the unreached ethnolinguistic people groups.

The SPM has its spiritual roots in the Holiness Movement and became part of the family of faith missions.<sup>364</sup> H G Guinness was influenced by H Taylor and greatly burdened with the spiritual needs of the African continent and the vast unreached region of the Sudan Belt. In the attempt of the SPM to advance from Aswan, Egypt via the Nile route to the Sudan Belt very naturally the Nile-Nubians came into view and, to a much more limited degree, the Beja, without giving up the wider Sudan Belt vision. When various obstacles delayed and eventually prevented the SPM from advancing further to the south, a clear focus was put on the Kunuuzi Nubians.

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<sup>363</sup> Although in this era there may have been a focus on regions this does not exclude a people group focus as happened through the New Tribes Mission or the Unevangelized Tribes Mission.

<sup>364</sup> The principles that were put forward by H Taylor were followed by numerous faith missions. For the principles of Bacon (1984:8-11).

## 10.2 Historical phases in the development of the SPM

We were able to discern six clearly definable consecutive phase in the history of the SPM between historical phases in between the years 1900-1966.

Phase one (1900-1904) was the pioneer phase in which the mission started with educational work in Aswan and an exploration and colportage trip into Nubia. However, soon the work suffered from its ill-planned inception, structural problems, inexperienced leadership and board, lack of qualified workers, lack of sufficient funding, lack of focus on its initial objectives, colonial policy that prohibited the advance to the south and interpersonal conflicts. The work was temporarily terminated with the intention to continue in the near future.

Phase two (1905-1915) was characterized by a prudent and careful restart, consolidation of the team and their ministry and gradual geographical extension of the work north of Aswan to Daraw and Edfu. Additional ministries were developed, such as polyclinics, hospital, schools, bookshop and Bible translation. Further, diverse building projects were undertaken and a growing number of missionaries came to Upper Egypt.<sup>365</sup> This promising period of steady and healthy growth was terminated by the beginning of World War I with the deportation of all German workers in autumn 1914 and the expulsion of the Swiss physician in summer 1915.

During phase three (1915-1924) the SPM was represented by the Nubian evangelist SAH who functioned as a caretaker for the mission property in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu. He tried to continue various activities, especially his translation work into Kunuuzi and became a preacher and elder in the Coptic Evangelical Church in Aswan. After the end of World War I, the main concern was the pressing question regarding the return of the SPM to Aswan. The British government was going to hand over the SPM property to the American Mission. Through a miraculous change of mind within the Board of Trustees of which entity the British government the SPM was allowed to return in 1924.

Phase four (1924-1939) was characterized by the continuation of the work that had to be left in 1914/1915, except for the station in Edfu that had been lost in 1921 for financial reasons. During this period the SPM had the highest number of personnel, was able to expand the medical work and contributed to the scholarly study of the Kunuuzi language. However, the most remarkable development was the opening of the first Nubian mission station south of Aswan in Koshtamne (1926) and later in Gerf Hiseen (1935). Another milestone was the

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<sup>365</sup> Cf the appendix 2 for a complete list of SPM workers in the years 1900-1966.

beginning of the club ministry among Nubian men in Cairo in 1932. Like phase two, this prospering period was terminated by a war, namely the beginning of World War II.

Phase five (1939-1948) is marked by similar features as phase three (1915-1924). The SPM was represented by its Egyptian Evangelical evangelist who took care of the property and conducted home visits and occasional meetings. With the beginning of World War II the Swiss mission (SVEMM) had taken over the sole administrative and financial responsibility for the SPM property and the evangelist. The mission work could be resumed on the basis of an agreement between the Egyptian authorities and the SVEMM in 1948.

Phase six (1948-today) is the longest period of uninterrupted work in the history of the SPM. Due to the delimitation of this study to the year 1966, we will only characterize the work of the SPM from 1948-1966. After the resumption and consolidation of the work in Aswan and Daraw, the SPM started a new polyclinic in Dakke, Nubia in 1951. The place had to be abandoned due to the forced relocation of the Nubians to New Nubia near the city of Kom Ombo, north of Aswan. A last time, the SPM established a physical presence in a Nubian environment in the village Gharb Aswan (1965-1966). When the two female missionaries left the place for health reasons, the work in a Nubian place came to an end. However, the work in Aswan and Daraw continued and was developed.



**Table 7: Historical phases of the SPM work**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Phase one	1900-1904	Inception, exploration, development, internal crisis Aswan, Nubia, Gizaira Schools, colportage, evangelism, Bible translation Terminated by structural problems, inexperienced leadership, colonial policy and interpersonal conflicts
Phase two	1904-1915	Restart, consolidation, expansion Aswan, Daraw, Edfu Schools, evangelism, Bible translation, medical work, literature work Terminated by World War I
Phase three	1915-1924	Limited activities, protection of property through native evangelist Aswan, Daraw, Edfu (abandoned) Evangelism, home visits, literature work, translation work Terminated by permission of missionaries' return
Phase four	1924-1939	Restart, consolidation, expansion Aswan, Koshtamne (abandoned), Daraw, Cairo, Gerf Hiseen Evangelism, medical, educational and linguistic work Terminated by World War II
Phase five	1939-1948	Limited activities, protection of property through native evangelist Aswan, Daraw, Gerf Hiseen Evangelism, home visits Terminated by permission of missionaries' return
Phase six	1948-	Restart, consolidation, expansion Aswan, Daraw, Dakke (abandoned), Gharb Aswan (abandoned) Evangelism, medical work, literature and linguistic work

### **10.3 Modification of the vision**

In this study we have drawn attention to the visionary framework of reaching the unreached of which the SPM had become a part. However, during the various historical stages the SPM modified and narrowed down the initial over-all vision and focus.

### **10.3.1 The Africa vision**

In his early years, Guinness<sup>366</sup> had the intention to go as a missionary to Argentina (Sauer 2005:43-44). After his conversion at the age of twenty and without completing his studies at New College, London, Guinness became an itinerant international evangelist in Europe and North America (Lamb 2000:421; Sauer 2005:313). When he heard H Taylor speak in Dublin in 1866, he was instantly ready to join the China Inland Mission. However, Taylor advised Guinness to engage in training missionaries for the unreached areas of this world (:45). Guinness followed Taylor's advice and started the East London Training Institute in 1873. In the subsequent years he started to focus on the spiritual needs of Africa (:313).

### **10.3.2 The Sudan Belt vision**

More specifically, Guinness' attention was drawn to the Sudan Belt, one of the huge unreached areas in Africa. Subsequently, it became part of his agenda and was given highest priority in 1887 when he started to support the mission project of Salim C Wilson (:313). The end of the Mahdist rule in the northern Sudan in 1898 marked the beginning of a new era. The Nile route was thought to be the most suitable avenue to reach the Sudan Belt. When in 1900 the SPM was started by Guinness and Kumm, it was part of the greater Sudan Belt vision. Guinness was passionate in reaching this unreached area with the Gospel and inspired Kumm with his vision. The so-called Sudan Belt comprised Western, Central and the eastern Sudan. There were other mission agencies that had begun to target the Sudan Belt as well (:311-312).

