

Review Paper

The Sudan's dimensions: A country divided by ethnicity and religion

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The words ethnic group and religion have been greatly controversial in world politics and especially in the developing world. This has been evidenced in the world that the word ethnic group and religion have created civil unrests within many countries and not just on the African Continent. This means that the communities which based their lives on ethnic groups have a different view of the term than the non-ethnic group communities. This is due to the fact that ethnic group and religion are perceived to be a legitimate cause for the group struggles to gain power or to be recognized. Therefore, this article analyzes the significance of ethnic group and religion involvement in causing conflicts in Sudan. It should be noted that many people used the term ethnic group and religion to achieve their common interests when they deemed that these terms would draw more support within their groups when using ethnic group and religion as a bottom line of their gains in national or local politics.

Key words: Sudan's dimensions, case study analyses, Darfur- and Northern Sudan's relationships, Southern- and Northern Sudan's relationships, Sudan's ethnic vs. religion relationships.

INTRODUCTION

An examination of case study analysis is a combination of diverse means and activities that are dedicated to understanding and explaining case study process and behaviour of significant actors in the national and international system. This is due to the fact that case study analysis is broadly used in a conflict analysis to provide real world scenarios which help us to understand the nature of a conflict in one context. This means that case study emphasizes detailed contextual analysis that is limited to a number of events or conditions and their relationships. In this context, ethnic group is defined as a group of people who identified themselves with one another or are being identified by others on the basis of their presumed cultural or biological similarities (Assefa, 1996).

In analyzing Sudan's dimensions, this discussion will focus on three regional relationships which tell us how far the Sudan's dimensions had gone. These three regional relationships on the Sudan's dimensions are: Darfur- and Northern Sudan's relationship; Southern- and Northern Sudan's relationship; and Sudan's ethnic vs. religious relationship. However, the main argument of this article is that Sudan's dimensions are caused by people's aspirations for economic survival. In order to understand Sudan's dimensions, a case study analyses was selected to examine these dimensions of the Sudan. The reason

for choosing a case study analysis was that ethnic groups' dimensions in Sudan are a very interesting subject to look at on the ground of contextual analyses. This makes historical context more important for us to look at before analyzing these issues. Even though historical context does not often resolve problem before hands, it does give us a better understanding of the problem.

BRIEF HISTORY OF SUDAN

Historically, Sudan's name comes from the Arabic word, which is called "Bilad al-sudan" or land of the blacks. Sudan is known as the Kingdom of Cush that was first ruled by the Kingdom of Napata from 1000 to 270 BC. The Sudan's second ruler was the Kingdom of Meroe who ruled from 270 BC to 350 AD, which attained global historical significance (Beshir, 1968). However, in the 8th and 7th centuries BC, Cush conquered Egypt and in the 25th dynasty ruled a kingdom stretching from the Mediterranean to the sources of the Nile. The rulers of Napata called themselves pharaohs and had their own written language. Since the evolution, Sudan is now referred to as the "Republic of the Sudan" (Duncan, 1957, p. XV). By the geographical map, Sudan is located in Northeastern Africa. Sudan is bordered on the North by Egypt; on the

Egypt; on the East by the Red Sea, Eritrea and Ethiopia; on the South by Kenya, Uganda and Zaire; on the West by the Central African Republic and Chad and on the Northwest by Libya (Beshir, 1968). Sudan is the largest country in Africa. It has an area of 966,757 square miles or 2,503,890 square kilometers, which represents more than 8% of the African continent.

A geographical location often gives us a way to understand what is going on in other part of the world (Hill, 1984). Sudan is very clear about its location, but its borders are complicated because of the ethnic groups' locations that often moved to other sides of the borders (Global Security Organization, 2004a). For instance, Darfur is a territory composed of three states: North, South and West Darfur. Darfur is located in the Northwestern region of Sudan, bordering Chad to the West, Libya to the Northwest and Central African Republic to the Southwest (Global Security Organization, 2004a). The people living on both sides of the 1,000 kilometer-long borders between Chad and Sudan have much in common.

