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ETHNICITY AND NATION BUILDING: SOUTH SUDAN

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DECLARATION

I declare that the research on Ethnicity and Nation Building: South Sudan is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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DEDICATION

To my husband Simon Akuei Deng and family who stood by me during the period that I was working on this project.

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This project would not have been possible without the input of the following people to whom I am deeply indebted. First, I acknowledge my university supervisor Dr. Anita Kiamba who gave me the focus and direction on how to go on about the project.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

AMIS	-	Africa Mission in Sudan
AU	-	African Union
CPA	-	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
GOSS	-	Government of Southern Sudan
JEM	-	Justice and Equality Movement
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
ROSS	-	The Republic of South Sudan
ROSSLA	-	Republic South Sudan Legislative Assembly
SPLM/A	-	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army

ABSTRACT

South Sudan seceded from the Northern Sudan to become a formally independent state on 9 July, 2011 after a referendum between 9th and 15th January 2011, which was held to determine whether South Sudan should be declared independence from Sudan. Despite this overwhelming breakthrough where 98.83% of the population voted for independent including those living in the north and expatriates living overseas, certain disputes still remain, such as sharing of the oil revenues, as an estimated 80% of the oil in the nation is secured from South Sudan, which would represent amazing economic potential for one of the world's most deprived areas. The purpose of this study was to find out whether ethnicity is a barrier to nation building in the current South Sudan. Primary data was gathered from Government Officer, Social/Political Activists, Non-Governmental Organization NGOs, members of the General Public. Secondary sources of data include analysis and review of published books, journals, papers, periodicals, and unpublished works; Government documents including policy documents and Session Papers, media sources and the internet. The study found out that the widespread suspicion of ethnicity-based exclusion from the national platform and other aspects of South Sudanese national life have resulted in tragic consequences for national unity, human life, and development programs. The main stumbling block to a long lasting peace and unity is ethnic strife and rivalries. For instance, ethnic relations in the city of Juba have been extremely volatile due to accusations that the Dinka, South Sudan's largest ethnic group, have dominated the government.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

South Sudan seceded from Sudan to become a formally independent state on 9 July, 2011 following a referendum between 9th and 15th January 2011, which was held to determine whether South Sudan should be declared independence from Sudan.¹ Despite this overwhelming breakthrough where 98.83% of the population voted for independent including those living in the north and expatriates living overseas², certain disputes still remain, such as sharing of the oil revenues, as an estimated 80% of the oil in the nation is secured from South Sudan, which would represent amazing economic potential for one of the world's most deprived areas.³

The confronting and fighting a common enemy (Northern Sudan) has been more important in defining South Sudan nation than have internal dynamics of unifying around a positive common denominator (shared ancestry, language and destiny). Presently, relations between ethnic groups in South Sudan remain tense, and the short independence period has already seen outbreaks of violence in the contested area of Abyei⁴, as well as a public spat over the division of oil revenues.⁵

The major ethnic groups present in South Sudan are the Dinka at more than 6 million (which is approximately 70 percent of the total population), the Nuer (who are approximately ten percent

¹Fick, Maggie, "Over 99 pct in Southern Sudan vote for secession". *USA Today*. Retrieved 30 January (2011).

²Karimi, Faith, "Report: Vote for Southern Sudan independence nearly unanimous". *CNN*. Retrieved 2 April (2011).

³Ibid Pg, 103.

⁴Johnson, (2011)

⁵Geschiere, Peter, *The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Africa and Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.(2009).

of the total population), the Bari, and the Azande. The Shilluk constitute a historically influential group along the White Nile and their language is fairly closely related to Dinka and Nuer. The traditional territories of the Shilluk and the Northeastern Dinka are adjacent to each other.⁶ There are over 60 indigenous languages spoken in South Sudan. Most of the indigenous languages are classified under the Nilo-Saharan language family; collectively, they represent two of the first order divisions of Nilo-Saharan (Eastern Sudanic and Central Sudanic).

The other languages are the Ubangi languages of the Niger–Congo family, and they are spoken in the southwest. And therefore inter-ethnic warfare that in some cases predates the war of independence is widespread.⁷ In December 2011, tribal clashes in Jonglei intensified between the Nuer White Army of the Lou Nuer and the Murle. The White Army warned it would wipe out the Murle and would also fight South Sudanese and UN forces sent to the area around Pibor.

Questions of nationality and nationalism are thus of great political importance to South Sudan because the ability to define the contours of the nation and thereby the conditions of citizenship are key instruments for political entrepreneurs to gain or hold onto power⁸. The situation mirrors similar occurrences in most of the African states since at least the 1980s where most of the states have been deficient to such an extent as to inspire a litany of academic attributes attachment to the idea of the nation which seems to persist regardless of the state's performance.⁹

⁶ Andrew Simpson, *Language and National Identity in Africa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.(2008).

⁷ James, Wendy, *Sudan: Majorities, Minorities, and Language Interactions*, Oxford University Press.(2009).

⁸ Dorman, Sara, Daniel Hammett and Paul Nugent (2007), Introduction: Citizenship and Causalities in Africa. Leiden: Brill.

⁹ Young, Crawford (2007), Nation, Ethnicity, and Citizenship: Dilemmas of Democracy and Civil Order in Africa *States and Citizenship in Africa*, Leiden: Brill, 241-264.

There have been extraordinarily war-related deaths in the range of 2 million¹⁰ and displacing even larger numbers of people in South Sudan since the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement.¹¹ What had initially been a war between the government of Sudan and the SPLA has also become a war between different Southern factions when the SPLA split in 1991.¹² This South–South war has further led to a more rigid conception of ethnic identity as the warring parties resort to presenting the war as being fought between Dinka and Nuer, two of the South’s largest ethnic groups.¹³

The issues of integrating the mosaic of different peoples found within the new country has since remained a big issue. Nearly a hundred different ethnic groups speaking over sixty indigenous languages live in South Sudan.¹⁴ Within this demographic mix, there are an undetermined number of nomadic South Sudanese groups of Arab descent who seasonally populate small portions of the western territories. Durable stability might be sustained by the country’s division into ten states along South Sudan’s three historical territorial delimitations (Bahr el Ghazal, Equatorial and the Greater Upper Nile).¹⁵ However, it is questionable how far the South

¹⁰Leitenberg, Milton (2006), *Deaths in Wars and Conflicts in the 20th Century*, Cornell University Peace Studies Program, Occasional Paper, 29, 3rd ed., Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

¹¹Nyaba, Peter Adwok (1997), *Politics of Liberation in South Sudan*, Kampala: Fountain Books.

¹²Rolandsen, Øystein H. (2005), *Guerrilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*, Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.

¹³Hutchinson, Sharon E., and Jok Madut Jok, Gendered Violence and the Militarization of Ethnicity: A Case Study from South Sudan, *Postcolonial Subjectivities in Africa*, London: ZedBooks, (2002).Pp 84-107

¹⁴Amos, Angele Benson (2011), Streets in Yei River County to Get Native Names, in: *People’s Voice*, January, online: <www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1699:streets-in-yei-ri>

¹⁵Stephen, Juma John, Equatoria Conference Calls for Federal System of Governance, in: *gurtong.net*, 19 April, online: <www.gurtong.net/EC_M/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/Article_View/mid/519/article_Id/5121/Equatoria-Conference-Calls-For-Federal-System-Of-Governance.aspx> (29 September 2011).

Sudanese national identity has solidified since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the North in 2005.

The combination of a fragile national identity, strong tribal allegiance and large amounts of weaponry remaining from years of conflict have all contributed to civil violence and the marginalization of certain groups in the state. The recent clashes witnessed between Lou Nuer militants and South Sudanese soldiers in Pibor County indicate the present degree of division within the country. Efforts by South Sudan President Kiir to end cattle-rustling in Jonglei state have gone unheeded, and confrontations have escalated into a full-blown political and humanitarian crisis that has already displaced 50,000 people, according to the UN.¹⁶

For many decades, the identity of South Sudanese has been a negative one “not-northerner” or not-Arab.¹⁷ This perhaps has been a useful uniting factor in a long liberation struggle, but now for a newly independent nation it is inadequate and even dangerous because people are now beginning to look on their tribes as supposed to national. The main glue that binds the country’s multiple ethnicities together is the history of their struggle for freedom and collective opposition to the north. The most recent phase of this struggle long and hard, under the leadership of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) was an experience that transcended ethnic boundaries, emphasizing unity of purpose during the war.¹⁸ At independence, the country has found itself with only a hazy notion of a collective national identity beyond its unified opposition

¹⁶The International Republican Institute, *Survey of South Sudan Public Opinion*, 6-27 September, online: <[www.goss-\(2011\),online.org/magnolia.Public/en/news/press/mainColumnParagraphs/0111114/content_files/file/IRI%20South%20Sudan%20Public%20Opinion%20Survey%20\(September%202011\).pdf](http://www.goss-(2011),online.org/magnolia.Public/en/news/press/mainColumnParagraphs/0111114/content_files/file/IRI%20South%20Sudan%20Public%20Opinion%20Survey%20(September%202011).pdf)> (25 April 2012).

¹⁷Abd al-Rahim, Muddathir (1969), *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan: A Study in Constitutional and Political Development, 1899-1956*, Oxford: Clarendon Press

¹⁸Ibid Pp, 98.

to the North, making its viability as a nation a matter of speculation. Given the history of internal political rivalries along ethnic lines and insecurity, the state's ability to immediately provide the highly anticipated peace dividends and fruits of independence has remained threatened.¹⁹The purpose of this study will be to find out whether ethnicity is a barrier to nation building in the current South Sudan.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

When South Sudan became independent on 9 July, 2011, many people had gladly hoped that the newly independent country's foundation would be built on principles of ethnic equality, democracy, rule of law and federalism. There was much optimism about the future of South Sudan. Many nationals had hoped that South Sudan would become a paradise of equality; justifying their argument on the belief that the people of South Sudan had bitterly struggled for equality in the old Sudan for over fifty years. It was strongly perceived that since these people struggled for ethnic equality for more than five decades; they would definitely be in a position to manage ethnic diversity in a way other African countries failed to do.

The argument is that people who have long struggled against the imposition of Arabism and Islamism in the once consolidated state of Sudan could not end up having a government that would behave like successive Khartoum regimes that treated ethnic Africans in general as second-class citizens and the people of South Sudan in particular as third-class citizens.

¹⁹ Ahmed, Einas, The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Dynamics of Post-Conflict Political Partnership in Sudan, in: *Africa Spectrum*, (2009), Pp,44, 3, 133-147

There is divergent opinion as to whether tribalism is destined to be a persistent feature of South Sudan that should be represented in a separate chamber or whether it may weather over time and be replaced by a nationalism that transcends tribal allegiance. Frahm's examined debates about *national identity in the media landscape of post-referendum and post-independence South Sudan* by analyzing opinion pieces from South Sudanese online media from January to September 2011 and placing them in the context of contemporary African nationalism²⁰.

Ole on *Nation building in Nascent South Sudan – How to Remember the War* observed that the processes of national identity formation in post-colonial Africa have typically followed a similar trajectory in form of a state-led top-down proclamations of inclusive nationalism combined with oppression of alternative, mostly ethnic loyalties, resurgence of ethnic sentiment, rise of discourses of autochthony and exclusionary politics of belonging²¹. While Jok reported on *state building in South Sudan* by focusing on how the new state could manage its cultural diversity with a view to bringing all its ethnic nationalities.²²

However, little attention has been given to the influence of ethnicity on nation building in country whose consequences has been characterised by tribal, clan and sectional favouritism being witnessed in the newly independence state and policy of ethnic domination which has since become the manifesto of the ruling clique. The current study therefore is aimed at assessing this developing phenomenon and its impact on nation building in South Sudan. This study thus

²⁰Frahm Ole, *Defining the Nation, National Identity in Southern Sudanese Media Discourse in Africa Spectrum*, ISSN 0002-0397. GIGA Institute of Global and Area Studies (2012).

²¹ Ole Frahm, *Nation building in Nascent South Sudan – How to Remember the War* Department of Social Sciences Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany(2013)

²²JokMadutJok (2011) *Diversity, Unity, and Nation Building in South Sudan*. Special report, United States institute of Peace. Washington, DC 20037

seeks to address the question; how has ethnicity been a barrier to nation building in the current South Sudan?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study is to assess the extent to which ethnicity among the communities has derailed nation building in South Sudan.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. Examine the extent to which ethnicity has been entrenched among the communities in South Sudan
2. To analyse how ethnic affiliation determine the allocation of job opportunities in the government institutions in South Sudan
3. To determine the extent to which ethnic conflicts among communities in Southern Sudan has affected nation building.
4. To establish the efforts by the government in turning South Sudan cultural diversities into national assets to achieve nation building

1.4 Literature Review

This section reviews other materials from academic writings of other scholars that describes the issues of nation building and then look at the phenomenon of nation building in Sudan in relation to ethnic affiliation in the independent Sudan.