### **10.3.3 The eastern Sudan vision**

In following their vision, Guinness and Kumm chose the region of the eastern Sudan as the appropriate territory for the SPM. Their target area was the Nile valley from Aswan via Dongola to Kordofan, Darfur and Wadai (Flyer SPM 1900:1). When Guinness and Kumm went to Germany and Switzerland they tried to inspire young people to commit themselves to missionary work in the eastern Sudan (Blum-Ernst 1951:14).

### **10.3.4 The Nile valley vision**

The work of the SPM started in Aswan, as the city was regarded a healthy place and a suitable starting point for using the Nile route to advance to the south (Minutes SPM 25.10.1900:8). The first region to the south that was explored was the Nile valley south of Aswan stretching

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<sup>366</sup> Although only Guinness is mentioned here, the author is well aware that his wife Fanny and his daughter Lucy were deeply involved in the promotion of missionary work.

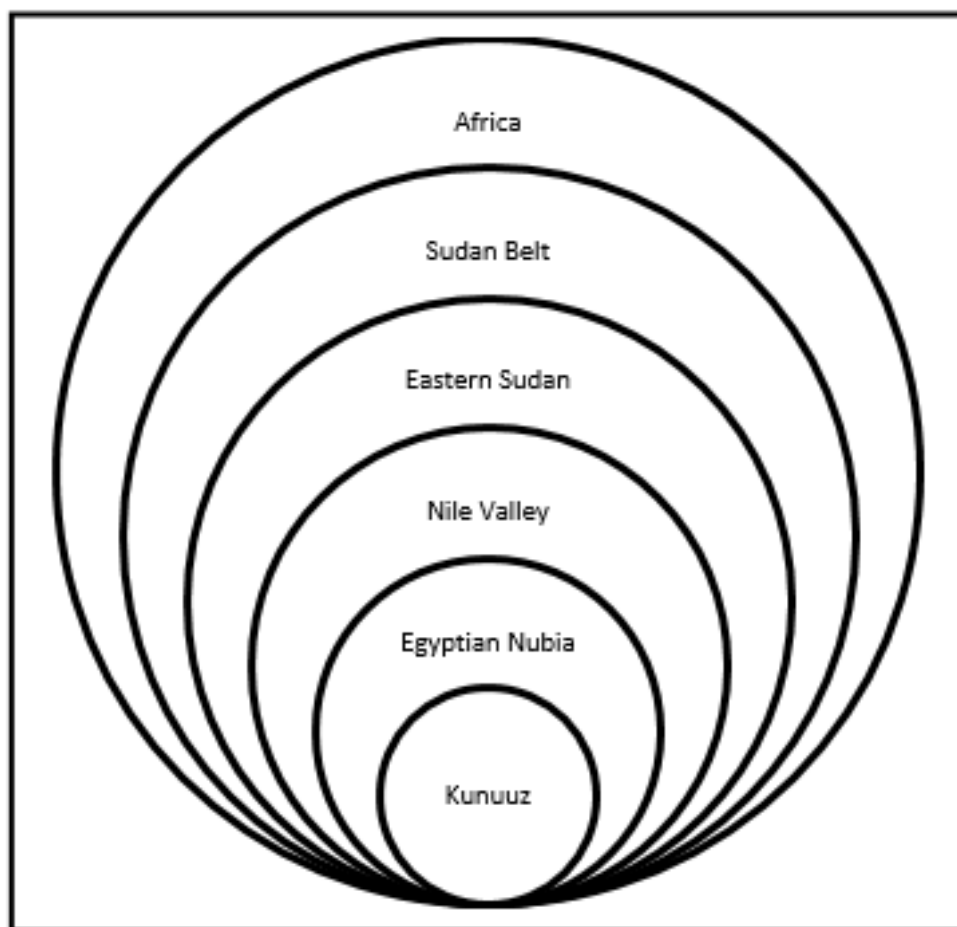
to Dongola. In March 1900, Kumm sent SAH on his first exploration tour through Nubia up to Dongola. The primary purpose of this trip was to explore the receptiveness for the Gospel and the possibility of starting the next mission station in Dongola. The permission was denied by the British authorities since they did not allow missionary work north of Khartoum in the Sudan in order to avoid renewed tensions with the Muslim inhabitants of the Nile valley. Due to internal conflicts between the first German missionary and the Nubian evangelist, no further progress was made during the first phase (1900-1904). It was even questioned whether Aswan should be maintained as a station or abandoned. Suakin, Berber and Fashoda in the Sudan were discussed as new places of ministry (Minutes SPM 21.07.1902; 26.03.1903). In March 1904, the SPM board discussed plans to send the new missionaries to Gallaland in the southern Sudan, but decided to keep Aswan as central base for the future work (Minutes SPM 01.03.1904; Ziemendorff 1903:15). During the second phase (1905-1915) the plans to advance to the south did not materialize although a number of exploration trips were undertaken (eg in 1905 and 1908). Still, the British policy had not changed and the SPM was not successful in its attempts to reach a comity agreement with the American Mission regarding its advance into the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. When during the exploration trip in October and November 1913 the door for a new station Wadi Halfa was opened, World War I thwarted the plans. In March 1914, the SPM board renewed its understanding that the region between Edfu, Abu Hammed, Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur was still regarded as the SPM's mission field.

### **10.3.5 The Egyptian Nubia and Kunuuzi vision**

When the doors beyond the Egyptian borders remained closed, attempts were made to establish contacts with Nubians in Egypt. The first station in Gizaira (1901-1902) was a failure and had to be abandoned. The opening of the stations in Daraw (1907) and Edfu (1911) provided the opportunity for contacts with Nubian settlements in these locations. In addition, the SPM missionaries made occasional visits to Nubian villages south of Aswan. Plans prior to World War I to start medical work on Elephantine Island and in West Aswan and a school in Korrer, close to the Aswan Dam, were not implemented. When the SPM returned to Aswan in November 1924, the SPM board had already reconfirmed the decision of March 1914 regarding its perception of the SPM mission field: Upper Egypt, Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur (Minutes SPM 01.10.1924). In March 1926, the SPM was able to establish its first Nubian mission station in Koshtamne, a Kunuuzi village south of Aswan. In 1935, the station in Gerf Hiseen was opened as Koshtamne had to be abandoned due to the

rising waters of the Nile after the second heightening of the Aswan Dam in 1933. Another extension of the work among Nubians was the opening of the German-Swiss Club for Nubian men in Cairo in 1932. World War II brought an end to all activities among the Nubians. After the war, a new station was opened in Dakke in 1951 and terminated in 1963 when the building of the Aswan High Dam required a complete re-location of the Nubians. The final place that was occupied by the mission was Gharb Seheel (1965-1966), immediately north of the Aswan Dam. Although, the SPM missionaries were in contact with Fadija speaking Nubians the vast majority of their work was among the Kunuuzi Nubians.

**Illustration 9: Modification of the SPM vision**



In the period under research (1900-1966), the SPM never became active in the far regions that were initially taken into focus. Next to the work in Aswan and Daraw its additional focus shrunk to the Nile-Nubians in Egypt which was the minimum target of the original vision.

#### **10.4 Key stakeholders of the Nubia vision**

The study has provided evidence that in every historical phase of the SPM, except phase five, there were key people that continued and promoted the ministry among the Kunuuzi Nubians.

