

## Preface to the Arabic edition of *Sudanese Ethics*

We live in a world where an amazing number of different cultural traditions come into contact with each other. And a state like the Sudan, like most African countries, is the home of an amazing number of cultures, different from the neighbouring cultures in certain ways and similar to them in other ways. In order to be able to live and work together in a state and a world like that, we have to understand each other. Hence the importance of analytical studies of the existing moralities in the Sudan and in the world at large. The developments of the last few decades have served to underline that point. Therefore, I am extremely grateful to Dr. Ahmed el-Mahdi for having undertaken the task of translating this work on Arabic ethics as I found it in the Sudan when I lived there some time ago into Arabic, thus making it available for the public at large.

I also express my deep gratitude to the three people without whose cooperation I could not have written this book. In the book, they are referred to as “Ali”, “Ibrahim” and “Osman”. Their real names are Ahmed Abdel-Rahim Nasr, Muhammad al-Hasan Abu Zaid and Abd al-Rahman Masri. The first of them is now a well-known scholar in the field of ethnology and folkloristics. I have lost track of Masri, but I do hope that a copy of this book will reach him, wherever he is, maybe somewhere in Saudi Arabia. Abu Zaid is unfortunately dead. After leaving the university he worked as a school teacher in the Sudan and Yemen before joining the administration of the University of Khartoum.

I dedicate this book to all my friends in the Sudan.

University of Bergen, Norway,  
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Tore Nordenstam