According to Ignatieff, civic nationalism upholds that the nation should be composed of all those

regardless of race, color, creed, gender, language, or ethnicity who subscribe to the nation's political creed. This nationalism is called civic because it envisages the nation as a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values.²³ Civic nationalism is necessarily democratic, because it vests sovereignty in the entire citizenry. It also has the greatest claim to sociological realism most societies are not mono-ethnic; and even when they are, common ethnicity does not of itself obliterate division, because ethnicity is only one of the many claims on an individual's loyalty.²⁴

Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, claims that an individual's deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen. It is the national community that defines the individual, not the individuals who define the national community. This may be more psychologically compelling, Ignatieff suggests, but it is sociologically less realistic. Ethnic regimes are, on the whole, more authoritarian than democratic, as common ethnicity, by itself, does not create social cohesion or community, and when it fails to do so, as it must; nationalist regimes are necessarily impelled toward maintaining unity by force rather than by consent.²⁵

Both the social contract and popular sovereignty tacitly assume the existence of a pre-political cultural community, and reflect norms that tend to say much more about the way in which people should order lives within given national communities than about why the boundaries of these communities should take one shape rather than another.²⁶ Defenders of the distinction have

²³Ignatieff, M. *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. Toronto: Penguin. (1994)

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ ibid

²⁶Smith, A.D. (2002) When is a Nation? *Geopolitics* 2 (7), 5–32.

generally responded to Yack and other critics by invoking Smith's qualifying claim that, as ideal types, their descriptions are not required to directly correspond with the real world, and that in practice all nations reflect a mix of civic and ethnic characteristics.²⁷

While the flaws of Ignatieff's explicitly normative account of "good civic" and "bad ethnic" nationalisms may be relatively obvious, even Smith's more carefully developed analytic version is mistaken.²⁸ The retreat to ideal types does not solve the problem of abstraction because it still maintains that the tenets of civic and ethnic nationalist ideologies accurately reflect the constitutive character of nations. In fact, even though these ideologies are important and often reflected in citizenship policy, national symbols, and participant self-understandings, the basis of nationhood is the systemic cultural relationship that underlies that participation. Nations are perceived and justified through ideologies limited only by the imagination, but it is a mistake to assume that there is a direct correspondence between the two.

The nation building process is completed when a nation is recognized by the international society whose legal forum is the United Nations. The principle of Self-determination should not be in practice in today's world. All domestic minority groups are ethnic groups, not nations or nationalities. They are parts of the pluralist unity of their nation. The international society or any given country should not encourage any of these domestic ethnic minority groups to launch nationalist separatism and seek independence. Of course, it is possible that one country might encourage an ethnic group to launch a separatist movement, even a civil war in another country,

²⁷Tonkin, E., McDonald, M., and Chapman, M. Introduction – History and Social Anthropology (1989) pp. 1–21

²⁸Smith, A.D. (2000) *The Nation in History*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

in order to seek its own strategic goals or practical interests. This kind of action is selfish and very harmful to the target country as well as world order. Nation-building entailed the efforts of newly-independent nations, particularly the nations of Africa but also in the Balkans,²⁹ to redesign territories that had been carved out by colonial powers or Empires without regard to ethnic, religious, or other boundaries.³⁰ These transformed states would then become viable and coherent national entities.³¹

Nation-building embraces the creation of national paraphernalia such as flags, anthems, national days, national stadiums, national airlines, national languages, and national myths.³² At a deeper level, national identity needed to be deliberately constructed by molding different ethnic groups into a nation, especially since in many newly established states colonial practices of divide and rule had resulted in ethnically heterogeneous populations.³³

However, many new states have since been plagued by "tribalism", rivalry between ethnic groups within the nation. This, in certain circumstances has occasioned in their near-disintegration, such as the attempt by Biafra to secede from Nigeria in 1970, or the continuing demand of the Somali people in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia for complete independence.³⁴ In Asia, the disintegration of India into Pakistan and Bangladesh is another example where ethnic

²⁹Mylonas, Harris. *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities*. New York: Cambridge University Press, (2012)

³⁰Deutsch, Karl W.; editors, William J. Foltz, *Nation building in comparative contexts* (New paperback print. ed.). New Brunswick [N.J.]: AldineTransaction. (2010).

³¹Connor, Walker. "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?". *World Politics* 24 (03): (2011)319–355.

³²Jochen Hippler, *Nation-building : a key concept for peaceful conflict transformation?*. (London: Pluto. 2005)

³³Smith, Anthony. "State-Making and Nation-Building," in John Hall (ed.), *States in History*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, (1986). 228–263.

³⁴Harris Mylonas.. "Assimilation and its Alternatives: Caveats in the Study of Nation-Building Policies", In *Rethinking Violence: States and Non-State Actors in Conflict*, eds. Adria Lawrence and Erica Chenoweth. BCSIA Studies in International Security, MIT Press. (2010).

differences, aided by geographic distance, tore apart a post-colonial state.³⁵ The Rwandan genocide as well as the recurrent problems experienced by the Sudan can also be related to a lack of ethnic, religious, or racial cohesion within the nation. It has often proved difficult to unite states with similar ethnic but different colonial backgrounds. Whereas successful examples like Cameroon do exist, failures like Senegambia Confederation demonstrate the problems of uniting Francophone and Anglophone territories.³⁶

The Sudan People's Liberation Movement has never been able to substantively move beyond existing tribal divisions and construct a national South Sudanese identity. The main reason for this is that political and military support has overwhelmingly been drawn from one particular ethnic group, the Dinka.³⁷ South Sudan is divided along tribal (and clan), linguistic and religious lines. The Dinka is the largest ethnic group making up approximately 35% of the population. The Nuer comprises 15% and the Shilluk, Azande and Bari approximately 8% each.³⁸ Political and military domination by the Dinka has produced animosity between other ethnic groups. This is especially the case in the greater Equatoria states where the difficulty of recruiting rural youth to the rebellion meant that the SPLA resorted to forced abductions.

The relationship with the SPLA in the Equatorias has always been problematic, where it is seen (and still perceived) as a 'Dinka army'. During the liberation war this resentment was tactically manipulated by Khartoum and led to the emergence of various armed groups over the course of

³⁵Dobbins, James, Seth G. Jones, Keith Crane, and Beth Cole DeGrasse..*The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building*. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation. (2007).

³⁶Fukuyama, Francis, *Nation-building : beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* ([Online-Ausg.] ed.). Baltimore, Md.: (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press 2006)

³⁷ Young, John, 2003. Sudan Liberation Movements, Regional Armies, Ethnic Militias and Peace, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 97, 423–434.

³⁸ Ibid

the conflict that bitterly fought the SPLA.³⁹ Due to its predominantly Dinka composition, SPLM's political and military pre-eminence has also created a degree of ethnic dominance.⁴⁰ John Young argues that The SPLA had never succeeded in overcoming the tribal identities of its soldiers and developing a national ethos, as a result the army often operated as a collection of militias and warring factions whose members were more loyal to their tribe or individual leaders than to the SPLA hierarchy.⁴¹

His analysis can be extended to the SPLA's post-independence situation. This is also the case with other security institutions like the South Sudanese Police Services (SSPS)⁴². According to a report from the Geneva-based Small Arms Survey, the command structure of the SSPS during 2011 included an Inspector General of Police (IGP), reporting to the minister of interior, and a deputy both lieutenant generals; three assistant IGPs in social welfare, administration, and railway and river transport, and a spokesperson major generals and 14 directors, nine of whom are major generals. Of these high ranking officers, 70% were Dinka.⁴³ As of December 2011, this trend was maintained in the states; nine of ten commissioners of police (all major generals) were Dinka⁴⁴.

³⁹Roque, Paula. 'The SPLM: Political Transformation or Strategic Adaptation', (2012) in Heinrich Böll Foundation and Toni Weis (eds.), *Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region*, Heinrich Boll Foundation, Berlin

⁴⁰ Young, John, *The Fate of Sudan. The Origins and Consequences of a Flawed Peace Process*. Zed (2012).

⁴¹ Young, John, 2003

⁴²Roque, Paula. 'The SPLM: Political Transformation or Strategic Adaptation', in enrich . Boll Foundation and Toni Weis (eds.), *Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region*, Heinrich Boll Foundation, Berlin(2012)

⁴³ Snowden, John, 2012 'Work in Progress: Security Force Development in South Sudan through February 2012, *HSBA Working Paper*, No. 27. Small Arms Survey, Geneva.

⁴⁴IDDRS, *Integrated DDR Standards*. United Nations, (New York.2006).

After independence, the GoSS succeeded in convincing significant numbers of leaders and rank and file members of four militia groups those led by Peter Gadet (a BulNuer), Gatluak Gai (a Jagei Nuer), David Yau Yau (a Murle) and Gabriel Tanginya (a Nuer) to accept an offer of amnesty and integration into the South Sudanese armed forces. Therefore it is not always easy to distinguish clearly between inter-communal conflict, and ethnic struggles and insurgencies, especially when the conflicts involve members of the politically dominant Dinka group.

Throughout 2011, ethnic violence persisted between Dinka and Nuer groups in the border area of Unity, Warrap, and Lakes States, resulting both in casualties and displacement. The worst of the violence in the first year of Southern independence, however, took place between Lou Nuer and Murle groups in Jonglei State in December 2011 and January 2012, affecting a total of 170,000 people in the state, killing hundreds and adding over 60, 000 displaced persons to some 50,000 resulting from prior inter-communal conflict and insurgent violence.⁴⁵ The worst of the attacks were inflicted on Murle civilians. As a reaction, Murle in the SPLA and South Sudan's Police Force began defecting, joining YauYau militia (predominantly Murle) and launching revenge attacks on Lou civilians.

The scale of Murle armed mobilization the YauYau is an indicator that the rebellion has successfully tapped the feelings of insecurity, distrust and marginalization among the Murle population towards the SPLA.⁴⁶ As the Jonglei incident clearly reveals, insurgent violence is

⁴⁵UNSG, 'Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan'. (UN Doc.S/2012/486, 26 June.2012a)

⁴⁶ Young, John, *The Fate of Sudan. The Origins and Consequences of a Flawed Peace Process*. Zed Books, London.UNSG, 2013. 'Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan'. UN Doc.S/2013/140, 12 March. (2012).

frequent and partly overlapped with inter-communal violence.⁴⁷ In Jonglei there is a significant risk that the recent increase in cattle raiding attributed to the YauYau militia against communities bordering Pibor County, as well as fear of attacks by Murle youth against other communities, could result in rearmament and the resumption of deadly inter-communal violence. In sum insurgent violence is rooted in rivalries among top military officers, triggered by the perception that a few ethnic groups dominate the political power in Juba. Rebellions often take on an ethnic character, as their leaders mobilize fighters in the name of ethnicity and belonging.

Frahm's article examined debates about national identity in the media landscape of post-referendum and post-independence South Sudan. The study design adopted a method of analyzing opinion pieces from South Sudanese online media from January to September 2011 and placing them in the context of contemporary African nationalism, in order to give an initial overview of the issues that dominate the public debate on national identity: fear of tribalism and regionalism, commemoration of the liberation struggle, language politics, and the role of Christianity.⁴⁸ The key issue that emerged from the analysis is the question of how to balance strong tribal identities with allegiance to the national supra-identity. In this context, fears of domination by the Dinka and larger ethnicities in general are countered by appeals to welcome ethnic diversity as the basis for a multi-ethnic nation.

⁴⁷UNSG, 2012b. 'Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan'. UN Doc.S/2012/820, 8 November.

⁴⁸Frahm Ole, Defining the Nation, National Identity in Southern Sudanese Media Discourse in Africa Spectrum, GIGA Institute of Global and Area Studies.(2012).

In terms of ideas for what constitutes the South Sudanese nation in appositive sense, a common thread is commemoration of the rebels' (in particular, the SPLA's) liberation struggle against the North as a point of reference for all South Sudanese. Also, just as people are eager to rid themselves of reminiscences of the "old Sudan" there is also a longing for something to take their place as a positive common denominator. Finally, an option brought into play both by the draft constitution and a couple of writers is that the country should do without a common identity altogether and instead allow for "unity in diversity"⁴⁹

Ethnic, tribal, regional and religious diversity should constitute South Sudan's national identity. For now, however this is a vision of nationhood that has yet to find consistent expression, either in the North or the South⁵⁰. And if the experience of fellow African countries, many of whom recently celebrated half a century of independence, is anything to go by, debates about national identity are not likely to conclude and disappear anytime soon.

Ole observed that the processes of national identity formation in post-colonial Africa have typically followed a similar trajectory.⁵¹ They have taken the form of a state-led top-down proclamations of inclusive nationalism combined with oppression of alternative, mostly ethnic loyalties, resurgence of ethnic sentiment due to the state's failure to deliver benefits and deserve adherence, rise of discourses of autochthony and exclusionary politics of belonging. In this

⁴⁹ El-Battahani, Atta, Tunnel Vision or Kaleidoscope: Competing Concepts on Sudan Identity and National Integration, in: *African Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 7, 2, 37-61 (2007).

⁵⁰ Ryle, John, Peoples & Cultures of Two Sudan's, in: John Ryle, Justin Willis, Suliman Baldo and Jok Madut Jok (eds.), *The Sudan Handbook*, Oxford: James Currey, (2011), Pp, 31-42.

⁵¹

context, the process of collective identity formation in newly independent South Sudan is a highly intriguing impediment of nation-building.