### **10.4.1 Henry Grattan Guinness – visionary and founder of mission agencies**

Guinness and Kumm not only initiated the SPM but also made decisions that promoted the course of the SPM in its ministry towards the Nile-Nubians. Initially, Guinness was looking for a Nubian who was able to teach at the SPM School that wanted to serve Nubian and Bishariyyin children in the first place. When he was surprisingly directed to SAH, a former student at the ELTI, discovered SAH's passion for evangelism among his own people, he agreed with SAH to employ him as an evangelist. After this encounter Guinness left Egypt and withdrew from any involvement on the field; however he continued to promote the vision in Germany and Switzerland and followed SAH's news from his exploration and colportage tour (Guinness 1900).

### **10.4.2 Herman Karl Wilhelm Kumm – pioneer and visionary**

Kumm was the SPM's strongest promoter of the activities among the Nubians as long as he was with the SPM. He respected SAH and developed a trust relationship with him. He saw SAH's potential and planned and together with him prepared the exploration and colportage trip. He ordered literature, helped SAH to prepare the logistic steps for the journey and instructed him regarding the objectives of the journey. First, SAH was instructed to gather geo-economic data on Nubia for future plans of the SPM in the region and for Kumm's academic work. Second, he was to distribute Bibles and tracts in Arabic and the share the Gospel. Third, he was to explore the possibility to start a mission station in Dongola al-Urdi (new Dongola). Forth, H Kumm obviously had encouraged SAH to start translating the Gospel of John into Kunuuzi and to produce some linguistic support tools, such as a Nubian-, Arabic-English glossary. When Kumm became aware of the tensions between the German missionary and SAH when he came to Aswan in spring 1901, he spontaneously instructed SAH to start a new station. The work in Gizaira was supposed to include a school for Nubian children and become a training and sending base for future missionaries to Nubia. However, the adventure in Gizaira north of Aswan eventually failed and had to be closed down. In April 1901 Kumm and SAH went for a short exploration trip to Wadi Halfa which was the first city in Sudanese Nubia under Anglo-Egyptian rule. When Kumm was dismissed from the SPM in October 1902 (cf the detailed discussion in Sauer 2005:230-253) one of the driving forces of the Nubian vision had left the SPM.

### **10.4.3 Samu'il Ali Hiseen – Nubian evangelist and Bible translator**

The presence of SAH was one of the greatest assets for the SPM. By God's provision he became the first and only evangelist among his own people group. SAH was uniquely prepared for his future task in the years 1863-1900 and applied his diverse competencies during his ministry with the SPM until his death (1900-1927).

#### **10.4.3.1 Life prior to joining SPM**

SAH was born in 1863 in Fichchikol, a Hamlet of Abu Hoor in Nubia. He grew up as a social orphan and was raised by his grandmother. At the age of six he left Nubia with his grandmother to Edfu. His compulsory attendance of the Quran School in the city was a repulsive experience. From Edfu he escaped to Lower Egypt and experienced an eventful childhood in Benha, Suez and Cairo. In 1873 he accepted an invitation to go to Switzerland. Initiated by a Swiss Christian industrialist SAH was brought to Europe and educated in a well-known boarding school in Peseux, Neuchatel. The plan of his sponsor was to train SAH to become an evangelist to his own people. During his elementary education he became a Christian, was baptized in 1876, adopted his new name Samu'il and expressed his commitment to be an evangelist wherever God would send him. In 1879, he trained for ministry at the East London Training Institute of Guinness in London and Sheffield. It was Guinness' intention to equip young man for the service in Africa. SAH went to Beirut to study Arabic in order to enter medical school. Necker wanted him to return to Egypt as a medical missionary. In Beirut SAH helped in evangelistic meetings to the Druze. The death of his sponsor required his return to Europe. In 1884, he was sent back to Cairo to work as a teacher. His work in two Christian schools ended in a disappointment. He struggled with the question of why he had trained for ministry but now was left alone and without guidance. Discouraged and pestered by his relatives he returned to his home village in Nubia in 1885. During the following thirteen years SAH was re-socialized as a Nubian. As the only Nubian Christian he lived a simple peasant's life, relearned his original culture including his vernacular and wisely testified to his Christian faith. SAH stood the test and proved to be an influential witness among his own people. After participating as translator in the Mahdi War (1898) and becoming an employee of the Egyptian Postal Service he met Guinness who called him to the ministry with the SPM in the beginning of 1900. SAH was uniquely prepared for his life's calling. It just needed the encounter with Guinness. Two right men met at the right time in the right place. Now the Nubian vision could flourish in SAH.

### 10.4.3.2 Work with the SPM

What was it that made SAH an ideal person to work with the recently founded SPM? SAH was a Kunuuzi Nubian who had received western education and was polyglot. He had become a Christian and had trained for ministry. SAH had kept his faith despite being shaken by his initial disappointing experience with Christian workers in Cairo and by the tempting life in the big city. He was able to re-adapt to his original culture and witnessed to his faith in a non-receptive environment. Most probably, he was the only Nubian Christian who maintained his presence uninterruptedly for thirteen years. His call to serve God that he felt during his baptism continued to live in him as a deep desire that found fulfilment through the meeting with Guinness and his subsequent employment as an evangelist with the SPM. By working with the SPM, SAH was finally back on track and his life story became a meaningful continuation post 1900 of that prior to 1900. SAH had returned to his original calling to evangelize his Nubian people. From the first moment with the SPM until his death, SAH had a never diminishing desire to see Nubians reached with the Gospel. SAH was evangelizing according to his call, education and appointment. In great faithfulness and endurance he was a true pioneer worker to the Nubians. And even beyond his death he was concerned that the inscription on his tomb plate and the cross on his tomb should speak to his fellow men. His contributions were manifold. He was ready to work as a medical assistant and as a gardener. He took over the responsibility for the bookshop and had countless conversations on the Christian faith. SAH worked as an evangelist in Aswan, Daraw and Nubia. He worked as an ambitious and passionate Arabic and Nubian teacher to equip the western missionaries. He was showing clear marks of Christian maturity and endurance by the way he coped with the death of his wife, the abduction of his four children in 1903, the tensions with the first western missionary, the loss of his promising son Abbaas and almost all of his children, and the years of loneliness from 1915-1924. While the writing of his biography responded to the request of the SPM supporters, it also left a written legacy for his Nubian people.<sup>367</sup> SAH's major contribution was in the linguistic field. The production of literacy and ethnographic material provided the SPM workers with useful material. The translation of almost the whole New Testament, Old Testament passages and Bible tracts was groundbreaking, although the use of this material remained limited. It is justified to call SAH the driving force behind the evangelization of the Nubians: he was the first Nubian evangelist speaking the language, knowing the Nubian culture from within and having produced and used the Scriptures in his vernacular.

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<sup>367</sup> The author of this research intends to make the biography of SAH accessible to the Nubians in Arabic.