This border region is divided into three ecological bands: desert in the North, which is part of the Sahara and the least densely populated and most ecologically fragile zone; a central, fertile belt which includes the Jebel Marra mountains and is the richest agriculturally and the Southern zone, which although more stable than the North, is also prone to drought and sensitive to fluctuations in rainfall (Barnett and Abdelkarim, 1991). All regions in the Sudan are very complex like Darfur and this is where the problems of the country lie. Sudan regional complexity has played a vital role during the colonial period when the country was struggling to become an independent state, which was granted by the colonial power according to parliamentarian wishes.

On December 19, 1955, the Parliament voted unanimously that Sudan should become a fully independent sovereign state. British and Egyptian troops left the country on January 1, 1956; the same day a five man Council of State was appointed to take over the powers of the governor general until a new constitution was agreed (Duncan, 1957). However, two years later, on 17 November 1958, a bloodless army coup led by General Ibrahim Abboud toppled the Government of al-Azhari. Upon assuming power, however, General Abboud declared that he would rule through a thirteen-member army junta and that democracy was being suspended in Sudan in the name of honesty and integrity (Country Study and Guide, 1991). Abboud was thinking that the country would be ruled as a secular state which would accommodate all ethnicities in the country, but in 1983, the Numieri's government introduced the Islamic Sharia law to Sudan that led to a new breakout of civil war in the Christian south. In the south, Dr. John Garang de Mabior led the rebellion forces and these forces were named the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) (Woodward,

1991).

The rebellion by the SPLA was a struggle for an identity when they saw that their black African identity was going to be replaced by the Islamic identity (Mabior, 1992). This statement should not be confused with the SPLA objectives though. It is obvious that the SPLA was a result of protest in refusing the installation of the Sharia Law when the Muslim Law was established in 1983 by Nimeiri's regime (Mabior, 1992). This indicates that the introduction of the Sharia Law caused civil unrest in the country where the ethnic groups were beginning to define themselves. The definition and boundaries of ethnic groups depend on how people perceive themselves and others. Sometimes, language, cultural characteristics and common ancestry may be used as markers of ethnic identity or difference, but they do not always define a group of people (Country Study and Guide, 1991). The distinction between Sudan's Muslim and non-Muslim people has been one of the most considerable and important divisions in the country's history and it have provided a preliminary ordering of the ethnic groups. It does not, however, correspond in any simple way to distinctions based on linguistic, cultural or racial criteria nor to social or political solidarity (Jackson, 1954).

Furthermore, in recent years of economic aspirations, ethnic groups have become the main key of struggle in which people express their dissatisfaction with the government when there are high stakes based on ethnic groups' desire. Indeed, the general census of 1956 has recorded 597 ethnic groups and about 400 languages spoken, because some ethnic groups have similar languages (Voll, 1991). As a result of so many ethnic groups in the country, the way to formulate the system of laws becomes complicated. Those who had the advantages of education before everyone else did took the opportunity to formulate the country's legal system to enable them to execute whatever they wanted. Therefore, it can be argued that this formulation of the country's legal system in one ethnicity's favor is the cause of the confusion in the country (Barnett and Abdelkarim, 1991). Furthermore, the political aspirations that often contribute to the policy making of a nation unity are still lacking in Sudan. The political identity of groups has created division among the Sudanese communities over who has the right to define the system of law, since the political structure of each ethnic group contributes to the creation of a unified system.

This confusion of political structures of ethnic groups has contributed to the power struggle among the Sudanese communities (Wischmeyer, 2004). As a result, the Darfurians have defected because their rebellion was caused by injustice and reinforced by the institutions that have marginalized and subjected them to the rule of laws which they have no say in it at all. However, there is more to be said than just not having a say in the legal structures (Barnett and Abdelkarim, 1991). In these circum-

stances, however, the real problem in the Darfur region is classes' struggle for power, even though this statement may sound like Marxist ideology, there is a sense of it in Sudan's crisis of Darfur. The government of Sudan has been using the strategies of eliminating those who claim that the government of Sudan is treating citizens unequally. Indeed, there are some reasons to believe that border crossing has complicated some issues in Sudan's crisis of Darfur (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2004). Although the border crossing has not influenced the government policy of elimination, there is a sense of it in the current crisis. From this brief survey of Sudan's historical and geographical context, it will give us a sense to understand what is going on right now in the Darfur region.