After overwhelmingly opting for independence and thus separate South Sudanese statehood in 2011, the nascent state is already struggling with ethnic rebellions, persistently strong sub-national (tribal) loyalties and widespread complaints over ethnically based nepotism. Hence, for the time being, the unifying effect from the civil war period of having a common enemy, the Khartoum government has not been replaced with either a new negative ‘other’ or a positive vision of a bond that is capable of uniting all citizens of the nascent state. Candidates for a positive identity include Christianity, the army, multiculturalism, and, especially, memory of the independence struggle.⁵²

Jok reports on *state building in South Sudan* by focusing on how the new state will manage its cultural diversity with a view to bringing all its ethnic nationalities together, forming a national identity that can reduce the level of suspicion and ethnicity-based political rivalry. The information and analysis in this report have their roots in the author’s academic research and interests, as well as his background as a civil servant in the government of South Sudan⁵³. The report concluded that many factors work against a project to develop a national identity in South Sudan. An endeavor to create one depends on the commitment of the entire government. Ideas about possible external funding sources for such a project need to be fine-tuned based on

⁵² Ole Frahm (2013) *Nation building in Nascent South Sudan* – How to Remember the War Department of Social Sciences Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

⁵³ JokMadutJok (2011) *Diversity, Unity, and Nation Building in South Sudan*. Special report, United States institute of Peace. Washington, DC 20037

national priorities that South Sudanese set according to a homegrown philosophy of development, rather than the usual development policies that donors dictate.⁵⁴

Such policies, if they address the priorities of the nation, have to be generated from the input and advice of experts across the whole of South Sudanese society. With such an approach, South Sudan could embark right away on the mission of involving every citizen in the business of participatory governance.⁵⁵

1.5 Justification of the Study

After the world was awakened by the ethnic violence which erupted on December, 23rd, 2011 in Jonglei state, so many people, particularly the international community began to wonder about the state of affairs in the newly independent South Sudan. In order for the people to understand violence which has now engulfed the South, it is crucial for members of the international community to be informed about the ideology tribal along ethnicity lines.

Although it is true that violence in Jonglei State between Dinka and Nuer on the one hand Murle tribe on the other is fuelled by cattle, poverty, political violence which involved fighting between Salva Kiir's regime and the rebel Movements in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity State was caused ethnic division and power in the South. This is the same case in Central Equatorial State, the fight between Mundari and Bari community, In Lake State the fight between Dinka Agar and Dinka Huro community.

⁵⁴ Richard Rands (2010) *In Need of Review: SPLA Transformation in 2006–10 and Beyond*, Small Arms Survey, Geneva, 2010

⁵⁵ Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *Negotiating Sudan's North-South Future*, CSIS, Washington, DC, 2010

It has become a practice among the less informed journalists to blame political violence in the South on the North by neglecting the politics of ethnic domination. The same tactics of looking for a scapegoat in the north have been used by so many African dictators in the past who blamed colonial powers for ethnic violence in the continent many years after Europeans left.

It has also become a practice of some individuals in the media to dismiss the prevalent ethnic discrimination being practised by the current government saying that it is a normal practice among Africans to prefer their ethnic groups. People who dismiss the dangers of state-practised tribalism in South Sudan are confusing public realm and private realm tribalism. In South Sudan, consciousness of one's tribal origin is a psycho-sociological reality that is largely universal in nature.

However, this research seeks to show that there is a distinction between public realm ethnicity which involves conflicts related to the determination of who gets what, when and how, and private realm ethnicity that may not invite state intervention. What is causing violence in South Sudan currently is a public realm ethnicity which denies individual's positions because of their ethnic background. This study thus seeks to fill the literature gap in relation to the extent to which ethnicity has challenged the spirit of nation building in South Sudan.

1.6 Hypotheses for the Study

- i) Ethnicity is deep-rooted among the communities in South Sudan
- ii) Ethnic conflicts among communities in South Sudan have challenged nation building.
- iii) The efforts by the government in turning South Sudan cultural diversities into national assets to achieve nation building have been a success.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The study shall apply symbolic politics theory. This theory proceeds from social-psychological and builds on the findings of neuroscience, which show that emotions, not rational calculations, motivate people to act. The theory postulates that the nature of ethnicity is constructivist rather than instrumentalist and that human motivations are based on emotion rather than rational cost-benefit calculations.⁵⁶

According to emotions allow individuals to prioritize goals while fear makes security more important than wealth. The theory further states that each ethnic group is defined by a "myth-symbol complex" that helps single out those elements of shared culture and an interpretation of common history that ties members of one group together and binds the group together while distinguishing it from others.⁵⁷

Importantly in this theory, ethnicity is historically and culturally rooted: it enables and constrains political instrumentalization at the same time. Consequently, the more a group's myth-symbol complex emphasizes hostility toward a particular (potential) adversary, portraying them as enemy and/or inferior, the greater the probability of ethnic conflict

⁵⁶Berman, Eli: "Sect, Subsidy, and Sacrifice: An Economist's View of Ultra-Orthodox Jews," (*Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (2000) 115(3).

⁵⁷ Berman, Eli: " Hamas, Taliban, and the Jewish Underground: An Economist's View of Radical Religious Militias," (2003).

People choose emotionally by responding to the most powerful symbol presented to them: this is their basis for prioritizing goals and favoring leaders. From this perspective, symbols reflect interests and “values”: a struggle for security, status, and ultimately group survival is at the same time a struggle against hostile, evil, or subhuman forces.⁵⁸

The symbolic politics argument asserts that ordinary people choose emotionally among competing values and leaders by responding to the most evocative symbol presented to them. Symbols are powerful because they simultaneously refer to an interest and to an emotionally laden myth, often framing a conflict of interest as a struggle against hostile, evil, or subhuman forces. Ethnic or national symbols are immensely powerful in this context, enabling a politician to reinterpret a conflict of interest as a struggle for security, status, and the future of the group. Using these symbols to evoke emotions such as resentment, fear, and hatred is how politicians motivate supporters to act. Politicians with logical arguments are often at a severe disadvantage when competing with such emotive symbolic appeals.⁵⁹

The theory is relevant since it explains the root cause of ethnic conflict. The theory states that the sources of ethnic conflict reside, above all, in the struggle for relative group worth and enumerates the following as the Preconditions for ethnic conflict: A group fears that its existence is threatened (perception, rather than reality matters); Opportunity to mobilize: political space

⁵⁸Glaeser: “The Political Economy of Hatred,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, CXX (1)(2005),45-86.

⁵⁹Azam, Jean-Paul (2001): “The Redistributive State and Conflicts in Africa,” *Journal of Peace Research*, (2001)429-444.

(Political freedom, state failure/regime collapse, support from third party); political concentration of a group or territorial base in a (neighboring) country.⁶⁰

Berman also acknowledges that escalation towards ethnic conflict emanates from: Elite-led or mass-led and in the presence of preconditions, three processes interact to facilitate violent escalation: mass hostility, chauvinist political mobilization and security dilemma.⁶¹

1.8 Research Methodology

This section outlines the methods of collecting, assembling and analyzing data. It is divided into research design, data collection and data analysis.

1.8.1 Research Design

While the social origins of the varying perceptions of nation-of-intent amongst ethnic groups can be examined through historical perspective, this study attempts to approach this problem by examining primary data collected through in-depth interviews and documentary evidence as well as current secondary data obtained through library research. These data then will be analyzed using various inter-related concepts and theories on ethnicity and nationalism as analytical tools. This study is primarily based on *qualitative* research. Qualitative research is concerned with individual's own accounts of their attitudes, opinions, motivations and behavior. While *quantitative research* refers to counts and measures of things, the notion of *quality* which is essential to the nature of things, instead refers to the what, how, when and where of a thing, its

⁶⁰Hardin, Russel (1995): One For All: The Logic of Group Conflict, (Princeton University Press.1995)

⁶¹Berman, Eli: " Hamas, Taliban, and the Jewish Underground: An Economist's View of Radical Religious Militias," (2003)

essence and ambience. As such qualitative research is more concerned with aspects of meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristic, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things.

1.8.2 Methods of Data Collection

This study capitalized on two forms of data collection;

Primary Data

Primary data collection or sources are those which come into existence in the period under research. Primary data was gathered from Government Officer, Social/Political Activists, Non-Governmental Organization NGOs, members of the General Public. The primary data will be obtained through semi-structured questionnaires with both open-ended and closed questions and will be used to gather quantitative data. Closed ended questions will be used as they allow the interviewer to control over the type of data and information that will to be collected. Open-ended questions facilitate the collection of qualitative data thus allowing the respondents to express their views. This type of data collection allows for clarification of ambiguous questions through getting feedback from the respondent.

In collection of primary data related to the study, several types of sources will be looked upon. This includes, in-depth interviews with a number of key informants such as government officials in state ministries, Social and political activists and members of the general public.

Secondary Data

Secondary data collection or sources are interpretations of events of that period based on primary sources. They include data gathered from documents search such as media reports, analysis and

review of published books, journals, papers, periodicals, and unpublished works as well as government's official documents. The study will use secondary data in the form of documented information from libraries and other relevant institutions.

1.8.3 Data Analysis

This study will use both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. The qualitative and quantitative methods of analysing data will be employed to assist the researcher in exploring how the social situations contribute to the problem of the study. Qualitative analysis will aid in giving description of the situation of the study and its variations; while on the other hand quantitative analysis will assist to find out how many people and why they hold particular attitudes. Meaning will then be deduced by interpreting the data through descriptive and content analysis.

1.9 Chapter Outline

Chapter One: Provides the Background of the Study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, literature review, and hypothesis of the study, justification of the study, conceptual framework and the research methodology.

Chapter Two: Discusses the current state of South Sudan

Chapter Three: provides a critical analysis of the Spirit of Nation building in South Sudan.

Chapter Four: Presents a detailed analysis of the research findings in order to answer the research objectives. The chapter evaluates the impact of Ethnicity on Nation building in South Sudan.

Chapter Five: Outlines the summary, conclusions of the study, gives recommendations and provides suggestions on areas for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

ETHNICITY, NATION BUILDING AND INDEPENDENT SOUTH SUDAN

2.1 Introduction

Nation-building refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state.⁶² This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. Nation-building may involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth; It comprise the development of behaviors, values, language, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and insure the future identity and independence of a nation.

Originally, nation-building referred to the efforts of newly-independent nations, notably the nations of Africa but also in the Balkans,⁶³ to reshape territories that had been carved out by colonial powers or Empires without regard to ethnic, religious, or other boundaries. These reformed states would then become viable and coherent national entities. Nation-building includes the creation of national paraphernalia such as flags, anthems, national days, national stadiums, national airlines, national languages, and national myths.⁶⁴ At a deeper level, national identity needed to be deliberately constructed by molding different ethnic groups into a nation,

⁶²Smith, Anthony. "State-Making and Nation-Building," in John Hall (ed.), *States in History*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) , 228–263.

⁶³Jochen Hippler. *Nation-building: a key concept for peaceful conflict transformation?* (London, 2005)

⁶⁴Smith, Anthony.. "State-Making and Nation-Building," in John Hall (ed.), *States in History*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1986) 228–263

especially since in many newly established states colonial practices of divide and rule had resulted in ethnically heterogeneous populations.⁶⁵

Based on the idea that nation and nationality refer to territorial boundaries whereas ethnicity and ethnic group to several cultural factors such as language, religion, identity and localism, state practices at the cultural level reveal significant information about the actual relations between the state and nation makers and those involved in the political process. Corrigan's claim that it is important to consider the pressure from subsidiary national or ethnic groups is noteworthy, since the cultural aspects of nation-state-formation illuminate the character of the state in a more specific way.⁶⁶ Similarly, Hall draws attention to the potential role of previous state structures that may be capable of reasserting themselves at moments of crisis.⁶⁷ Jessop supplements this position by suggesting that both support for and resistance to hegemonic projects is important for an adequate understanding of the state.

Foucault noted that the resistance to state-formation brings into play 'subjugated knowledge's' which while present are disguised or muffled.⁶⁸ This knowledge is always particular, local and rarely systematized. This requires that a population's historical past be reconstructed on the basis of local popular knowledge's, which may give rise to the development of ethnic and religious ideologies capable of mobilizing social action.

⁶⁵Harris Mylonas.. "Assimilation and its Alternatives: Caveats in the Study of Nation-Building Policies, (2010)

⁶⁶CORRIGAN, PHILIP RICHARD D. 'Towards a history of state formation in early modern England', in Philip Richard D. Corrigan (ed.), *Capitalism, State Formation and Marxist Theory*, (London: Quartet Books 1980)

⁶⁷HALL, STUART 'The state in question', in Gregor McLennan, David Held and Stuart Hall (eds), *The Idea of the Modern State*, Milton Keynes: (Open University Press, 1984)128

⁶⁸FOUCAULT, MICHEL 'Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977', in Colin Gordon (ed.), (New York: Pantheon Press, 1980).78-108

Smith and Shanin viewed modern ethnicity as a continuation of past ethnic revivals.⁶⁹ In their perspective, although ethnicity appears as distinguishable from nationalism, ethnic communities can move towards defining themselves as a nation. In this respect, ethnic communities are viewed as self-reproducing cultural entities. The language and kin ties can become the sources for mythologizing past histories. This makes ties of ethnicity distinctive compared to other loyalties such as economic class since they can easily intersect with various other ideological sources such as religion or regional and local histories in the construction of present realities. In this respect, ethnicity can form the basis of competing political or territorial claims, since cultural values and processes are an essential part of the state and nation-building dynamic. The cultural field is where new identities are formed and shaped, and in times of social transformation these competing identities can become part of broader political conflicts and movements, which influence the direction of state and nation-building.