### 10.4.3.3 Shortcomings of the SPM regarding SAH

The relationship between Guinness and SAH was characterized by mutual respect, affection and appreciation. For Guinness, SAH was the sort of man that was needed (Guinness 1900:2). It equally seems that Kumm had developed an uncomplicated and straight forward relationship with SAH. Based on trust and recognition of SAH's abilities, he put him immediately into a position of direct responsibility only being accountable to him. SAH proved to be reliable during his pre-evangelistic exploration and colportage tour in 1900 and also during the Gizaira project (1901-1902). Unfortunately, with the coming of the first German missionary J Kupfernagel, interpersonal conflicts arose. In Kupfernagel's perspective SAH had to work in a subordinate status under the western missionary. As Kumm was dismissed by the SPM board in summer 1902, his supporting influence was gone. Kupfernagel passed on harsh criticism on SAH to the SPM board in Germany which led a loss of mutual trust between SAH and the board. During SAH's long stay in Wiesbaden (1903-1904) the relationship was restored and never severely affected again. When the new group was sent to Egypt in November 1904, SAH was not sent as a missionary equal with the Germans but as a subordinate assistant (Minutes SPM 01.03.1904).<sup>368</sup> With the exception of the period when the SPM missionaries were absent during World War I and the years beyond (1915-1924) SAH never attained an independent position again. He remained in a subordinate position as an assistant, although well respected by the senior missionaries such as Enderlin, Fröhlich, and Massenbach.<sup>369</sup> This attitude to downgrade indigenous workers even though they were well trained was part of a wider phenomenon among western mission agencies (Sauer 2005:320). It is also worth noting that after Kumm's dismissal the SPM for a considerable time neglected SAH's competence for translating Scriptures into Kunuuzi. Despite the tensions with Kupfernagel and the challenges in the establishment of the Gizaira station, SAH refused an offer by Giffen (AM) and Brown (ABS) to work as a Bible translator for them (:300). It took the involvement of German scholars that helped the SPM to see the strategic importance of SAH and allow him to become increasingly involved in Bible translation work. Thereby he became the first Nubian who put his Kunuuzi mother tongue into writing by translating most of the New Testament books and by writing ethnographic texts.

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<sup>368</sup> Cf Sauer (2005:276-282) on the role of indigenous mission workers in the SPM.

<sup>369</sup> It seems to be appropriate to point towards the fact that especially in phase two (1905-1915) there were only very few contributions by SAH in the SPM journal. Nevertheless, the supporters of the SPM were well aware of SAH's work with the mission and had a sense of his important role. Therefore, they requested SAH to write his autobiography (Hussein 1920:7).



#### **10.4.4 Samuel Jakob Enderlin – missionary and lecturer**

Enderlin was another stakeholder of the Nubian vision. Enderlin was the SPM worker who had the longest service period together with SAH (1903-1927). He was introduced to SAH in November 1903 in Wiesbaden and was taught by him in Arabic language and culture. From the beginning, the two developed a close working relationship that was characterized by mutual trust, respect and encouragement. They together visited supporters in Germany and proceeded together to Egypt in November 1904. SAH was the main teacher and tutor for the young missionaries. Enderlin and SAH started the new work in Daraw in 1907 and undertook a number of exploration tours together (1908, 1913, 1926). Enderlin was introduced to the Nubian language by SAH and supported him in the work on the Nubian primer with D Westermann in Berlin in 1911. Enderlin remained in contact with SAH during World War I and encouraged him during his visit in March and April 1923 on his way to Palestine. After his return to Aswan in November 1924 Enderlin again was taught the Kunuuzi language by SAH. Enderlin remained committed to the Nubian vision which is evidenced by his appointment as lecturer at the School of Oriental Studies in Cairo for Arabic and Nubian languages and history and by the beginning of the club ministry among Nubians in Cairo (1932-1939).

#### **10.4.5 Willy Gerson Fröhlich – medical doctor**

In 1906, the Swiss ophthalmologist W G Fröhlich came to Aswan and developed the medical work in Aswan, Daraw and started missionary-medical visits in the surrounding villages. In the beginning, SAH was his assistant in the clinic and also functioned as interpreter. Fröhlich developed a love for the Nubians and started to learn the Kunuuzi language and was able to communicate with his Nubian patients. In 1909 and 1911 he undertook evangelistic tours through Nubia and combined the medical service with sharing the Gospel to his patients and audience (Fröhlich 1926: 28-32, 81-104). Fröhlich was deported from Egypt in summer 1915, returned to Germany and to Switzerland in 1917. During World War I he stayed in close contact with SAH as they corresponded with each other. When the Swiss branch of the SPM was constituted in the 1920s, Fröhlich became a board member.

#### **10.4.6 Abbaas Samu'iil Ali Hiseen – prospective SPM worker**

Although Abbaas, the son of SAH, was not officially employed by the SPM he had developed a growing vision to share the Gospel with his Kunuuzi kinsmen. In summer 1903, he was kidnapped by his relatives and only returned back to his father in May 1905. In February

1910, he was baptized in the SPM church in Aswan. After his secondary school education he started to study at the theological seminary of the AM in Cairo in 1914. During his vacation Abbaas started to gather Nubian men in a Nubian club and presented to them the Gospel message by reading from the gospels that his father had translated and by interpreting it to them. The SPM saw in him a future worker, however, he unexpectedly died from tuberculosis in January 1918.

#### **10.4.7 Gertrud von Massenbach – missionary and linguist**

G von Massenbach arrived in Aswan in 1909 and was initially working mainly as a teacher. Even prior to World War I she started to get acquainted with the Kunuuzi language. During the long absence of the SPM missionaries in the years 1914-1924 Massenbach began serious Kunuuzi studies that were also stimulated by the Kunuuzi text collection that was published by Schäfer in 1917. After her return to Aswan in 1924, she intensively studied Kunuuzi with SAH and Schäfer during his visit to Aswan in 1925. In 1926, she was leading the team in Koshtamne. Massenbach had developed a large number of contacts with Nubian women and girls and intensively shared the gospel with them. She also produced various articles and one popular book on Nubia. Massenbach continued SAH's legacy in the linguistic field. In the years 1931-1966 she wrote four scientific contributions, such as text collections, grammar introductions and a wordbook. She also transliterated a number of Kunuuzi Bible tracts into Arabic script as most of her audience could not read texts in Latin script. In 1952 she made a linguistic research trip to Egypt and the Sudan and continued her interest in the language until her death in 1975. In this context it is worthwhile to mention G Noack's contribution who had equally studied Nubian and was part of the team that started the work in Koshtamne in 1926. While she was on her home assignment in Germany in 1933-1934, she typed SAH's revised texts of nineteen New Testament books and produced a mimeographed collection.

#### **10.4.8 Elisabeth Herzfeld – medical doctor in Nubia**

When Dr E Herzfeld came to Aswan at the end of 1926, she was privileged to get to know SAH in the final months of his life. She most probably realized SAH's joy about the work in Koshtamne that had been started in March 1926. Although Herzfeld did not join the SPM with an expressed call to the Nubians, she became one of the main stakeholders of the Nubian vision for the next decades. In 1927 she initially went to Koshtamne, but had to return to Aswan in 1930 to take over the medical work of the hospital. During the next years until 1939, she occasionally ventured to Koshtamne, Gerf Hissen and Abu Hoor. In 1950, she was

the first SPM missionary to return to Egypt. As soon as she was able to leave her responsibility in Aswan to Dr E Schmitt, she followed her passion for the Nubians. From 1958-1963 she went to Dakke and from 1965-1966 to Gharb Seheel. Together with the missionary and nurse, Marianne Bühler, she spent many years of work among the Kunuuzi Nubians. They combined their medical service with the sharing of the eternal Biblical truth in the Kunuuzi vernacular. Only some months after they had closed down the station in Gharb Seheel, Herzfeld died in September 1966 from an incurable kidney disease.