DARFUR AND NORTHERN SUDAN'S RELATIONSHIP

In order to gain a proper understanding of the Darfur and Northern Sudan's relationship, it would be useful to get a sense of the background to the conflict in the region which has resulted in territorial claims. The clashes between the non-Arabs and Arabs have been going on in the region for centuries. These differences could be summed up as the ethnic groups' struggle for natural resources in the region (Barnett and Abdelkarim, 1991). However, there is more to be said about ethnic groups' struggle for natural resources. There have been several cases of the region's ethnic groups' straddling both sides of the frontier between Chad and Sudan. Historically, there has been significant migration and trade across the border (Badal, 1986). While the region's peoples are mostly Muslims, they are diverse groups ethnically, linguistically and culturally and this has played a significant role in border crossing. There are two methods often used to describe the ethnicities in Darfur such as a language and occupation; each has been used for sometime to distinguish each indigenous group from the others.

Sudan has two distinct major cultures, the Arab and Black-African, with hundreds of tribal divisions and language groups, which makes effective collaboration among them a major problem (Global Security Organization, 2002). And even by climate itself, Sudan is divided between the Arab and Black-African, in which the Arabs live in desert areas, while the Black-Africans live in tropical areas. There is a sense that indigenous non-Arabs or African peoples historically do not speak Arabic at home and came to Sudan from the Lake Chad area centuries ago (Ehret, 2001). However, those claiming the Arab descent are Arabic speakers. Another classification that distinguishes each group from the others is agriculturalists versus pastoralists. Pastoralists are people who make a living from herding animals and selling their products, such as animal skins, meat and milk. But agri-

culturalists are those who use industrial intensive technologies to produce food and market crops within a metropolitan area (Ehret, 2001). While there are some overlapping between the two descriptions, there are also important nuances between them. It has been asserted that Darfur's sedentary agriculturalists are generally composed of non-Arab or African ethnic groups known as "Zurga" or blacks that include groups such as the Fur, Masaalit, Tama, Tunjur, Bergid and Berti, who lived and farmed in the central zone (United States Department of States, 2004). As a result of diverse ethnicities in the region, Darfur has been affected by intermittent attacks of conflict for several decades.

On the other hand, pastoralists from the North, including the Northern Rizeigat, Mahariya, Zaghawa and others, typically migrate South in search of water sources and grazing in the dry season which usually occurs in November to April of each year (Global Security Organization, 2002). Since the mid-1980s, much of the Sahel region was hit by recurrent episodes of drought and increasing desertification. There was no doubt that the Southern migration of the Arab pastoralists provoked the land disputes with the agricultural communities. These disputes generally started when the camels and cattle of Arab nomads trampled the fields of the non-Arab farmers living in the Central and Southern areas of Darfur (Ehret, 2001). Some scholars have mentioned that the disputes were resolved through negotiation between traditional leaders on both sides, but compensation for lost crops and agreements on the timing and routes for the annual migration was not resolved.

In the late 1980s, however, clashes became progressively bloodier through the introduction of automatic weapons. By 1987, many of the incidents involved not only the Arab tribes, but also Zaghawa pastoralists who tried to claim land from Fur farmers and some Fur leaders were killed (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004b). The increase in armed banditry in the region also dated from this period, partly because many pastoralists lost all their animals in the devastating drought in Darfur of 1984 - 1985 and, in turn, raided others to re-stock their herds. There were also contentious political issues in the region (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004b). In Darfur, Arab tribes considered themselves not sufficiently represented in the Fur-dominated local administration and in 1986, a number of Arab tribes formed what became known as the "Arab alliance" (Tujammo al Arabi) aimed at establishing their political dominance and control of the region. Meanwhile, Fur leaders distrusted the increasing tendency of the federal government to favor the Arabs (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004b). As a result of this mutual distrust, political detention of people who were non-Arabs began because they were suspected of being rebel supporters. A good example of this is a claim made by the delegations from the Nuba Mountains that:

Inmates are kept there against their will, they are forced to work for low wages or no wages, men are forced to become members of the People's Defense Forces (PDF), women are raped, and children have their identities changed. It is all part of the program for dismembering Nuba society ... It is also widely held that the peace camps are kept as a human shield' to discourage SPLA attacks (Ruiz, 1998, p. 167).