Consequently, ethnicity is an ambivalent source in mobilizing local populations, and, in times of social disturbance, it is difficult to detect the forces that determine the direction of ethnic movements. The most prosperous nation would be when the population, by its strive to mastery of high culture, produce a high culture that penetrates the state and leads it to prosperity. If there is no coherence between state and high culture, and the state seems to exercise power in a way that contradicts the high culture; it will naturally evoke deep frustration in the population, as much as it would awake satisfactory emotions when the coherence proves to be effective.

⁶⁹ SMITH, ANTHONY D. *The Ethnic Revival in the Modern World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986 'State-making and nation-building', in John A. Hall (ed.), *States in History*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981 pp. 228-63)

2.2 The New South and the Rise of a Nation

South Sudan's independence carries the question of whether the historical experiences that have long united the old southern divide will endure in the new south state, enabling the young country to become a unified political, cultural, and social entity in short, a nation. So far, the unity of purpose that kept the south together as a political entity has been, in a sense, a negative unity, driven by opposition to the north.⁷⁰ In the event that there is no war between Sudan and South Sudan after separation, there is a chance that the old ethnic discord within the country will rear its ugly head once again.⁷¹ There are already many signs of this, as the relative calm that has prevailed since the 2005 truce between north and south has started to run out of steam, revealed by the many rebellions against the Juba government.⁷² These rebellions are rooted in rivalries among top military officers, triggered by perceptions that political power in Juba has been heavily dominated by a few ethnic groups. These episodes quickly take on an ethnic character, as their leaders play the ethnic card to attract fighters into the rebellion.

Ethnic relations in the city of Juba have been extremely volatile due to accusations that the Dinka, South Sudan's largest ethnic group, have dominated the government; claims of violence by Nuer and Dinka-dominated army personnel; and suspicions of land grabbing by people who are not indigenous residents of the town.⁷³ The Bari, the ethnic group more autochthonous to Juba, blame the presence of a large population of SPLA soldiers for the election of Clement

⁷⁰Meister, Richard J., *Race and Ethnicity in Modern America*, Heath and Co. (1974, Washington, D.C.)

⁷¹Gentleman, J. 2012. "Born in Unity, South Sudan is Torn Apart Again." *The New York Times*.http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/13/world/africa/south-sudan-massacres-following-independence.html?_r=1&page=1

⁷²Ibid

⁷³Ibid

Wani, who is from the Mundari ethnic group, as governor of Central Equatoria in the April 2010 elections, implying that the Dinka and Nuer are helping impose an unwanted governor on the Bari.⁷⁴

Consequently, none of the above promises well for the future unity of the country. Some Equatorians claim that the presence of the national capital in their town has only led to their marginalization in their own territory.⁷⁵ Non-Equatorians are demanding that either the capital be moved to another town if the Equatorians continue their rhetoric or a national land policy be issued to declare the national capital a multiethnic arena that reflects the diversity of the nation. *“If we say that Juba is to become a national capital, then we are recognizing the benefits that accrue from it, and we are also agreeing that any citizen of this country has the right to choose the capital as his place of residence. . . . We can’t have it both ways, to want the benefits that the capital city provides and to desire to keep out all other citizens,”* remarked a citizen from Jonglei state in an interview.⁷⁶ If the question of land is not political y and constitutionally addressed for the capital city and across the country in general, there will undoubtedly be a major crisis, which could trigger ethnic violence and challenge the spirit of nation building in the newly independent South Sudan.

2.3 History as National Identity

Ever since the country now known as Sudan came into existence, the people living in its southern half have had more commonalities between them than differences, and they are

⁷⁴ GoSS. “South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013: Realizing Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for All. (2011)

⁷⁵ *ibid*

⁷⁶ *ibid*

different from the northern population in several significant ways. The similarities among south Sudanese ethnic groups have included modes of production and livelihood, religious traditions, and culture in general. They also include important shared historical experiences especially regarding contact with the outside world and the effects of slavery, the colonial order, and the protracted wars between north and south.⁷⁷

For South Sudanese, the struggle that culminated in independence is now officially recognized as a nearly 200-year struggle against foreign occupation and domination. State medals will now carry the official historical timeline between 1821, when Muhammad Ali, the viceroy of the Ottoman Sultan in Egypt, sent an expedition to invade Sudan in search of slaves and ivory, and 2011, the year South Sudan gained independence.⁷⁸ Professional historians go on debating whether or not the Turkiyya (1820–81), the Mahdiyya (1881–98), the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium(1898–1956), and the state of independent Sudan (1956–2011) had interconnected policies of oppression that would make the people of South Sudan view them as one continuum of colonization. However, this narrative is now South Sudan’s state history; there is an official historical conclusion that the new country united or not, was a colony of all these powers, and has just now ended foreign rule to emerge independent and united by its history of struggle.⁷⁹This official line is intended to shape the historical experience with a view to asserting the claim to oneness of all South Sudanese. “*We are one people, if not by genealogy, then by lived experienced,*” remarked Vincent, a social researcher from Western Equatoria in an

⁷⁷Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), “Negotiating Sudan’s North-South Future,” CSIS, Washington,DC, 2010

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹Sudan’s Split: A Northern Attack on a Disputed Town Complicates Southern Independence,” *The Economist*, May26, 2011, and “The Birth of South Sudan: Managing Expectations,” *The Economist*, July 8, 2011.

interview.⁸⁰ The policy is meant to preempt and offset any claims that a country as diverse as Southern Sudan would have no foundation upon which to build a sense of nationhood.

Consequently, unity among South Sudanese historically has been based more on how different they are from northerners than on the commonalities among them.⁸¹ These differences have been cultural, religious, linguistic, ethnic, and racial. The official policy of the Khartoum government, starting at the end of British colonialism, attempted to homogenize Sudan and creates an Arab country. Many Khartoum officials have remarked that, since various South Sudanese ethnic nations use Arabic to communicate across linguistic boundaries, Arabic should become the only national language.⁸² Though this may be true, it does not necessarily follow that South Sudanese are Arabs. “*We also speak English, but we have never claimed that we are English people,*” suggested Manyang, a journalist, in an interview.⁸³ The story that most learned Southern Sudanese are well conversant with is that all successive governments took Khartoum and the areas around it as the center of the country in every sense of the word, and with this view, the Khartoum-based state was built on policies of exclusion from cultural representation, resources, and political power.⁸⁴ Khartoum sought coercive unity, using both outright violence and more underhanded tactics, such as the propagation of Arab culture in state media.

Thus South Sudan’s official history is a history from the perspective of victimhood, politically refashioned over time to make a case for dissent by aggrieved areas peripheral to the central

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars* (Oxford:, 2003)

⁸³ JokMadutJok, *Sudan: Race, Religion and Violence* (Oxford: One World Publications, 2007).

⁸⁴ Ibid

region. In addition to concentrating development and basic services in Sudan's central area, the Khartoum government actively promoted Arab and Islamic culture at the expense of the various cultural practices that the rest of the country was made of. The result was that Southern Sudan and other peripheries of the country increasingly felt that this cultural, ethnic, or racial exclusion was the basis for exclusion from the distribution of the national pie, basic services, and political power. The southerners, (as they increasingly came to be referred to and self-identified) found themselves needing to forge a unity of convenience that is, a unity driven by the need for a collective effort to deal with the negative experiences imposed on them by the Arab-dominated Khartoum governments.⁸⁵

The need and opportunity for unity existed even during the colonial period. The scourge of slavery, because it affected all southerners regardless of their ethnic affiliation, forced them to create a unified front and disregard the differences among them.⁸⁶ When the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, the colonial power of the time, began to fight the slave trade at the turn of the twentieth century, southerners were also brought together by the various colonial policies deemed antagonistic to their well-being. Southerners responded to colonialism as people affected by the colonial order in ways that differed from the northerners. The popular perception was that British colonial authorities and northerners had a common goal to suppress the south and do away with the fabric of its core cultures. Religion and race, regardless of the definitions one applied, were central not only to demarcating the lines separating northern and southern identities, but also to reducing the differences among southerners. Such a sense of political unity

⁸⁵ Peter Adwak Nyaba, *The Politics of Liberation in South Sudan: An Insider's Viewpoint* (Kampala: Fountain Press, 2001).

⁸⁶ Ibid

was necessary in efforts against British colonialism, which was then seen as favoring the Arabs, Sudanese, and Egyptians⁸⁷. A history of victimization remained a very effective force for unity.

At the end of the colonial era in 1956, southerners again found another unifying force: the view held by their political leaders regarding how independence should tackle the many matters of discord between north and south that dated back to the conception of Sudan as a political entity in the nineteenth century.⁸⁸ The idea of two countries emerging out of the colony of Sudan had been raised then; since the south had been neglected during the colonial period.⁸⁹ Southern leaders felt that the independence of Sudan as one country would mean that the south became yet again a colony, this time of the north, as an Arab power asserted itself over Africans. Thus united, southerners argued collectively for the British to either delay independence until the south was ready to compete with the north on an equal footing, or set up two separate countries.⁹⁰

British hastily exited Sudan without rectifying their wrongs with southerners having to choose between remaining with the north and being second-class citizens in their own country or fighting for a better arrangement that would transform the old exploitative Sudan into a modern state where citizenship implied rights for all. That lived history is one of the experiences that the current population of South Sudan point to as a foundation for their new nation.⁹¹ With Sudan's independence failing to reassure southerners, a protracted and violent conflict raged between

⁸⁷ Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (Oxford: 2003);

⁸⁸ Ibid

⁸⁹ Jok Madut Jok, *Sudan: Race, Religion and Violence* (Oxford: One World Publications, (2007)

⁹⁰ Ibid

⁹¹ Ibid

north and south for seventeen years. This postcolonial experience united southerners yet again and set them on a collision course with the north. Despite many disagreements among southerners, which were sometimes very violent, the experience of the war, including Khartoum's counter insurgency tactics against civilians in the south, convinced large swaths of the southern population that the north was a common enemy and that all southerners should set aside their differences and unite.⁹²

South Sudan's history of struggle against oppression is one that every learned Southern Sudanese today understands as being shared by all. It is echoed in the words of Lual Ding, a veteran politician from Aweil, who said that "*we suffered together because our enemies saw our various identities as one and the same, and so we should turn that shared painful past into a positive outcome and say that we are indeed one.*"⁹³ In the wake of independence, it is hoped that such messages will be heeded to stem violence among people in the Southern Sudan, now that they are freed from their common oppressor.

The event most closely related to the emergence of what one might describe as a Southern Sudanese identity, that is, the feeling that they are one people was the second round of the north-south war (1983–2005).⁹⁴ When the fighting started, southern grievances included a protest against then-President Nimeiri's application of *sharia*, the redrawing of north-south borders in an attempt to annex some newly discovered oil-rich areas to the north, the question of an oil

⁹²Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General, Geneva, 25 January 2005

⁹³Petterson, Don, Inside Sudan. Updated Edition. Westview Press (2003, Boulder, Colorado)

⁹⁴Power, Samantha, Dying in Darfur: Can the Ethnic Cleansing in Sudan Be Stopped? (*New yorker*,2004)

refinery proposed to be built in Port Sudan instead of in areas of production in the south, and the plan to divide the then-autonomous south into three weaker regions, clearly abrogating the Addis Ababa Agreement that had ended the first civil war.⁹⁵ All these shared grievances all owed the southerners to speak with one voice against Khartoum, and the war that was triggered by these policies and the SPLA/M's popular support was regarded by people in South Sudan as testament to the South's unity of purpose. Some south Sudanese supported Khartoum, but it was unmistakable that the south had taken another step toward unity.

Most supporters of the "re-division" of the south came to regret their actions later, when they realized that it was a mechanism northerners supported to weaken the south.⁹⁶ They later joined the SPLA en masse. The Khartoum government responded with counter insurgency tactics that targeted civilians in urban centers, accusing nearly all southerners of supporting the opposition. Collective punishment became the norm, pushing more and more people into rebellion and swelling the ranks of the opposition. In the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the south witnessed gruesome atrocities involving air bombardment and ground attacks on villages and SPLA-controlled towns. These tactics resulted in displacement and destruction not seen anywhere since World War II. Consequently, two and half million people are believed to have died, and most South Sudanese are still convinced that a genocidal campaign was carried out while the world watched.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Ibid Pp, 31-37.

⁹⁷ Ibid

These acts of atrocity increased negative sentiment toward the north and the South's greatest determination in the history of the struggle to achieve separation. The treatment of internally displaced persons in the north, the extrajudicial killings in government-controlled garrison towns in the south, and the whole idea that all the country's political problems and the periphery-center problems should be solved through military might, all cemented southerners' resolve to stand together, at least until the main goal was achieved.⁹⁸

The SPLA/M's concept of a New Sudan, that is, making all Sudan democratic and secular instead of attempting to secede from it, seductive as it was, began to wane among ordinary fighters.⁹⁹ The continued horrific conflicts, abductions, maiming of abductees and the aerial bombings, all convinced South Sudanese that they could not share a nation with northerners. Southern Sudanese political humor is currently awash with jokes about John Garang's vision of New Sudan, how it had always been a geopolitical tactic, how doubtful it is that he genuinely meant what he preached, and how he had frustratingly remarked that "*anyone not convinced about the liberation of the whole Sudan can stop when we reach Kosti and leave me to march to Khartoum alone if I so choose.*"¹⁰⁰

History demonstrates the gradual emergence of the ingredients that created Southern Sudan's sense of a collective national identity, internally muddled as it may be. These experiences helped form a concept of southernism, the idea that being a Southern Sudanese was not only a matter of geography, but of cultural, ethnic, and racial connections, juxtapose against

⁹⁸Mezran, Karim K., *Negotiating National Identity*. Antonio Pellicani Editore (Rome, 2002)

⁹⁹Richard Rands, "In Need of Review: SPLA Transformation in 2006–10 and Beyond," *Small Arms Survey*, Geneva, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*

the historical injustices done by colonial powers and the Khartoum government. In conclusion, the question to be contemplated upon is whether this history is enough to be the foundation for a new nation.