**Table 8: Major stakeholders of the Nubia vision**

Phase	Time	Name
Phase one	1900-1904	Guinness, Kumm, SAH
Phase two	1904-1915	SAH, Enderlin, Fröhlich, Massenbach
Phase three	1915-1924	SAH, Abbaas
Phase four	1924-1939	SAH, Massenbach, Enderlin, Herzfeld, Bühler
Phase five	1939-1948	(Rafla Juwakim) <sup>370</sup>
Phase six	1948-	Herzfeld, Bühler, Massenbach

## 10.5 Promoting factors for the Nubia vision

The study has shown that the primary promoting factor in pursuing the Nubian vision was the availability of stakeholders in almost all of the historical phases that have been analyzed. Yet there are additional internal and external factors that reduced and modified the initial vision and promoted the focus on the Nile-Nubians and especially on the Kunuuz in Egypt.

### 10.5.1 Choice of Aswan as a starting location

When Guinness and Kumm came to Aswan the first time in 1899 they fell in love with the city. Aswan was chosen as the starting point for the new venture and was supposed to be the sending station. Although they were not able to buy their preferred plot in the beginning, they rented facilities first and were able to buy the land later. In the early crisis years, the question arose whether the property should be kept or sold and whether the SPM should work in another location. Yet the mission continued in the same strategic location. Aswan, in former times the northern border between Nubia and Egypt had become a place with a high

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<sup>370</sup> Rafla, the Egyptian evangelist and caretaker visited Nubian families during World War II, but due to his different focus in his Christian ministry he cannot be regarded as a major stakeholder of the Nubian vision.

percentage of Kunuuzi and Fadija Nubian inhabitants over the years. Thus, the station in Aswan was perfectly located for approaching the Nubians with the Gospel.

### **10.5.2 Choice of SAH as evangelist**

The employment of SAH as evangelist was strategically the most influential decision by the founders of the SPM. SAH was uniquely prepared for the work among Nubians. Regarding the encounter between Guinness and SAH we can simply state that the right people met at the right time at the perfect place (cf above).

### **10.5.3 Political decisions and developments**

The numerous exploration trips to the south by SAH, Kumm, Enderlin and others clearly show that the initial vision to advance to the eastern Sudan was still alive. However, the colonial policy of the British did not allow a missionary advance beyond the Egyptian border. The SPM missionaries had constantly tried to explore the situation further south in order to advance the work in the Nile valley according to the original vision.

There were two main causes for not being able to proceed to the south beyond the Egyptian border. First, the British directed government of the Sudan did not allow any missionary work north of Khartoum. The colonial policy did not want to risk further unrest in the north and thereby prevented Christian missionary activity in the north of the Sudan. When finally the permission was granted to start a new station in Wadi Halfa in 1913 and hopes for starting later in Dongola had been raised, the outbreak of World War I hindered the realization of these plans.

From time to time the general climate in Egypt against the British rule and influence in Egypt affected the missionary work as well. Public opinion was strongly expressed against all foreigners and was opposing all missionary work.

In 1924 the SPM was allowed to return to Aswan although prior political intentions by the British government and the local authorities did not leave much room for hope. A similar procedure took place after World War II. This time, resumption of the work was possible through the Swiss sister organization in 1948. When after the 1952 revolution in Egypt the anti-western attitude reached its peak and American and English missionaries had to leave the country, the Swiss and German missionaries were allowed to stay on the condition of specific labor regulations. When the Swiss physician G Trüb was refused a work permit in Egypt due to the principle of equal treatment, he went to the Sudan as the first missionary of the SPM in 1954.

#### **10.5.4 Comity agreement with the American Mission**

Despite the fact that the SPM had early tried to come to a comity agreement with the AM with regards to the allocation of a clearly defined mission field, no agreement was reached prior to World War I. The SPM had made three basic statements of intention. First, it was committed not to go beyond Edfu in the north since the city was regarded the northern border of Nubian settlements. Second, it was ready to seriously discuss the establishment of a work among Nubians in Cairo. Third, it planned to open a new mission station in Dongola (Minutes SPM 17.10.1913:185-186).

#### **10.5.5 Invitation to start work among Nubian men in Cairo**

The invitation by the Egypt General Mission to start a ministry among Nubian men in Cairo in 1912 was an indication that the SPM with its well-experienced workers was regarded as the appropriate organization to start such a venture.

#### **10.5.6 Commitment of SPM board to the Nubia vision**

Although the SPM board dismissed Kumm in 1902, it did not abandon the vision of the founders. It was Rev Ziemendorff who was committed especially to the mandate. He inspired the board and kept the mission on course. His frequent visits to Aswan until his death in 1912 helped to stabilize the work and pursue the vision. When the relationship with SAH was at its lowest point in 1903, it was Ziemendorff who helped to restore the relationship and encouraged the board to come to a more appreciative attitude towards SAH and a trust based work relationship with him. The board promoted exploration trips to the south prior and after World War I, requested from its missionaries to study Kunuuzi and was supportive of the linguistic work of SAH and G von Massenbach. The board acted wisely in the critical phase after World War I and was not easily willing to let go of the property and work in Aswan. Against all human reasoning the board kept the vision and was proven correct. After the final news came from London regarding the permission to return to Aswan the board renewed its eastern Sudan vision. The SPM board supported the extension of the work to the south in Nubia proper in the years 1926-1939 and 1951-1966. In the middle of the development of the work in Egyptian Nubia, the board unfortunately took a premature and hasty decision to employ Dr Berg as an evangelist, to integrate Dr Schalck's work among the Kurds in Persia and to change its name into Evangelische Muhammedaner-Mission (EMM). The work among Nubian men in Cairo and Enderlins appointment as lecturer at the SOS were approved. When it was possible again to send Germans to Egypt after World War II the board in Wiesbaden

was immediately ready to send missionaries to Egypt and support the new work among Nubians in Dakke and later in Gharb Seheel.

The work among the Nubians played a prominent role in the periodicals of the SPM: *Der Sudan Pionier*, *Der Pionier*, *Im Lande der Moscheen*, *Wasserquellen*, and newsletters and Prayer information. In addition to these, the autobiography part one and two and the letters of SAH were published. The board was in favor of the scholarly and popular publications of G von Massenbach and the booklets of E Herzfeld and other mission or board members. The supporters and friends of the mission were well informed about the developments of the work through reports by the missionaries, their essays on certain topics and summaries of the board's decisions.

### **10.5.7 Support through German scholars**

The year 1908 marked the beginning of a fruitful cooperation. The SPM was in the fortunate and unique position to be in close contact with leading western scholars in the field of Egyptology and African studies and languages. The leadership of the SPM supported, developed and pursued these contacts. Dietrich Westermann and Carl Meinhof encouraged Christian mission. Both were appointed board members of the SPM. Their contribution to the strategic discussions and the development of the missionary work in Egypt proved to be invaluable. Occasionally they were also invited as speakers at the SPM's main mission conferences in Wiesbaden. When the SPM published the first part of SAH's autobiography in 1920, Meinhof wrote the preface (Hussein 1920:5) and Westermann the epilogue (:128-135). The linguistic work of SAH and his Bible translation efforts could not have been successful without the constant support of H Schäfer (Berlin), H Junker (Vienna), D Westermann (Berlin), and C Meinhof (Hamburg). The relationship between these leading scholars in their respective fields and the mission work of the SPM can truly stand as an example of a successful symbiosis of science and mission.