There is no doubt that the Arabs were furious; because they had been attacked by the people whom they believed deserve no rights at all. Arabs from the Northern Nile Valley controlled the central government since independence in 1956. The government was suspicious that the local will dislocate the Arabs in most areas if they do not do more to protect the Arabs. Regardless of the peace agreement between the Southern rebels and Northern government which called for unity, there is a great skepticism that peace will hold for long.

Furthermore, the fear of the Arab domination was exacerbated by the Sadiq El Mahdi government (1986 - 1989) policy of arming the Arab Baggara militias from Darfur and Kordofan known as "murahileen" (Ruiz, 1998, p. 144). Murahileen were similar to the militias currently involved in the Darfur conflict. Murahileen were a militia based in Darfur, employed by the El Mahdi government and its military successors for almost twenty years as a counterinsurgency force against the Southern-based rebels, the SPLA (Ruiz, 1998). The SPLA forces were partially drawn upon from Dinka, Nuer and Shilluk, just to mention a few of these ethnic groups. One of the differences in this fighting was that the Sudanese government recruited volunteers to fight in the Southern Sudan on the basis of jihad. This was a religiously sanctioned war against the non Muslim Southerners such as Dinka, Nuer and Shilluk just to mention few examples (Ruiz, 1998). In Darfur, in contrast, the communities under assault are Muslim, but that has not proved to protect them from the same abusive tactics inserted by the government of Sudan before against the Southern rebels.

In 1988 - 1989, the intermittent clashes in Darfur evolved into full-scale conflict between the Fur and Arab communities. The situation also developed a more political character, a pattern that was to be repeated numerous times throughout the 1990s (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004b). Rather than working to defuse the tensions and implement peace agreements which would have resolved the problem, (the tables turned). The Khartoum (Sudan) government has inflamed tensions by arming the Arab tribes and neglecting the core issues underlying the conflict over resources.

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(Human rights Watch Organization, 2004b). This means that the ignorance of this region by the Khartoum government had encouraged many Darfurians to take up arms against the Khartoum control of the region. Since the conflict in Darfur intensified, the communities under attack, namely the Fur, Masaalit and Zaghawa, have begun to identify themselves as African and marginalized, at the same time. This new identity is in contrast to earlier self-definitions as the Sudanese or Darfurian (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004a). They have increasingly seen the attacks on their communities by the Sudanese government as racially and ethnically motivated ones which need to be addressed by the International Community. In this case, the rebels were intensifying their rebelliousness against the Khartoum government so that their cases can be heard loudly at an international level.

Moreover, the intensity of the conflict in the region between the government troops and the rebels could be related to the struggle of natural resources in the region. This conflict which began early in 2003 when the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebels attacked government forces and inserted their authority on Darfurians was a major conflict in the region (Plaut, 2004). The government of Sudan was caught by surprise and had very few troops in the region because the majority of their troops were in war torn Southern Sudan. This was a claim by the government of Sudan regarding the crisis in Darfur. There were good numbers of troops around in Darfur though, but they did not respond well (Mulama, 2004). The complication of the troops was that large proportions of the Sudanese soldiers in the region of Darfur were Darfurians and the governments distrusted them, were suspicious that they might be involved in the revolt against it controls of the region (Mulama, 2004). As a result, the government responses were to mount a campaign of aerial bombardment supporting ground attacks by an Arab militia, the so-called Janjaweed, who were recruited from local tribes and armed by the Sudanese government. The Commissioner of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says that more than 50,000 people have been killed in recent conflict alone in Darfur (Sudan Net Press, 2004b).