2.4 Liberation Struggle against the North and South Sudan Nation building

One of the few almost unanimously held interpretations is that the new nation should be built on the memory of the decades of struggle against the North and less universally on the role played by the SPLM/A and its late leader John Garang.¹⁰¹ In an effort to fight political tribalism and the culture of war, Stephen Par Kuol, the education minister of Jonglei State, states that “*historically, we have come a long way as a family united and divided by the common struggle against the common oppression*”.¹⁰²

An editorial on the day before the declaration of independence reminds its readers that all gratitude is owed to the SPLA fighters. To properly commemorate those who died during 22 years of war, the author proposes “*Project 22, A Campaign for South Sudan's Future*”, a 22-year effort to shape the new South Sudan into a place worth living in. If that project is realized, “*we will have delivered on the sacred promise of our nation to all those who gave selflessly of themselves*”.¹⁰³ Building a new nation is therefore a duty owed to the SPLA’s martyrs. Salva Kiir Mayardit, South Sudan’s president and chairman of the SPLM, also “paid tribute to the fallen

¹⁰¹Garang, Ngor Arol, South Sudan Opposition Party Renews Demand for Release of Member, in: *sudantribune.com*, 31 October, online: <www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-opposition-party, 40590> (2011).

¹⁰²Stephen, Juma John, Equatoria Conference Calls for Federal System of Governance, (2011)

¹⁰³New Sudan Vision, The Meaning Behind South Sudan Declaration of Independence, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 8 July, online: <www.newsudanvision.com>(2011)

heroes of the new nation” in his independence speech, adding that their efforts had not been in vain.¹⁰⁴

Samuel has noted that one very obvious way in which the SPLA’s resistance fight will be commemorated by the state is the new currency. Some of the newly printed South Sudanese pounds will show John Garang, so that “*the face of the late leader will remind Southerners of the long road to independence*”.¹⁰⁵ Independence celebrations saw a giant new statue of John Garang unveiled in Juba next to his mausoleum, which is already becoming a shrine to his legacy.¹⁰⁶

Along the same lines, the third stanza of the newly composed national anthem, in the words of South Sudanese Minister of Information and Broadcasting Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin, “*commemorates the martyrs and heroes who lost their lives for the sake of the people of this nation*”.¹⁰⁷ Canada-based Laku Modi Tombe, in contrast, harshly criticizes the exclusive focus on the SPLM and reminds his readers that the SPLM had been preaching unity with North Sudan for 26 years, until one week before the referendum, when it declared its support for independent South Sudan.¹⁰⁸

Salva Kiir has turned curiously ambiguous on how to treat the liberation struggle in the national narrative. Arguing on whether the South’s decision to become independent constituted a betrayal

¹⁰⁴Sudan Tribune, Salva Kiir Takes Oath, Grants Amnesty to Rebels, in: *sudantribune.com*, 10 July, online: <www.sudantribune.com/Salva-Kiir-takes-oath-grants,39479> (20 April 2011). (2011b)

¹⁰⁵Samuel, Adaku, South Sudan to Issue New Currency on July 9, in: *juba post.org*, March, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-50.html>> (8 July 2011).(2011)

¹⁰⁶Girungi, Marvis, Independence Spurs Renewed Tributes to Garang, in: *sudanvotes.com*, 16 July, online: <www.sudanvotes.com/articles/?id=929> (6 October 2011)(2011)

¹⁰⁷Wudu, Boboya Simon (2011), South Sudan National Anthem Launched, in: *juba post.org*, June, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-127.html>> (8 July 2011)

¹⁰⁸Tombe, Laku Modi, Dictators Aren’t Nations’ Builders, in: *gurtong.net*, 31 January, online: <www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/4774/categoryId/24/Dictators-Arent-Nations-Builders.aspx> (16 September 2011)(2011)

of John Garang's and the SPLM movement's ideas, Kiir said, "*Evidently I cannot dance to the secession of the South*".¹⁰⁹ He adds that the way forward should be to forgo anger, and Southerners should forgive Northerners for what happened during the war. Therefore, Kiir's answer to the question of how to commemorate the war is "*we have to forget the past*".¹¹⁰ As such, Kiir's movement stands in marked contrast to other liberation movements, which have come to power and laid claim not only to the state but also to the nation.¹¹¹

Consequently, it remains to be seen whether the SPLM and its leadership will in the long run refuse to follow in the footsteps of Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF policy of actively propagating "patriotic" history in an attempt to monopolize its own view of national history.¹¹² This tension between forgetting and using the past was apparent in the president's speech on Martyrs' Day (30 July). On the one hand, Kiir explicitly links the commemoration of the dead to nation-building: "*Unless we cultivate the spirit of nationalism, cemented by the blood of our martyrs, we cannot prosper*".¹¹³ Yet, in the same speech, he described the Republic of Southern Sudan as a tabula rasa, while urging Southern Sudanese that "*it is not time to blame the past but rather it is time to focus on what to do today, tomorrow and the future*".¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹Ochi, Richan, Kiir: A Road Map for the Coming Period, in: *sudanvotes.com*, 25 February, online: <www.sudanvotes.com/articles/?id=593> (6 October 2011). (2011)

¹¹⁰Kiir Mayardit, Salva, President Kiir's Message on Martyrs' Day, in: *gossmision.org*, 1 August, online: <[www.gossmision.org/goss/index.php?option=com_content & task=view & id=1230&Itemid=193](http://www.gossmision.org/goss/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1230&Itemid=193)> (27 April 2012). (2011)

¹¹¹Dorman, Sara, Post-Liberation Politics in Africa: Examining the Political Legacy of Struggle, in: *Third World Quarterly*, 27, 6, (2006), 1085-1101.

¹¹²Ranger, Terence, Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: The Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe, in: *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30, 2, (2004), 215-234.

¹¹³Kiir Mayardit, Salva (2011), President Kiir's Message on Martyrs' Day, in: *gossmision.org*, 1 August, online: <www.gossmision.org/goss/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1230&Itemid=193> (27 April 2012).

¹¹⁴*Ibid*

The use of the liberation struggle as the keystone of national unity can also have exclusionary effects, for instance with regard to the large diaspora community. While on the surface the issue is the lack of opportunities for highly qualified South Sudanese returning from the diaspora,¹¹⁵ others argue that “*many southern Sudanese expatriates who seek to participate in their country are reluctant due to the overriding concept that ‘those who did not hold the gun should not now come and claim positions’*”.¹¹⁶

2.5 South Sudan Cultural Diversity and Nationhood

In early June 2011 just a month before South Sudan affirmed itself an independent state, and despite the violence engulfing its people from within and from without there was commotion in the capital, Juba, and throughout the country in preparation for independence celebrations on July 9.¹¹⁷ In May, Sudanese armed forces had attacked and occupied Abyei town, a hotly contested region on the north-south border, and there were rebel militia attacks in three states and numerous tribal conflicts in seven states all causing renewed uncertainties among many observers about independence.¹¹⁸

The main preoccupation of political debate in Juba was not just the anticipated independent statehood, but how to turn Southern Sudan into a viable nation: that is, how to turn its ethnic and cultural diversity into a useful asset, forming the colorful and unified country that everyone had

¹¹⁵ Ayieci, Thon Agany, South Sudan Needs Diaspora Commission, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 24 May, online: <www.newsudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2363:south-sudan-needs-a-diaspora-commission&Itemid=14> (30 September 2011). (2011)

¹¹⁶ Juba Post (2011), How to Best Serve the South, in: *jubapost.org*, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-11.html>> (8 July 2011).

¹¹⁷ Nyaba, Peter Adwok (1997), *Politics of Liberation in South Sudan*, Kampala: Fountain Books.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*

yearned for since the 1940s, long before Sudan's independence from British colonialism.¹¹⁹ In the referendum in January 2011, South Sudanese had demonstrated their ability to unite around a single purpose, for instance, all other disagreements notwithstanding: A about 98 percent voted in favor of separation, rejecting a unified Sudan, a country that had been suffering from the woes of forced unity for over fifty years. The vote, which was part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the second round of Sudan's prolonged wars, turned a page in the long history of southern struggle for freedom and the destructive northern counterinsurgency.¹²⁰

Consequently, it turned out that just five months later even before the nation was officially born the euphoria after the referendum results had given way to disappointment. Southern Sudanese wanted an opportunity to communicate with their government on the concept of nationhood. The media were embroiled in discussions about deficiencies in the government's ability to deliver security, basic services, and above all, a sense of unity some of the most highly anticipated peace dividends and rewards for independence. Claims of corruption, nepotism, exclusion, and domination of government and business by some ethnic groups all seemed to erode the public's enthusiasm for the upcoming transition, despite the initial excitement.¹²¹

The sense of disappointment is more related to the perceived behavior of the top political class than to the national security issues that threaten the young state's sovereignty.¹²² Undoubtedly, the security of individual and property is a major concern for people: Many nationals have

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Khalid, Mansour (1990), *The Government They Deserve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan's Political Evolution*, London: Kegan Paul.

¹²¹ Ibid, Pg 6-9

¹²² Ibid, Pp, 11-15

admitted that it is the single most important expected peace dividend and have been most disappointed by its failure to materialize.¹²³ The activities of the Khartoum government on the borders and the invasion by its armed forces are certainly worrying and have undoubtedly dampened the independence mood throughout Southern Sudan. Nonetheless the nationals argue that internal insecurity problems, especially those caused by local militias, rebel movements, and tribal warfare, are a greater threat to the new nation.¹²⁴

These threats relate to the South Sudan government's ability to address the concerns of individual citizens. The involvement of the government in exclusionary practices that allow ethnic backgrounds, rather than national policy interests, to influence decision making processes, jeopardizes South Sudan's future stability, unity, and development.¹²⁵ Consequently, the forces that Southern Sudanese often see as a threat to the transformation to nationhood are tribalism; nepotism; corruption; exclusion on ethnic, age, or gender bases; lack of meritocracy in hiring; and lack of a respectable constitution that spells out a clear social contract between government and citizens. Southern Sudanese realize that the current ethnic composition of the country could be a liability if it is not carefully managed, especially as it influences everyday governance.¹²⁶ However, the extent to which this worry runs through all sectors of the population, including top political leadership, will depend on how future national policies address diversity and the behavior of public officials.

¹²³ Ibid, Pp, 17.

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Kymlicka, Will, Nation-Building and Minority Rights: Comparing Africa and the West, in: Bruce Berman, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka (eds.), *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, Athens: Ohio University Press, (2004) 54-71.

¹²⁶ Ibid

2.6 The “Land of Cush” and Nation Building in South Sudan

Another theme that has emerged is the attempt to trace the origins of the modern state of Southern Sudan to the ancient and mystical land of Kush. A Nubian state that formed part of the Egyptian empire for much of its existence, it is typically said to have been along the Nile in the present-day Republic of Sudan, the North (Török 1997).¹²⁷ One of the reasons for its popularity among some Christian South Sudanese lies in the fact that Kush is sometimes equated with the biblical persona Cush, son of Ham and brother of Canaan, who appears in Genesis and the Books of Chronicles. Thus, Abuoi Jook Alith starts his patriotic poem “*Diverse south Sudan we yearned*” with the following lines: Southern Sudan diversities let us all unite.¹²⁸ The popularity of Cush or Kush is further evidenced by the new national anthem’s former working title “Land of Cush”, though this was later dropped. Other lines that hold the same attachment are; “Oh Cush!” and “For your Grace upon Cush” became “Oh motherland!” and “For your grace upon South Sudan”, respectively.¹²⁹

Chol de Kwot, logistics expert, goes much further by advertising the “Republic of Kush” as the name of the new state of Southern Sudan.¹³⁰ Based on quotations in the Bible and the fact that the word Kush is used in the Jieng language (meaning, curiously, “unknown”), he argues that the Kingdom of Kush consisted of Nilotic tribes that were later forced to move South from present-day Egypt and the Republic of Sudan. More importantly, Kwot believes that the name Kush

¹²⁷Török, László, *The Kingdom of Kush: Handbook of the Napatan- Meroitic Civilization*, Leiden: Brill.(1997)

¹²⁸Alith, Abuoi Jook (2011), *Diverse South Sudan We Yearned*, in: *jubapost .org*, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-101.html>> (8 July 2011).

¹²⁹Martell, Peter (2011), *A Song for South Sudan: Writing a New National Anthem*, in: *BBC News*, 12 January, online: <www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12164171> (14 September 2011).