### **10.5.8 Support by the Swiss Mission**

After the SPM work had begun in Upper Egypt and Nubia, Guinness and Kumm visited Germany and Switzerland for support of the new venture. During their visit at the Bible school St Chrischona, Switzerland, they contacted Zimmerlin and Enderlin who both became SPM missionaries in 1904. Zimmerlin was the first Swiss missionary of the SPM, followed by W Fröhlich.<sup>371</sup> The support base for the SPM work in Switzerland steadily increased through

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<sup>371</sup> A list of all other Swiss missionaries during the period under research is provided in Appendix 3.

the church visits of the missionaries and the activities of L Rubli who was a preacher and former fellow student of Enderlin at St Chrischona. During World War I, SAH was fully supported by the Swiss friends of the SPM. The financial support coming from Germany and Switzerland was transferred to Egypt via the Swiss branch of the SPM. In 1923, L Rubli established a Swiss committee of the SPM in order to strengthen the relationship of the Swiss friends with the SPM. In 1928 Rubli was appointed inspector of the Swiss branch. As the transfer of foreign currency via Germany became increasingly difficult since 1933, the Swiss branch again took over the financial responsibility for the work. In 1935, the Swiss branch constituted itself as an independent organization under the name Schweizer Verein für Evangelische Muhammedaner Mission (SVEMM - Swiss Society for Evangelical Muhammedan Mission). In 1937, an agreement between the EMM und SVEMM under the leadership of the Basler Mission was settled (Moor 1993). With the beginning of the World War II the Swiss mission was alone responsible for the work in Egypt. In 1947 A Blum-Ernst took over the field inspector position and restarted the work in Egypt through negotiations (Blum-Ernst 1950:69-74). Rubli and Merklin, who had become the inspector of the SVEMM in 1950, had identified themselves with the vision towards the Nubians as they had experienced the pre-World War II phase through visits and through the missionary work from 1930-1939. When Merklin came to visit Egypt in 1952, he made an exploration trip with E Schaffner to Nubia and the Sudan to prepare the situation for a possible end of the work in Egypt. Georg and Maja Trüb went to the Sudan from 1954-1979 being the first workers of the former SPM to work in the Sudan.

### **10.5.9 Lack of human and financial resources**

When the SPM was allowed to return to Aswan in 1924, the SPM board still regarded the Nile valley up to Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur as part of their mission field. However, the lack of personnel and finances prevented any practical steps to send missionaries and occupy the area.

### **10.5.10 Diminishing vision**

After World War II, the vision for the Sudan and Egyptian Nubia was still alive; however, the concentration had shifted clearly to the institutionalized work in Aswan and Daraw. Although a new mission station was prepared in Dakke at the end of 1951, generally it seems that the Nubian vision was fading and the work among the Kunuuzi Nubians was left to the senior missionaries.

## **10.6 Contribution of this study**

This study has contributed to the historiography of interdenominational faith missions particularly the German-based *Sudan Pionier Mission* (SPM). The history of the SPM has not received much attention in scholarly literature so far with the great exception of the dissertation of C Sauer (2005) who analyzed the initial years of the SPM (1900-1904). In this study we have presented a concise historical description of the SPM work in Egypt from 1900-1966 in the context of the twentieth century mission history in Egypt. However, the main contribution of this research lies in the fact that it draws a clear picture of the SPM's development into a mission among the Kunuuz, a subgroup of the Nile-Nubians. The period under research was limited to 1966 when the last SPM missionaries returned to Germany ending almost three decades of physical presence in Nubia. Yet, at the heart of this thesis lies the presentation of the comprehensive life story of Samu'ill Ali Hiseen (SAH), the first Kunuuzi Nubian evangelist in modern times who has almost been forgotten on mission historiography. His preparatory years (1863-1900) prior to his work with the SPM and the years of his ministry with the SPM (1900-1927) are presented and analyzed. Further the various aspects of his multifaceted ministry are summarized and a special focus is given to the literary and linguistic contribution of SAH. He translated almost all books of the New Testament and some Old Testament passages into his Kunuuzi Nubian mother tongue. For the first time, his translation work is presented in a precise chronological order. Further, the importance of his production of extensive ethnographic and literacy material in his vernacular is highlighted. To complement this study, we have presented the missionary methods used by SPM missionaries in their work among the Nubians and how they were employed by the key stakeholders of the Nubian vision, Enderlin, Massenbach and Herzfeld who continued the legacy of SAH and promoted the Nubian vision of the SPM with variant emphases.

## **10.7 The SPM as mission to the Nubians – unique features**

This study has brought to light some unique features of the SPM regarding its involvement with the Nubians, features that led to its recognition as “Nubian Mission”.

### **10.7.1 The SPM – “first” mission agency among the Nile-Nubians**

There is no evidence that there was any mission organization in modern times prior to the existence of the SPM that displayed a clear focus in their work to reach the Nile-Nubians as a



distinct ethnic group.<sup>372</sup> The inhabitants of Egypt were basically seen as adherents of Islam or nominal members of the Coptic Orthodox Church or any other traditional Christian church.<sup>373</sup> The primary focus in their earlier missionary work lay on Coptic Orthodox Christians or/and Muslims in general. The centers of these organizations were mainly in Lower Egypt<sup>374</sup> and in the cities al-Minya and Assiut, in Upper Egypt. The Nubians in Alexandria, the Delta, the Canal cities, such as Port Said, Suez or Ismailia were regarded as part of the Muslim community. It can be assumed that the missionaries of St Chrischona during their *Apostle's Road Project*, the American Mission and the Church Missionary Society may have been in contact with individual Nubians in Egypt and the Sudan, but no specific ministry among the Nubians is reported. The only distinct effort to bring the Nubians in contact with the Gospel was made by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) when they printed a special edition of the Gospel of Mark in Nobiin in 1885. The Gospel was first published by K R Lepsius in 1860 and then reprinted by the BFBS for distribution through the Anglo-Egyptian army during the war against the Mahdists in the late nineteenth century. When the agents of the BFBS realized that the Gospel that was printed in Latin script could not be read and understood by the majority of the readers they re-wrote the whole Gospel in Arabic script and printed the first edition in Alexandria in 1899. When, after initial reservation, the Nobiin speaking Nubians in Lower Egypt received the gospel edition with growing appreciation a second edition was published in 1906 (Lauche 1998:127-133). Nevertheless, the distribution of the Gospel was not part of a planned strategic approach towards the Nobiin speaking Nubians. There is hardly any evidence for any *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Gospel.<sup>375</sup> Thus, the Sudan Pioneer Mission was the *first* mission organization that designed and shaped its work to a large degree in such a way that it had a clear focus on the Nile-Nubians.

### 10.7.2 The SPM – “only” mission agency among the Nile-Nubians

The American Mission (AM) was the largest mission in Egypt. It was followed in numbers of the missionaries by the Egypt General Mission (EGM) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). As the AM regarded Egypt as “their mission field”, comity agreements with the

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<sup>372</sup> Cf 3.3.

<sup>373</sup> Cf the description of the various churches in the Middle East by Betty Jane Bailey & Martin Bailey (Bailey & Bailey 2003).