The conflicts in Sudan have a long history to which they can all be related to each other in one way or another. There is a sense that all conflicts in the country have a political basis which also has acquired an ethnic dimension, with civilians being deliberately targeted on the basis of their ethnicity, as well as an economic dimension related to the competition between pastoralist Arabs and non-Arab farmers for land and water uses (Human Rights Watch Organization, 2004a). To this extent, I would simply say that Sudan as a country is on the verge of collapse because it has failed to deal with its diversity. We have seen from the evidence of the rebellions in Darfur

by which the Arab government in Khartoum got furious and used strategies of eliminating the non-Arabs in the region (Sudan Net Press, 2004a). Even though most Darfurians are Muslim and could be considered as being Arabs, this has not been the case in the current conflict in the region.

SOUTHERN- AND NORTHERN SUDAN'S RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between the Southern and the Northern Sudan has always been dominated by conflicts. These conflicts can be associated with the policy implemented by the colonist administration (Abd al-Rahim, 1969). However, this is just one variable of the problems in Sudan because there are many variables that could be argued in relation to the Southern and Northern Sudan's conflict. This suggests that during the Anglo-Egyptian rule, Northern and Southern Sudan were administered as two different entities. Abd al-Rahim mentioned that "The British government policy was to make each province as self-contained and independent as possible" (1969, p. 73). With this policy, there was little autonomy in the South in which the governors of the three provinces could not regularly attend the governors' annual meeting in Khartoum, but could have their own gatherings in the South and keep in touch with their opposite members in Kenya and Uganda. Albino observed that the British regarded the Southern troops as a valuable counterweight to Arab (Egyptian) influences in Northern Sudan (1970). These troops continued to be the sole military force in the South until replaced by Northern units following the 1955 mutiny and subsequent uprising in the South.

It is very clear that the British secret policy in Southern Sudan was to build up a series of self-contained racial and tribal units with structural and organizational bases (Albino, 1970). To this extent, the question we should be asking is why did this policy fail to succeed in Southern Sudan? To answer this question, there are many ways one could discuss this policy. But one reason is obvious; Southerners were pursuing the wide range of interests which jeopardized the government policy of secession. It was clear that Southerners were not having unified interests as has been the case in the past up to the present. From 1930 to 1947, the government policy was to maintain the South separately from the North. Abd al-Rahim mentions that the letter sent to officials in Sudan was the main statement of official policy and read that:

It is the aim of the Government to encourage as far as impossible (Christian) Greek, and Syrians traders rather than the Gallaba, type for instance Muslim Arabs from northern Sudan. Permits to the latter should be decreased unobtrusively but progressively, and only the

best type of Gallaba, whose interests are purely commercial and pursued in a legitimate manner should be admitted (1969, p. 76).

The limitation of Gallaba trade to towns or established routes in Southern Sudan was essential. The British government was concerned that these Gallaba would change the dynamics of the Southerners. Abd al-Rahim observed that the "myth of rapacious Arab slave traders has been used to embitter relations between the North and the South" (1969, p. 13). However, there was a notion that the Arab administrator feels and behaves more like a foreigner in the South than did the British. These actions fueled the sentiment among the Southerners toward the Northerners in Sudan.

The Southern Sudanese struggling against the Northern Sudanese had always been an issue in every mind of the Southerners and not only the rebellion in 1983, which lasted for 22 years of civil war. O'ballance mentioned that "Ali Abdul Latif, a Dinka officer, founded the Sudanese United Tribes Society, which called for independence, but he was imprisoned in the following year" (1977, p. 32). The real question that should be asked here is why does nationalism motivate ethnic groups to seek independent power? There are many ways one could look at this causes, but the logic idea surrounding nationalism is that it gives people an opportunity to have whatever they want. However, the introduction of Islamic Law (Sharia) in 1983 was recipe for the further civil unrests in the country (Woodward, 1991). The Southerners were really troubled by this move because the majority of their people are not Muslim or Christians, but can easily go along with Christians because there were not forced to accept what they do not like. As a result, the Southerners were really outraged by the installation of the Sharia Law, because their traditional permits them to have wine, while the Islamic Law prohibited such and therefore the Southerners were having a hard time in applying the Sharia Law in their daily life (Woodward, 1991). The installation of Sharia Law encouraged many young Southerners to join the rebellion because they believed that their fundamental right was violated.