¹³⁰Kwot, Chol de (2011), *Why Republic of Kush Should be Adopted for the County in Waiting?*, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 25 January, online: <www.newsudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2312:why-republic-of-kush-should-be-dopted-for-country-in-waiting&Itemid=44> (4 October 2011).

would tap into the belief among many Southern Sudanese Christians that the story of the Israelites leaving Egypt in a 40-year search for their homeland finds its modern-day expression in their own liberation struggle, with John Garang in the role of Moses and Salva Kiir as his deputy Joshua.¹³¹ He adds that such strong belief in the fulfillment of God’s prophecy can easily be tapped into to enhance growth of patriotism and nationalism in the people of southern Sudan which will in turn be a platform to rise beyond tribalism and other vices within a short time. Therefore, the Republic of Kush is a name with the ability to unite the people of the same land and destiny.¹³² In addition, patriotism that is centered on the idea of Cush could also “easily be marketed in the Christian world”.¹³³ Alier Ngong Oka from the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, in contrast, opposes the name Cush/Kush because it is an “*ambiguous geographical piece of land we can only claim to be part of, because our land is not the same as the old ‘Cush’*”, which also covers parts of the territory of the neighboring states of Chad, Ethiopia and Central African Republic.¹³⁴

The entire debate about Cush can be seen as exemplary of the wider phenomenon of rooting Southern Sudan’s independence and national identity in the biblical tradition and employing biblical language and imagery to elucidate the nation’s trajectory toward a Christian future. The national anthem’s first stanza “portrays Southern Sudanese’ trust in God and thanks God for the

¹³¹ Kiir Mayardit, Salva (2011), President Kiir’s Message on Martyrs’ Day, in: *gossmission.org*, 1 August, online: <www.gossmission.org/goss/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1230&Itemid=193> (27 April 2012).

¹³² Kwot, Chol de (2011), Why Republic of Kush Should be Adopted for the County in Waiting?, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 25 January, online: <www.newsudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2312:why-republic-of-kush-should-be-dopted-for-country-in-waiting&Itemid=44> (4 October 2011).

¹³³ *Ibid*

¹³⁴ Oka, Alier Ngong (2011), New Name for South Sudan Debate Broadened, in: *gurtong.net*, 10 January, online: <www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/4649/New-Name-For-South-Sudan-Debate-Broadened.aspx> (16 September 2011).

peace, freedom and resources he has given to the long-time marginalized persons in the new African state”.¹³⁵ Kenneth Oluka, editor at the Ugandan daily *The New Vision*, likens the independence celebrations of the multi-ethnic nation in Juba to “the day of Pentecost when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and they started speaking in tongues”.¹³⁶ Others see the Southern Sudanese victory over the North as being “akin to the biblical story of David vs. Goliath”.¹³⁷

Finally, Southern Sudanese seek to instill a sense of national belonging by having the newly composed national anthem taught and memorized all over the country while not forgetting to emphasize its high symbolic value, which merits taking an earnest approach to the song and its text. Thus, Joseph Kolombos, spokesperson for the Eastern Equatoria State Legislative Assembly, warned the public against using the Southern Sudan National Anthem in mobile phones as ringtones as the National Anthem is an important symbol for the country and it must be used with great respect and dignity.¹³⁸

2.7 Language diversity and nation building in South Sudan

Culturally diverse countries are confronted with the challenge of finding symbols for their people to rally around that transcend their ethnic, linguistic, and political differences. Currently, South Sudan seems most divided by its lack of an indigenous national language, a situation that has

¹³⁵Wudu, Boboya Simon (2011), South Sudan National Anthem Launched, in: *juba post.org*, June, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-127.html>> (8 July 2011).

¹³⁶Oluka, Kenneth (2011), Jubilant Crowds Welcome South Sudan, in: *thenewnation.net*, 10 July, online: <www.thenewnation.net/features.html?start=9> (1 October 2011).

¹³⁷New Sudan Vision (2011), The Meaning Behind South Sudan Declaration of Independence, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 8 July, online: <www.newsudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2396:editorial-the-meaning-behind-declaration-of-south-sudan-independence&catid=1:sudan-news-stories&Itemid=6> (9 July 2011).

¹³⁸Jackson, Lagu Joseph (2011), Citizens Warned against Using National Anthem as Mobile Tones, in: *thecitizen.info*, 18 July, online: <www.thecitizen.info/general/citizens-warned-against-using-national-anthem-as-mobile-tones/> (21 July 2011).

prompted government discussion on the phenomena.¹³⁹ South Sudan might follow the experiences of other, similarly diverse countries in developing a national language, whether it creates a hybrid of a number of local languages, drawing from the Indonesian model, or adopts English as the language of government, business, and education.

There has been a suggestion that five languages should be selected from the three main regions of the country.¹⁴⁰ In each of these regions, the majority of the people speak languages that could be elevated to the national level. In Upper Nile, Nuer is the language of the majority could be one of the national languages from that region. Dinka is the majority language in seven states mainly from greater Bar El ghazel and Upper Nile, as are Bari, Latuka, and Zande, which are spoken by the majority of people in three states mainly from the Equatoria. However, the argument is that developing these national languages does not mean that the small languages would be allowed to die off; their use at a local level would be encouraged. Consequently, the project of selecting national-level languages will require open dialogue with all South Sudanese communities, perhaps by commissioning a survey to solicit ideas from a cross-section of communities.

Linking the language policy to the educational curriculum, all indigenous languages could be taught in primary school up to, say, the third grade, after which English could take over as the medium of instruction. This would result in the majority of people, especially the urban and educated population, being trilingual in the national language, English, and a special version of

¹³⁹ *ibid*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*

Arabic that has already begun to function as a lingua franca across South Sudan. Lack of a unifying language does not mean that Southern Sudan cannot develop as a unified nation, but failure to address the issue may slow down the speed of its development.

Having a national language would lessen feelings of exclusion and domination by one or few ethnic groups, not to mention that people could communicate across ethnic boundaries more easily, easing conflict and alleviating suspicions of domination and favoritism. For instance, there might be a problem say in government offices when two officials from one ethnic background speak to each other in their native tongue in the presence of members of other ethnic groups; such can be quite upsetting for those who do not understand that particular language, and the use of tribal language might suggest that the officials are conspiring about something they do not want the others to understand. Dealing with this issue is currently one of the debates in government circles, that is, whether there might be a need for legislation that prohibits conducting official business in a language other than the official language of government.¹⁴¹

2.8 Government Role in Nation Building in South Sudan

Exemplifying how worried people are about South Sudan's transition to statehood was the large crowd that attended a series of lectures held at Juba University, organized by Rift Valley Institute and the university's Center for Peace and Development Studies, on the topic of culture and nation in Southern Sudan.¹⁴² The lectures raised the questions of whether Southern Sudan is ready for and capable of nationhood, and what it will take for the statehood process to happen

¹⁴¹ *Toward a New Republic of Sudan* by Jon Temin and Theodore Murphy (Special Report, June 2011)

¹⁴² *Ibid*

smoothly. Other questions in this debate concerned the role of cultural diversity in development.¹⁴³ Various institutions have organized many similar events throughout Southern Sudan since the January referendum, garnering much attention from ordinary citizens, government officials, and international development partners.

The discussions have made two things clear. First, most people are aware of the distinction between nation building and state building, understanding that they are related but different projects, and second, the idea of nation building is a concern of everyone throughout Southern Sudan.¹⁴⁴ On the one hand, state building focuses on economic development, upgrading the capacity of human resources, an effective security apparatus, responsible fiscal policy, efficient service delivery, and general infrastructure. It also entails policies aimed at encouraging the growth of the private sector, including foreign investment. Nation building, on the other hand, refers to a national political project that would produce a sense of national unity and collective national identity with an eye to preventing discord along ethnic lines, especially as tribal violence and its ongoing destructive legacies remain part of a collective memory among South Sudanese.¹⁴⁵

Any government activities that citizens recognize as insensitive to the history of ethnic discord will automatically project ethnic bias. Nation-building program needs to focus on citizens themselves, seeking to cultivate a strong sense of national over tribal membership. Such a

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ ibid

¹⁴⁵ Deng, Francis M.), Sudan's Turbulent Road to Nationhood, in: Ri-cardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism, and the African State*, Boulder: (Lynne Rienner, 2005), 33-86.

program would not emanate from a conviction that nations are made, not born nor can accidents of history and geography necessarily result in a unified nation, at least not in the sense of fostering citizens' feelings of belonging and loyalty. Creating such a nation, especially in an age where no country can avoid the global limelight, requires a vision, a plan, and honest and participatory actions, not just the pronouncements of politicians and the wishes of a few dedicated nationalists.¹⁴⁶

Interviewees with South Sudanese nationals suggest that the government and its development partners seem heavily focused on state building and less so on nation building.¹⁴⁷ This represents a missed opportunity for the young state. Though they are conceptually distinct, in practice, state and nation building can be mutually reinforcing. Providing services, improving living standards, and strengthening security allows citizens to be proud of their country, just as pride in one's nation is the foundation for stability, producing an environment in which services can be provided. So whatever projects a new country conceives it has to view nation and state as separate but inseparable components of the same project. The government cannot focus too much on one without investing in the other.

South Sudan having become a state, it also needs to become a nation.¹⁴⁸ Citizens 'sense of exclusion from the national platform as in key decision making positions in the executive branch of government media, government programs, and access to services cannot be all owed to grow. The euphoria of independence will be accompanied by the challenges of building a new

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Jendia, Catherine, *The Sudanese Civil Conflict, 1969-1985*, (New York: Lang, 2002)

nation, a project that will have to go beyond the usual temptation of focusing on material and infrastructure development as well as delivery of basic social services. These are all important and expected dividends of independence, but it will be near impossible to meet citizens' expectations if South Sudan fails to become a nation.

Over decades, the struggle for freedom from the grip of the Khartoum government has been the most unifying force for South Sudanese.¹⁴⁹ Fortunately, this struggle has borne fruit and there is no more north to blame hence what will unite Southern Sudanese is the desire to build a nation with a shared identity. Such a collective identity needs to be politically constructed, and it is the task of its leadership, government, civil society, and private enterprise to do it by turning South Sudan's cultural diversity into a national asset. Under normal circumstances, diversity is celebrated as a source of strength and enrichment of the human endeavor; such an approach in South Sudan will signify a discourse of hope and togetherness. Engaging in anything short of this will reflect a discourse of hegemony, exclusion, and assumptions of homogeneity. To go in for the latter is to make diversity a liability and a hazard, creating a discourse of discord. In the worst circumstances, it can be a discourse of rejection. To view diversity as a threat, as the Islamist government in Khartoum did regarding southerners, is to condemn difference and position otherness as a rationale for stigmatization.

The current discourse found in the South Sudan government's policies is inclusive and broad-based, and at least as a matter of policy, there has been a collective agreement to begin

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

constructing the nation's identity.¹⁵⁰ This agreement emanates from an apparent conviction that the lack of unifying symbols in the face of ethnic and cultural diversity is an impediment to national unity. Historically, and given the strong ethnic loyalties within Southern Sudan, the most significant enemy of the country's cohesion, national loyalty, and citizen pride will be the currently widespread suspicion of ethnicity-based exclusion from the national platform and other aspects of South Sudanese national life.¹⁵¹ This same sense of exclusion is one of the most important factors in South Sudan leaving Sudan, and authorities are keen not to practice the same policies.

At the same time, however, some government officials have tended to engage in exclusionary practices¹⁵² or at least the public perceives that they do and these have in the past been based on ethnic differences. If these practices continue in the new Southern Sudan, any citizen who feels excluded will never develop that important sense of pride in nation.

A starting point to addressing the feeling of exclusion is for the government to state the obvious: that South Sudan belongs to all South Sudanese, and not to any ethnic, religious, or political group.¹⁵³ In a bid to put this simple fact into action, in distributing the nation's resources and in governance generally, the government has gone on record by stating that the whole country must address itself to identifying, documenting, preserving, displaying, promoting, and celebrating the

¹⁵⁰James, Wendy), Sudan: Majorities, Minorities, and Language Interactions, in: Andrew Simpson (ed.), *Language and National Identity in Africa*, Oxford: (Oxford University Press, 2008),61-78.

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Ibid

¹⁵³*Local Justice in Southern Sudan* by Cherry Leonardi, Leben Nelson Moro, Martina Santschi, and Deborah H. Isser (Peace works, September 2010)

cultural practices that are common to all Southern Sudanese.¹⁵⁴ According to this policy commitment, the religious practices, dancing arts, marriage systems, indigenous languages, natural environment, and unique ecological zones inhabited by dozens of Southern Sudanese ethnic nationalities must be celebrated as a mix of symbols that bind together the people of South Sudan, making it unique and yet similar to the rest of black Africa.¹⁵⁵

2.9 Tribalism and Nation Building in South Sudan

Tribalism has been termed as a common enemy that shows up in articles from news media across the spectrum. Given the fact that Southern Sudan is a home to more than sixty tribes with no ethnic group in a numerical position to establish majority nationalism reminiscent of European nation-building, fear of tribalism as a divisive factor is hardly surprising.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, many people in South Sudan, especially those living outside the cities, have very little interaction with the state, which according to Achille Mbembe, is one of the major reasons people turn to communitarian structures like clans or tribes.¹⁵⁷

Nasredeem Abdulbari, a lecturer at the International and Comparative Law Department at the University of Khartoum, therefore praises the draft constitution⁸ for its inclusive definition of citizenship while refraining from equating citizenship with a particular ethnic, cultural or religious identity: Wisdom he adds “*is therefore dictates that nations, states, and governments*

¹⁵⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵⁵ *ibid*

¹⁵⁶ Cook, Traci, *Intergovernmental Relations in Southern Sudan*, Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, online: <www.ndi.org/node/14950> (4 July 2011). (2008)

¹⁵⁷ Mbembe, Achille (2001), *On the Postcolony*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

concentrate directly on how different identities could peacefully live together, and establish a strong nation, rather than sparking unnecessary debates over the identity of the state."¹⁵⁸

Joana Adams, a regular contributor to South Sudan Nation based in Juba, makes a similar point in even stronger language by asserting that it is a serious judgment of error to entertain desires to give Southern Sudan a single, national cultural identity. The CPA was negotiated with the understanding that Southern Sudan is a multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-religious, and multi-racial society.¹⁵⁹ Consequently, amongst state officials, there also seems to be an awareness of the need to overcome tribal allegiance with national allegiance in order to make way for a functioning state. During independence celebrations, President Salva Kiir called on the citizens of South Sudan: "*You may be a Zande, Kakwa, Lutugo, Nuer, Dinka or Shiluk, but first remember yourself as a South Sudanese*".¹⁶⁰ On another occasion, Kiir appealed especially to the younger generation to refrain from tribal tendencies, as nation-building required building a national conscience.¹⁶¹ Moreover, Kuol Manyang, governor of Jonglei State, reminded new graduates of the police academy that they "*are now police of the nation not for the tribe*".¹⁶² At the presentation of the South's new national anthem, South Sudan's information and broadcasting minister stated that its "*words like unity, harmony and peace that advocate for one*

¹⁵⁸ Abdulbari, Nasredeen (2011), South Sudan Needs to Recognize Citizenship, in: *Sudan tribune.com*, 13 May, online: <www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-needs-to-recognize,38884> (9 July 2011).