<sup>374</sup> The development of the Evangelical missionary work in Lower Egypt in the nineteenth and twentieth century has been compiled and described for the first time by Rev E Troeger in 2013 (Troeger 2013).

<sup>375</sup> Single copies of the Gospel were kept individually or circulated in a photocopied version. The first copy of the Arabic version of the Gospel of Mark was shown to me by Dr Abdel Masih Istefanous, the former director of the Egyptian Bible Society, in the mid-nineties. Cf also 8.3.1.1 regarding an incident when a copy of the Gospel was identified in Aswan in the market place by a mother tongue speaker.

remaining organizations were reached. In the beginning, the SPM was only accepted with apprehension and regarded as intruders by the AM. The AM had started work in Luxor and even in Aswan. It organized evangelistic campaigns with a *dahabiyya* (house boat) in the villages along the river Nile between Luxor and Aswan. The SPM owed its freedom to exist to the promise that it would only work among Muslims, particularly among the unreached people groups of the Nubians and Beja. The crisis years (1901-1904) affected the reputation of the SPM and the trust relationship with the other organizations. After the new beginning (1904) the work developed well and the profile of the SPM became visible. Rev Ziemendorff and Enderlin succeeded in their efforts to establish a trust relationship with the other organizations. The SPM's profile as a mission to Muslims and particularly towards the Nile-Nubians was recognized and appreciated. When the organizations in Lower Egypt and Cairo recognized the presence of thousands of Nubian workers in the capital they invited the SPM to start a specific ministry among them (Hohenlohe 1914:22). The SPM was acknowledged as *the Nubian Mission* (Unruh 1950:23) due the geographical location of its center in Aswan, the presence of SAH, his linguistic work, the ongoing evangelistic ministry among the Nubians and the constant attempts to extend the work further south into Nubia proper. During the time under research, the SPM was the only organization that prepared Bible texts in Kunuuzi for publication. After the death of SAH, G von Massenbach continued in the linguistic footsteps of her teacher. She collected and published Nubian ethnographic material as well as grammar sketches and dictionaries for the Kunuuzi and Dongolaawi languages. She also contributed to the publication of Bible tracts for distribution among Kunuuzi Nubians. After World War I and the return of the SPM missionaries Enderlin was appointed lecturer for Arabic at the School of Oriental Studies, the four Nubian dialects and Nubian history in 1932. At the same time he was welcomed to start a ministry among Nubian men in Cairo as he established a Club for Nubians in down town Cairo. Although Enderlin saw the urgent need for a combined effort of various organizations to reach out to the Nubians the SPM was left alone in its efforts that were terminated with the beginning of World War II. After the war the work in Cairo was not resumed. Yet, the SPM continued as soon as possible its work in Nubia proper, in Dakke (winter 1951) and in Gharb Seheel (1965), until it had to terminate its physical missionary presence in Nubia in 1966, due to the health conditions of the primary stakeholders of the Nubian ministry, E Herzfeld and M Bühler. Thus, the findings of this research have clearly shown that the SPM had remained the *only* western mission agency reaching out to the unreached people group of the Nile-Nubians during the period under research.

### **10.7.3 The SPM – not exclusively a mission among Nubians**

The majority of contacts of SPM missionaries with Nubians were with Kunuuzi speaking Nubians. The SPM workers established only occasional and peripheral contacts with Fadija speaking Nubians south of Aswan and in the club ministry in Cairo. However, it is necessary to state that the SPM was not exclusively a mission to the Nubians. The teams in Aswan, Daraw and Edfu offered their medical and educational services to all people regardless of their social, educational, religious and ethnic background. It is even fair to say that the majority of SPM missionaries were more involved in ministries to non-Nubians than to Nubians. Thus, it is important to differentiate that, while the SPM became the first and only mission that was committed to sharing the Gospel with the Nile-Nubians, it did not do so at the exclusion of others. The SPM did not become a mission only to the Nile-Nubians.

In summary, the SPM was initiated to minister to the unreached people groups in the eastern Sudan using the Nile route as access path. The Nile valley between Aswan and Dongola, Kordofan and Darfur was considered by the SPM as “their” mission field until the beginning of World War II. Due to the fact that the Anglo-Egyptian administration did not allow missionary work in the northern Sudan and no comity agreement was reached with the American Mission, the SPM started to focus on the Kunuuzi Nubians in Egypt south of Aswan and in Cairo. The SPM became the “first” and “only” mission to the Nubians in the years from 1900 to 1966.

## **10.8 Topics for further research**

This study has described the various phases in the history of the SPM from 1900-1966. However, the main focus was put on the development of the SPM into a mission among the Nile-Nubians. Therefore a variety of aspects in the SPM history are still in need of further research.

In the beginning years (1900-1912) the SPM was mainly consolidated and shaped by Rev Th Ziemendorff, its chairman and his family. So far, their role has not yet received sufficient attention and is still waiting to be researched.<sup>376</sup>

Furthermore, it still remains an unresolved question what or who made the Board of Trustees in London agree to the return of the SPM to Aswan in the year 1924. After World War I the British government was determined to prohibit the return of the SPM to Upper

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<sup>376</sup> SPM inspector J Held provided in his SPM history a good summary of Ziemendorff’s contribution to the SPM work (1925:47-62).

Egypt. What was the role of Zwemer, Gairdner, the American Mission and the Nubian petition in the negotiation process?

It would be meaningful to examine the development of the relationship between the German and the Swiss branches of the SPM and their successor organizations from 1923-1988.<sup>377</sup>

Another subject that has never been studied is the position of the SPM towards the Nazi regime and the Jewish question during the years 1933-1945.<sup>378</sup>

There is also a need to research the legacy of Samuel Jakob Enderlin and Gertrud von Massenbach who were both students of SAH and major stakeholders of the Nubian vision.

## 10.9 Concluding remarks

The SPM has seen its work first of all as an act of obedience to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. Priority was given to the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. The educational and medical service was seen as an appropriate avenue to share the love of God in a practical way complementing the verbal message. The translation of the word of God into Kunuuzi Nubian was encouraged and promoted. The SPM board urged as many missionaries as possible to receive an introduction to Kunuuzi Nubian and the subsequent study of the language. The cooperation with leading scholars in the field of Egyptology and African studies and languages was much encouraged and proved to be of great benefit for the work of the mission among the Nile-Nubians. Although the receptiveness of the Nubian listeners towards the Gospel varied a lot, the SPM continued its work faithfully understanding it as sowing the seed, especially among girls and women. A harvest was not excluded but also not expected as imminent. However, after World War I the possibility of planting churches of believers from Muslim background among the Nubians was considered. In line with the understanding of western missionary work, preference was given to the individual approach versus the group approach. Regardless of the fruitlessness in terms of individual conversions or church planting, generations of SPM missionaries have been obedient to God's mandate and loyal to the SPM without seeing much fruit.<sup>379</sup> Despite the fact that the SPM was not able to see a Nubian church being planted through its ministry, the ongoing ministry today is based on the sacrificial life of generations passed. Their moderate lifestyle, their endurance in the

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<sup>377</sup> Moor (1993) has presented a study that deals with the establishment of a field commission between EMM, SVEMM and the Basler Mission in the years 1937-1939 after the Swiss branch of the SPM had become independent in 1935.

<sup>378</sup> Cf E Spohn (2014) who investigated the history of the German faith missions during the period of National Socialism regarding their accommodation, affinity and resistance.