The problem of Sudan has a long history, which is more than just simply what is seen in the contemporary world's politics viewpoints. The relationship between the Southern and the Northern Sudan was mostly ruined by the past experiences that could be related to the slavery period. Jackson also quoted a Nuer man saying that:

We Nuer are free men and do not want to have anything to do with your government or any other government. You Turks are slaves. We go naked, but you, with your clothes, are only the servants of the government. Look at that policeman in his uniform. That is a sign of servitude. He must do whatever the government orders him to do

(1954, p. 151).

The actions taken by some ethnic groups in Southern Sudan have further escalated hostilities among the Southerners. However, there are universal commonalities among the Southerners in which they could agree on Jackson that civilized and uncivilized communities have at any rate one thing in common such as unwillingness to pay taxations (1954). Although it was common among the Nuer and the Dinka to raid each others cattle as a part of their lives, it was not in a large scale, but now it has become bigger wider spread in the twenty first century.

The relationships between the Southern and the Northern Sudan were damaged by the Anglo-Egyptians' policy of appeasement. It is much cleared from those policies that the rivalry between ethnics in sub-region of the country was a result of those policies, because many Sudanese ethnic groups were not informed about the fact of being ones (Albino, 1970). It becomes apparent from Gordon, a Governor of Equatoria Province, from 1873 to 1876, who forced other ethnic groups to accept the view of one ethnic group. Gordon was always forcing people to accept the Dongolese as allies in his dealing with the hostilities among the Southern Sudanese especially Equatorians. Gordon acknowledges the problems faced by Southern Sudanese when he stated that:

If we conquered the country we would at least in some measure benefit the conquered; but here I cannot say I see the least chance of the country being improved or the people benefited; the civilizers are so backward themselves that they cannot be expected to civilize others (Albino, 1970, p. 13).

And when Sudan became independent, the Arabs took up the power and with bitter memories of the past on both sides, sought to behave in a manner which they believed would frighten Southerners into submission. This was a miscalculation by the Arabs because power itself does not deter human beings from good without a room to breathe out.

The Arabs in the Northern Sudan have always used the strategies of dividing Southerners on the basis of ethnicity (Albino, 1970). The question that the Southern Sudanese should have asked themselves is that; who is next on the line when we have eliminated the current target ethnic group. To illustrate this point, using an example heard a long time ago. The story goes like this: it was a history between fox and ducks when the fox line up the ducks into three lines. After the fox has lined up the ducks, he started killing the ducks on the right line and he told the ducks on the other two lines that, he was dealing with this line only and not other lines. The ducks did not figure out what would be the ultimate result when the first line was finished. This is like what Arabs told some Southern ethnic groups that you are good people;

you are not like other ethnic groups who are opposing the government of Sudan, while knowing that these people are seeking freedom of oppression and marginalization.

The 1972 Agreement can work as an example of why so many Southerners are skeptical about the Arabs' approach to southern Sudan's problems (Woodward, 1991). The agreement was presumed to be a solution between the South and the North; however, Nimeiri dismantled the agreement when he said that the Addis Ababa Agreement was not a Quaran, which cannot be changed. This statement underpins the assumption which Northerners had held about the Southerners. It is evidenced from this statement that the Northerners see the Southerners as those who cannot play any political role in the country because they are primitive (Albino, 1970).