¹⁵⁹ Adams, Joana (2011a), The RoSS Draft Constitution Debate, in: *south Sudan nation.com*, 20 June, online: <www.southsudannation.com/rossdraftconstdebate%20josephn78.htm> (4 October 2011).

¹⁶⁰ Sudan Tribune (2011b), Salva Kiir Takes Oath, Grants Amnesty to Rebels, in: *sudantribune.com*, 10 July, online: <www.sudantribune.com/Salva-Kiir-takes-oath-grants,39479> (20 April 2011).

¹⁶¹ Kiir Mayardit, Salva (2011), President Kiir's Message on Martyrs' Day, in: *gossmission.org*, 1 August, online: <www.gossmission.org/goss/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1230&Itemid=193> (27 April 2012).

¹⁶² Manyang David (2011), New Police Force ahead of Independence, in: *juba post.org*, June, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-155.html>> (8 July 2011).

tribe in the new nation should be kept at the fingertips”.¹⁶³ Meanwhile, David Marial Gumke, Rumbek East County commissioner, warns of inter-ethnic conflict. He reiterated that “*Unless we abandon tribalism and sectionalism in the country we cannot build a peaceful nation.*” Instead of concentrating on the differences between different tribes like Nuer, Dinka, Shilluk, Azande, Acholi and Bari, “*we should all be united now and call ourselves Southern Sudanese*”.¹⁶⁴ And the poet argues that it’s high time Southern Sudanese started to see that too much focus on one’s tribal needs is the express lane to most of Africa’s frictional tribal nonsense and political instabilities.¹⁶⁵

The alleged overrepresentation of Dinka in key government positions has raised serious complaint among writers. The charge of “Dinka domination” goes back to the days of the Southern Regional Government (SRG) under Abel Alier in the 1970s and early 1980s,¹⁶⁶ and facilitated the Nimeiry government’s dissolution of the SRG.¹⁶⁷ A columnist at the *Southern Sudan News Agency* has traced the root causes of internal conflict in Southern Sudan to alleged Dinka domination in political affairs and deems the SPLM politburo “a rubber stamp used by one ethnic group (Dinka) to dominate others by using their numbers to impose decisions on others”.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³Wudu, Boboya Simon (2011), South Sudan National Anthem Launched, in: *juba post.org*, June, online: <<http://jubapost.org/article-127.html>> (8 July 2011).

¹⁶⁴Mon, Benjamin Majok (2011), Commissioner: Tribalism Undermines South’s Independence, in: *sudanvotes.com*, 15 July, online: <www.sudanvotes.com/articles/?id=930> (6 October 2011).

¹⁶⁵Garang, Kuir (2011), Stop Whining and Start Building your Counties, in: *southsudannation.com*, 18 September, online: <www.southsudannation.com/stopwhiningandstart%20kuirgarang78.htm> (6 October 2011).

¹⁶⁶Jendia, Catherine, *The Sudanese Civil Conflict, 1969-1985*, New York: Lang. (2002)

¹⁶⁷Johnson, Douglas H. (2011a), *Abyei: Sudan’s West Bank: The Enough Project*, online: <www.enoughproject.org/publications/abyei-sudans-west-bank>(21 June 2011).

¹⁶⁸South Sudan News Agency (2011), The Root Causes of Conflicts in South Sudan, in: *southsudannewsagency.com*, 14 May, online: <www.southsudannewsagency.com/news/top-stories/the-root-causes-of-conflicts-in-South-Sudan> (28 September 2011).

Elhag Paul, a frequent commentator on various websites, similarly accuses the government of “Dinkocracy” and failing to deliver unity and peace.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, he does not spare his own ethnic group, Equatorians, which he also sees as guilty of tribalism. He stresses that the lesson to be learnt is that “*supporting crooks because they come from our tribes is not nationalism at all*”.¹⁷⁰ On the other hand, Jacob K. Lupai, less drastic in his choice of words but no less critical of perceived Dinka overrepresentation in government, like Paul, contributes to several outlets by lamenting that 12 out of 32 national ministers and 7 out of 15 government advisors hail from the same ethnic group.¹⁷¹ Riak G. Majokdit on the other hand does not focus exclusively on the Dinka but sees a more general threat of domination by larger ethnicities. According to him, the South Sudanese nation will not prosper if big nationalities, such as Nuer (Naath), Dinka (Muonyjang), Azande or Colo abuse their God-given numeric strength to dominate small nationalities politically, economically, culturally and socially.¹⁷²

In recognition of the problematic nature of appointments based on tribal allegiance rather than qualification, Dr. Jok Madut Jok, undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and a renowned academic, has been more critical of journalists’ style of reporting events in the young nation. He claims that instead of focusing their criticism on individuals, journalists accuse ethnic groups as a whole of wrong doings and corruption. The long-term effect of this is that the media

2011).

¹⁶⁹Paul, Elhag (2011), SPLM’s Political Tricks: Appointing Crooks in Cabinet, in: *sudantribune.com*, 31 August, online: <www.sudantribune.com/SPLM-s-political-tricks-Appointing,40005> (16 September 2011).

¹⁷⁰ **Ibid**

¹⁷¹Lupai, Jacob K. (2011a), The New Nation, in: *gurtong.net*, 1 May, online: <www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/5161/categoryId/24/The-New-Nation.aspx> (16 September 2011).

¹⁷²Majokdit, Riak G. (2011), We Have Finally Done It!, in: *thecitizen.info*, 20 July, online: <www.thecitizen.info/opinion/we-have-finally-done-it/> (1 October 2011).

has further polarized the country along ethnic lines when the aim was to close the gap so that there is a nation united by a sense of loyalty and belonging.¹⁷³

Framing grievances with the government along exclusively ethnic lines prevents the rise of multi-ethnic coalitions that could serve to allow each and every tribe to feel like an equitable part of the state and the nation. Jok argue that responsible journalism therefore ought to calm the already volatile ethnic make-up of our country, with a view to forging a future of citizenship in the nation rather than in the tribe.¹⁷⁴

University of Toronto geology student Chol Marol Deng presents quite a different approach to the issue of tribal strife: He sees reconciliation between Dinka and Nuer as an essential step on the way to forming a nation.¹⁷⁵ These two ethnic groups constituted the major opponents in the South–South civil war that erupted in the years following the SPLM/A’s split into two factions in 1991, during which both groups suffered from cycles of reciprocal violence, killings and displacements.¹⁷⁶ Deng argued that for people to feel the full meaning of freedom, forgiveness is necessary between those that were involved in any conflict.¹⁷⁷ Reconciliation is also at the core of Jok Madut Jok’s plea because “domination of the national platform by certain ethnic groups at

¹⁷³ Jok, Jok Madut (2011b), Public Reactions to Kiir’s New Cabinet and the Crisis of Nationalist Thinking, in: *thecitizen.info*, 11 September, online: <www.thecitizen.info/opinion/public-reactions-to-kiir%E2%80%99s-new-cabinet-and-the-crisis-of-nationalist-thinking/> (16 September 2011).

¹⁷⁴ **Ibid**

¹⁷⁵ Deng, Chol Marol (2011), Southern Sudan: Nowhere Near the “Promised Land” – Part III, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 25 March, online: <www.new-sudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2344:southern-sudan-nowhere-near-the-promised-landq-part-iii-&catid=5:columns&Itemid=14> (9 July 2011).

¹⁷⁶ Hutchinson, Sharon E. (2001), A Curse from God? Religious and Political Dimensions of the Post-1991 Rise of Ethnic Violence in South Sudan, in: *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 39, 2, 307-331.

¹⁷⁷ Deng, Chol Marol (2011), Southern Sudan: Nowhere Near the “Promised Land” – Part III, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 25 March, online: <www.new-sudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2344:southern-sudan-nowhere-near-the-promised-landq-part-iii-&catid=5:columns&Itemid=14> (9 July 2011).

the expense of others can only produce citizens who give no loyalty to the nation.¹⁷⁸ Generally, the majority of commentators decry tribal allegiance as detrimental to a strong national identity while being wary of domination by demographically strong ethnic groups. Significantly, as Jok points out, the very fact that writers describe problems in ethnic terms serves to reinforce the salience of ethnicity and tribe.¹⁷⁹

Conclusion

Sudan was a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-lingual, and multi-ethnic country. However, over a long period one identity grouping, which happened to be “Arab” and Islamic, dominated. It defined itself as the Sudanese identity, and at various times oppressed, assimilated, disenfranchised, marginalized and tried to destroy other identities. The second is the centre-periphery dynamic. Power, resources and development were concentrated in a small geographical area and amongst a small number of ethnic groups in the centre of Sudan. All peripheral areas were marginalized. These dynamics led to the wars in Sudan, not only in the South but also Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and the Eastern Front, and to tensions even in the far north amongst Nubians. It created second-class citizens (and some would say third and fourth class too).

¹⁷⁸Jok, Jok Madut (2011b), Public Reactions to Kiir’s New Cabinet and the Crisis of Nationalist Thinking, in: *thecitizen.info*, 11 September, online: <www.thecitizen.info/opinion/public-reactions-to-kiir%E2%80%99s-new-cabinet-and-the-crisis-of-nationalist-thinking/> (16 September 2011).

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*

The danger of the same dynamics in Southern Sudan cannot be ruled out. If there is a perception that any one group, whether ethnic, geographical, political or whatever, is appropriating to itself not only power and resources but the very concept of national identity, then there is a potential for conflict. National identity must be built on the primacy of citizenship, not any other criteria.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CURRENT STATE OF SOUTH SUDAN

3.1 An overview of the history of Sudan

This section analysis the road to independent of South Sudan by looking at the conflicts that have occurred in Sudan and the major ethnic groups that are represented in the independent South Sudan.

The history of Sudan has been strongly influenced by the Arab world since the Seventh century. In 651, Muslim Egyptians invaded Sudan, and signed a peace treaty with the Christian state of Makuria ruled by the Nubians, first inhabitants of the country. The treaty came to be known as *bakt*,¹⁸⁰ and was based on mutual respect of each other's political and cultural integrity. Accordingly, Makuria had to provide the Egyptians with slaves in exchange for goods. This historical pattern is central, because the exploitation of marginalized regions is still an ongoing process in modern Sudan. With the first Arab invasion, the Egyptian Arabs and the Nubians became linked by frequent intermarriages. Although the *bakt* was a treaty of peaceful coexistence, Northern Sudan underwent a slow process of Islamization. During the 1200s, the Egyptian military ruling class, the Mamlukes, attacked the state of Makuria, which finally collapsed around the 1300s.¹⁸¹

In fifteenth century the black population of the Blue Nile region mixed with the Arabs, and founded the Kingdom of the Funj where Sennar became the capital.¹⁸² The Funj started to

¹⁸⁰ Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African-American Experience, (New York , 1999). 1793.

¹⁸¹ Ibid

¹⁸² Ibid

expand northward destroying in 1504 the Kingdom of Alwa - last Christian state of Sudan. The Funj unified the country, by subduing the pagan states of Darfur and Kordofan (1596), and by establishing local Muslim dynasties. The hegemony of Sennar lasted until 1786, when the Funj were suppressed by the Hameg, who threw the country into anarchy.¹⁸³

Islamic law and religion came to Sudan through pilgrims and holy men.¹⁸⁴ Arabization was strengthened by the presence of Arab merchants, who linked Sudan with the Arab world. The 1797 Battle of the Pyramids, led by Napoleon Bonaparte, weakened the power of the Mamlukes. This event helped the Egyptian Khedive Mohammed Ali to conquer the regions of Kordofan and Sennar in 1821, and the district of Dongola around 1820-22. Mohammed Ali melted Sudan with Egypt, and founded a new capital in Khartoum in 1823.¹⁸⁵ The Egyptian domination accelerated the Islamization and Arabization of the indigenous tribes of the North and promoted their development. However, the Egyptian conquest also increased the spread of the slave trade, perpetrated by the Arab ruling classes, known as Jellaba. The Jellaba were merchants who had come to Sudan with Islam. The slave trade was the means by which the Egyptians could finally conquer in 1874 the Darfur region and Southern Sudan.¹⁸⁶

Consequently, the bad administration of local governors, the establishment of the Anglo-French dominion on Egypt, and the repeated attempts by the Khedive Isma'il, successor of

¹⁸³ Ibid

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

¹⁸⁵ Stevens, Richard P., The 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement and the Sudan's Afro-Arab Policy, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Jun., 1976), pp. 247-274

¹⁸⁶ Ibid

Mohammed Ali, to suppress the slave trade were the causes for the bloody Mahdist Revolt (1881-1898).¹⁸⁷ The revolt attempted to create an Islamic state, but it faced the opposition of the Fur sultanate. The Fur are the predominant ethnic group in the Darfur region. They were never fully subjected to the strict Islamic law of the Mahdist state, but they applied Islamic law based on the Fur ethnicity and tradition. During this period, after the Fashoda incident (Sep. 1898), the British affirmed their interest on this area, and in 1899 an Anglo-Egyptian condominium was reacted.