<sup>379</sup> According to the records, four baptisms took place in the SPM church between 1910 and 1932.

scorching heat of the Nile valley, their witness through the proclamation of the Gospel and the loving touch through medical, social and educational work have led to a longstanding trust relationship between the Nubians and the SPM. As today's successor organization of the SPM has continued its geographical proximity to the Nubians it has a historical and missional responsibility to continue its service to the Nubians. May future generations of missionaries be granted by the grace of God to bring in the harvest for the glory of God and the lamb that was slain to save people from all ethnic groups including the Nile-Nubians.

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EMO, Walkmühlstraße 8, 65195 Wiesbaden, Phone +49-611-40 39 95, Email: Info@EMO-Wiesbaden.de

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- File 5: SAH's translation of NT books, handwritten Kunuuzi manuscripts
- File 6: SAH's translation OT texts, handwritten Kunuuzi manuscripts
- File 7: SAH's literacy material, Christian texts, diverse NT texts
- File 8: SAH's translation of the four Gospels, handwritten Kunuuzi manuscripts
- File 9: SAH's ethnographic texts, typed Kunuuzi manuscripts

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EMO, 19 Sh. Corniche el-Nile, Aswan, Phone +20-97-230 21 76

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## Appendix

### 1 List of SAH's Nubian letters to Schäfer and Junker

Letter No	Addressee	Place of writing	Date	Original in EMO archive	Pages in Schäfer
1	Schäfer	Aswan	27.05.1909	X	238-241
2	Schäfer	Aswan	09.01.1910	X	241-245
3	Junker	Aswan	27.01.1919	X	245-246
4	Junker	Aswan	10.03.1919	X	247-248
5	Schäfer	Aswan	12.06.1910	X	248-252
6	Schäfer	Aswan	13.08.1919	X	252-255
7	Junker	Aswan	15.08.1919	X	255-256
8	Schäfer	Aswan	27.07.1911	X	256-259
9	Junker	Berlin	11.09.1911	X	259-260
10	Schäfer	Wiesbaden	10.10.1911	X	260-261
11	Schäfer in Nubien	Wiesbaden	14.11.1911	X	261-265
12	Schäfer in Nubien	Aswan	23.12.1911	X	265-267
Postcard 13	Schäfer in Cairo	Aswan	14.01.1912	X	267

## 2 List of workers in Egypt (1900-1966)

### 2.1 SPM workers 1900-1904

Girgis Ya'quub	1900-1902
Zamerida Ya'quub	1900-1902
Samu'iil Ali Hiseen	1900-1927
Johannes Kupfernagel	1901-1904
Martha Kupfernagel	1901-1904

### 2.2 SPM workers 1904-1915

Samuel Jakob Enderlin	1904-1939
Leopold Edmund Zimmerlin	1904-1909
Elisabeth Gonnermann	1904-1939
Willy Gerson Fröhlich	1906-1915
Annie Fröhlich	1906-1915
Rizk Girgis	1907-1914
Lina Götte	1907-1939
Heinrich Weil	1909-1912
Gertrud von Massenbach	1909-1939
Gertrud Noack	1911-1939
Charlotte Wolter / Rippert	1912-1931
Edgar Schäfer	1912-1914
Irma Pauer	1912-1914
Detwig von Oertzen	1913-1914
J. von Oertzen	1913-1914
Olga Kinnert	1913-1914

### 2.3 SPM workers 1924-1939

Jakob Enderlin	1924-1939
Lina Götte	1925-1939
Gertrud von Massenbach	1924-1939
Gertrud Noack	1925-1939
Jakob Rippert	1925-1931
Hermann Schönberger	1925-1930
Dr. Alfred Kallenbach	1926-1930
Frau Ruth Kallenbach geb. Siebel	1926-1930
Dr. Elisabeth Herzfeld	1926-1939
Mar Küster	1926-1930
Frieda Pohl	1926-1935
Frau Hanna Schönberger geb. Gebhardt	1927-1930
Ilse von Dewitz	1927-1935
Christa Farradsch	1927-1939
Frau Margarete Küster geb. Miller	1928-1930
Lina Marthaler	1928-1935
Diakonisse Charlotte Weimann	1928-1939

Apothekerin Käthe Gauer	1930-1939
Hans Merklin	1930-1939
Elisabeth Leuthold	1931-1935
Walter Mueller	1932-1939
Anna Faust	1932-1939
Frau Olgi Merklin geb. Berber	1932-1939
Helene Gerhardt	1933-1939
Margarete Lieferung	1933-1937
Willy Höpfner	1933-1939
Marianne Bühler	1934-1939
Christine Hahn	1935-1939
Lily Gsell	1936-1939
Frau Martha Mueller geb. Ratz	1937-1939
Frau Lotte Höpfner geb. Wawersick	1938-1939

## 2.4 SPM workers 1948-1966

Lily Gsell	1948-1973
Käti Nigg	1948-1973
Rösli Kirchhofer	1949-1952
Erich Schaffner	1949-1962
Gretli Schaffner	1949-1962
Elisabeth Herzfeld	1950-1966
Olgi Brunner	1950-1952
Klara Peter	1950-1965
Alfred Nyesh	1951-1953
Zita Nyesh	1951-1953
Georg Trüb	1952-1954
Maja von Salis-Trüb	1952-1954
Elisabeth Behnke	1952-1956
Edith Ukena	1954-1962
Margarethe Zorn	1955-1989
Elfriede Schmitt	1956-1989
Eva-Maria Weichert	1959-1980
Eberhard von Dessien	1959-1967
Edith von Dessien	1960-1967
Dora Giese	1957-1964
Maria Meister-Sarofim	1960-1964
Anneliese Bienert-Süß	1963-1966
Irma Nübling	1965-1988
Elfriede Neumann	1965-1990
Margarethe Richter	1965-1978
Eberhard Troeger	1966-1975
Brigitte Troeger	1966-1975

### **3 List of Swiss Missionaries (1900-1966)**

Leopold Zimmerlin	1904-1909
Willy Fröhlich	1906-1915
Annie Fröhlich	1906-1915
Lina Marthaler	1928-1935
Elisabeth Leuthold	1931-1935
Olgi Merklin	1932-1939
Käti Nigg	1948-1973
Lily Gsell	1936-1939; 1948-1973
Rösli Kirchhofer	1949-1952
Erich Schaffner	1949-1962
Gretli Schaffner	1949-1962
Olgi Brunner	1950-1952
Clara Peter	1950-1965
Alfred Nüesch	1951-1953
Zita Nüesch	1951-1953
Georg Trüb	1952-1954

### **4 List of Mission Chairmen (1900-1966)**

Theodor Ziemendorff	1900-1912
Wilhelm Ziemendorff	1913-1948
Rudolf Bars	1948-1970
Walter Störmer	1970-1977
Helmut Albig	1977-1984
Helmut Golimbeck	1984-1987
Klaus Strub	1987-2012
Markus Müller	2012-today

### **5 List of Mission Inspectors (1900-1966)**

Johannes Held	1913-1931
Hans-Georg Feller	1931-1936
Margarete Unruh	1937-1959 (home)
Emmanuel Kellerhals	1937-1947 (field)
Willi Höpfner	1959-1975 (home)
	1969-1975 (field Egypt)