SUDAN: ETHNIC'S VS. RELIGION'S RELATIONSHIP

Sudan is partially divided into three camps such as: Muslims, Christians and non-religious groups. These groups have waged wars against each other and within each group; there has also been many conflicts regardless of their religious affiliation. During those conflicts, it has become apparent that ethnicity is more valued and trusted than religion. Albino has pointed out that the geographical, climate and ethnic differences between the South and the rest of the country are considerable and have given rise to political opposition between the two parts (Albino, 1970). Indeed, such differences were reinforced when the Anglo-Egyptians rule the country. The Europeans on the other sides were appeasing the Arabs so that they kept Egypt under control and therefore the Muslims were more respected than those of African descent. Hill observes that:

The Muslim religion of government and people effectively barred social contacts between reputable Muslim women and European men who, unless they brought out their wives from their countries of origin, which few did, had to make do with Galla or Southern Sudanese girls, for which the men survived (1984, p. XXIV).

The interests of the Europeans were translated into a religious affair in which Southerners were seen as people of one identity and not people with different identities.

The application of religions in the country has indeed become an issue across the regions. It was obvious that an establishment of potential trade in Southern Sudan was one of the issues for which missionaries competed. Sandersons observed that the Catholics in contrast had established themselves in the South with remarkable speed and efficiency, but this was nothing to the Government of Sudan (1981). This ignorance continues to harm the Southerners and even though the Southerners began to associate themselves with Christian as their identity.

This suggests that ethnicities and racial differences constitute the root causes of the problems which have beset Sudan.

Nowadays, it appears that the Africans of Southern Sudan have not only realized the need to retain their identity and dignity, but see a clear-cut difference between their aspirations and those of the Arabs (Albino, 1970). These aspirations of ethnic groups have divided Sudan beyond anyone's imagination because each group is striking to benefit and be heard. Albino noted that these relations existed before independence, and yet there were no clashes between the Africans and the Arabs, simply because they were kept at arm's length from each other by those who wielded political power (Albino, 1970). These notes sum up our argument that Sudan's mismanagement of ethnicity is the core of the problem in the country and as a result of this mismanagement; economic prosperity has entered into the theatre of ethnic groups' aspirations.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this analysis, one would maintain that ethnicity and racial differences between the Southerners and the Arabs in Sudan constituted the roots of conflicts in the country. All ethnicities in Sudan have contributed greatly to what has gone wrong in the country. Even though some ethnic groups have a long history of rivalry for which they have complicated each other; for example, Nuer and Dinka have long history of rivalry since they were hunter-gatherers and up to modern life. One would simply say that Dinka and Nuer should not be looked upon as a major problem that set Southerners back from struggle. It is believed that all ethnic groups in Southern Sudan are responsible for what had taken them decades to achieve. The politicians in Sudan do not tell the truth; instead they used ethnicity and religion as a road to power. If the politicians in Sudan stood up and said this is wrong, one would assume that Sudan would not have been as vulnerable as it was. This allows suggesting that all ethnic- and religion groups in the Sudan would hold the blame on the destruction of Sudan. This is because an assumption of the ethnic groups' aspiration for economic survival tells them to look for what would benefit one's own group rather than a collective benefit.

In January of 2005, the Government of Sudan and SPLA signed a peace deal. The agreement includes a permanent ceasefire and accord on wealth and power sharing. This peace agreement seemed to have resolved the conflict between the North and the South, but according to my understanding of the country ethnic groups' dimensions, the future of the country remains bleak. This is due to the fact that there are many militants who wanted to go on with their own ways of acquiring resources for living. Acquiring resources indicate that ethnicity is

going to be the next major issue in Sudan's politics. During the several conflicts in Sudan, it has become apparent that ethnicity is more valued and trusted than religion.

For this reason, the next few years to come, Sudan will be facing a disintegration of ethnicities in the country because every ethnic group wanted an independent or regional power, while in those regions; there are many ethnic groups who do not go along with each other. Even though the current crisis is resolved, there is still a high probability that a new conflict will rise in any region of the Sudan because of ethnic groups' interest. It may sound like a realist when emphasizing ethnic groups' interest as a major cause of the future conflict in the Sudan, but I am just predicting the reality that will face the country in the near future. There are realities of course that ethnic groups' interest are going to dominate Sudan's politics in next decades to come and an example of those issues can be seen from the previous conflicts and the current political affairs of the Southern Sudan.

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