Accordingly, Sudan was still economically tied to Egypt, but it was administered by the British. The condominium regime was renewed even in early twentieth century. However, a profound divergence arose between Great Britain and the Egyptian nationalists on the fate of the country.¹⁸⁸ When in 1922, Egyptian Sultan, Fuadi, had proclaimed himself hereditary ruler of the two countries, the British did not oppose, mainly because they maintained the practical administration of the country. Greater divergence emerged in 1936 where on the one side, Britain wanted an independent Sudan (and for the purpose it endowed the country with a Constitution in 1948 together with a legislative assembly), whereas, on the other, Egyptian nationalists wanted to annex the country to Egypt, claiming their legitimate right to rule the country.

The Egyptian nationalists' requests finally ended with Egypt's independence in 1953. In 1953, elections were held in Sudan, but they represented a compromise between the Egyptian

¹⁸⁷ Ibid

¹⁸⁸ Annan, Kofi, Darfur Descending: No Time For Apathy on Sudan, The Washington Post, Wednesday, January 25, 2006; Pg.19.

nationalists and Northern Sudanese parties. Egypt accepted Sudan's independence on the condition that the South was removed of its administrative powers. In response to Southern Sudan's non-representation in the elections, a violent protest, known as the Torit Mutiny, blew up in 1955.¹⁸⁹

3.1.1 The First Civil War

The Torit Mutiny is seen as the beginning of the first civil war in the Sudan.¹⁹⁰ The Sudan finally gained independence in 1956, but it was clear from the beginning that peace could not last if an agreement between North and South was not reached. In 1958 the first military coup ended the two years of pseudo-democratic governance and brought General Ibrahim Abbud to power. His policy of forced Islamization and Arabization was met with increasing violence, which led to the first civil war in 1962 between a mostly Arab Muslim North and a prevalently African Christian/Animist South.¹⁹¹

In 1965, a coup made elections finally possible, but only in the North. The South was not represented, because violence was still raging the region. However, the democratic regime was short-lived, as another military putsch took place in 1968. General Mohammed Nimeiri took the leadership of the country until 1985. The war only came to an end in 1972 with the Addis Ababa Agreement, which gave a higher degree of autonomy to the South.¹⁹² In February 1975, following a major cabinet reshuffle, General Gaafar Mohamed Nimeiri reaffirmed his

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

¹⁹⁰ "Can the African Union Bring Peace To Darfur?", Economist.com, (October 25th, 2004)

¹⁹¹ Irobi, Emma Godwin, Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Case Study of Nigeria and South Africa, May 2005.

¹⁹² Ibid

Government's basic commitment to the pursuit of an Afro-Arab foreign policy, and noted that this was not tied to particular personalities.

The appointment of the distinguished diplomat, Mansour Khalid, as Foreign Minister in August 1971 prompted charges that the Sudan's Arab ties were to be sacrificed to African interests, and thus his departure from office to become Minister of Education aroused speculation that greater Arab involvement, if not actual African disengagement, would now follow.¹⁹³ The Addis Ababa agreement did not reach an effective compromise between North and South for a stable peace. Certainly, another coup was perpetrated, which led to the elections in 1986 of Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of the moderate Islamist party, the Umma Party. In 1989, a modicum of stability at least in what concerns the head of government's position was reached as President Omar Hassan al-Bashir came to power through a military coup, and still retains power.¹⁹⁴

3.1.2 The Second Civil War

The second civil war erupted in 1983 and lasted twenty years, and mainly involved the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), which is the major rebel movement in the South.¹⁹⁵ The war emerged as a consequence of President Nimeiri to revoke the Addis Ababa Agreements and to establish Islamic law (*sharia*). In 1986, Sadiq al-Mahdi came to power, and initiated the peace talks with the SPLM/A. The "Koka Dam" Declaration aimed at abolishing *sharia*, but the President only signed the

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General, Geneva, 25 January (2005)

declaration in 1989.¹⁹⁶ However, after a few months a coup d'état deposed al-Mahdi, and the Declaration was disregarded.

The peace talks that finally put an end to the conflict initiated in 2002, and culminated in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 9, 2005. CPA established a six-year autonomy of the South (elections will be held in 2011), an even share from oil revenues between North and South, and the integration of rebels into the regular army.¹⁹⁷

3.1.3 The Darfur Crisis

The first battle in Darfur began in 1985, the same period when Sudan was suffering from a severe drought which brought untold suffering in the form of devastating famine.¹⁹⁸ The feeling of neglect by the government in Khartoum coupled with the denial by sedentary communities to allow migration on their land of the pastoralists towards the South created an explosive cocktail which pushed some in the Darfur region to pick up arms. The situation was further exacerbated by the massive movement of Chadian refugees fleeing the civil war that had begun in Chad, bringing with them more hardship. The civil conflict lasted for four years until a peace agreement was signed in 1989 by the warring faction.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

¹⁹⁷ Ibid

¹⁹⁸ Fisher Jonah, Dying As Darfur Awaits for Peacekeepers, Thursday, September 21, 2006, *BBC News*, from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5365770.stm>

¹⁹⁹ Ibid

This initial conflict created the mechanisms for future conflict. The 1989 Peace Accord lasted nearly for a decade and another conflict erupted in 2003 and has not been settled yet.²⁰⁰ The developments in Sudan over the years have led the present crisis to be at a glance an ethnic conflict, which sees mainly two sides: the Arab, government-sponsored militia, the *Janjaweed*, and the African ethnic groups - the Masalit, Fur and Zaghawa - of two rebel movements, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement (SLA). According to Human Rights Watch, between 2003 and 2005, the crisis has caused two million of internally displaced people (IDPs), 220,000 refugees to Chad, and 1.5 million still need food assistance. According to the UN Office in the Sudan, 200,000 people were killed since 2003.²⁰¹

The ongoing Darfur crisis started in early 2003 with the peace talks between North and South. The two Darfurian rebel groups - the SLM/A (Sudan Liberation Movement/Army) and the JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) started to conduct attacks against military installations in early 2003.²⁰² The rebel groups' major concern was that the peace agreement between North and South would have marginalized even more - politically and economically the region of Darfur. Since 2003, the government started to bombard African villages, and state-sponsored Arab militia, known as the *Janjaweed*, which has been involved in grave crimes against humanity, including ethnic cleansing, mass killings, and raping.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ AMIS: African Union Mission in Sudan (Darfur), www accord.org.za/ct/2005-4/ct4_2005_pgs52_53.

²⁰¹ Ibid

²⁰² AMIS: African Union Mission in Sudan (Darfur), www accord.org.za/ct/2005-4/ct4_2005_pgs52_53.

²⁰³ Ibid

On May 5, 2006, the Abuja Agreements were signed in Nigeria where the SLM and the Government signed the peace agreement brokered by the African Union and the US.²⁰⁴ The JEM did not sign the peace accord, because it did not meet JEM demands for a higher share of power in the Sudanese government. The agreement called for the disarmament of the Janjaweed and the incorporation of the rebels in the army, an annual \$200-million investment in the region, compensation to IDPs (internally displaced persons), and affirmative action in favor of the Darfurians to enhance inclusivity in public services.²⁰⁵

Despite the agreement, attacks by the Janjaweed did not subside and the local population continued to suffer from the brutal actions by both the Khartoum authorities and their Janjaweed militia. An AU peacekeeping force (AMIS- African Mission in Sudan) entered Darfur since 2004.²⁰⁶ Its main task is to protect IDPs from the Janjaweed. However, due to weaknesses in command and control, logistical support and operational practice, the peacekeeping force has been unable to eradicate violence in Darfur. The International Press denounced the continuation of bombing campaigns by the government. On 12 June 2007, President al-Bashir finally agreed to the deployment of a 20,000-men hybrid UN-AU force in Darfur. This was a first positive sign for conflict resolution.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Ibid

²⁰⁵ Ibid

²⁰⁶ Ibid

²⁰⁷ Darfur Peace Agreement signed on May 5, 2006, in Abuja -Nigeria.

3.1.4 Major Ethnic Groups in Sudan

Most ethnic groups in Sudan socially construe their ancestry, origins and culture by reference to the past. For instance, the Berti and Zaghawa claim descent from a Nilo-Saharan group, which came from northwest between the 1300s and the 1500s.²⁰⁸ However, despite the perceived common origins and ancestry, most modern ethnic groups in Sudan are also the result of centuries of migrations from neighboring countries. Accordingly, there are about nine major ethnic groups, each of which is subdivided in smaller ethnic groups.

The Arabs account for 55% of the population. They claim descent from Saudi Arabia or Yemen, and speak Arabic. The Arabs are not a uniform group, and ethnicity can be defined by the way of life of a community. Thus, for instance, a nomadic or sedentary livelihood modifies the perception of ethnicity.

The Bari people are both an agriculturalist and pastoralist society, living in South Sudan and professing traditional religious cult.

Despite their African descent, the Nubians have been arabized and Islamized throughout the centuries. Most of them claim themselves to be Arabs. The influx of Arabs to Egypt and Sudan had contributed to the suppression of the Nubian identity following the collapse of the last Nubian kingdom in 1900.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Ibid

²⁰⁹ "The Nubians", The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE ORIENT, http://lexicorient.com/e.o/sudan_4.htm

The Nuba account for 6% of the population, and are characterized by various ethnic sub-groupings. They predominantly live in the Kordofan region on the Nuba hills. They live mostly on agriculture and cattle rearing. Almost all Nuba profess so-called “traditional” religions, but those who moved to urban areas have adhered to the Islamic religion. However, it has been recalled that “The term Nuba refers to *‘bewildering complexity’* of ethnic groups .²¹⁰ There are more than 50 languages and dialect clusters, falling into 10 groups. Many authors have argued that the term 'Nuba' was originally an alien label used to group together all peoples living in the hills area who were seen as 'black Africans' as opposed to the Baggara Arabs.²¹¹

The Nuer mostly live in South Sudan, and consist of 4% of the total residents. The name “Nuer” is used by neighboring ethnic groups. However, they call themselves Naath. It is remarkable that “their communities are not closed, and groups originally belonging to other peoples have been included into the Nuer communities.”²¹² Their primary occupation is cattle raising, and their livelihood is semi-nomadic. Their religious belief is named “traditional”.

The Fur ethnicity lives in the Western regions of Sudan, especially in Darfur. They are 2.7% of the population, and they profess Islam. They mainly live on agriculture. The foundation of the Zandeis traced back to the 18th century when the Ambomu people conquered large lands where people of different ethnic groups lived. The people of the conquered lands would become the Zande. The Zande are also known as Asande or Niam-Niam, and live in Western part of

²¹⁰ Ibid

²¹¹ Suliman, Mohamed, *Ethnicity From Perception to Cause of Violent Conflicts: The Case of the Fur and Nuba Conflicts in Western Sudan*, CONTICI International Workshop, (Center For African Studies, London: Bern, 1997)

²¹² “The Nuer”, *The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE ORIENT*, http://lexicorient.com/e.o/sudan_4.htm

South Sudan, Congo, and the Central African Republic. The Zande are agriculturalists, and practice a theist religion.²¹³

Living in south-central Sudan, the Shilluk are 1,6% of Sudanese population. They are pastoralists, and also their religion is said to be traditional. The Dinka are 70% of Sudan's total population, and are mainly settled in the South. As the Arabs, the Dinka present about 25 ethnic subdivisions.²¹⁴ They are mainly semi-nomadic.

Table 3.1 Main Sudanese Ethnic Groups

Arabs	21,000,000	55%
Dinka	3,000,000	8.0%
Nuba	2,100,000	6.0%
Nuer	1,400,000	4.0%
Fur	1,000,000	2.7%
Zande	660,000	1.8%
Shilluk	600,000	1.6%
Bari	480,000	1.3%
Nubians	200,000	.5%
Other Peoples	6,300,000	17.0

Source: The Encyclopedia of the Orient http://lexicorient.com/e.o/sudan_4.htm

²¹³The Zande”, The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE ORIENT, http://lexicorient.com/e.o/sudan_4.htm

²¹⁴ Ibid

3.2 South Sudan's History of Resistance

At the time of the conquest and occupation of the Sudan by Mohamed Ali, the Viceroy of Egypt, in the first quarter of the 19th century, there did not exist a single political entity known as the Sudan. The Sudanic kingdoms of Sennar and Darfur between controlled much of what is now called the Northern Sudan, but the Southern waterways of the Bahr EL Arab, Bahr El Ghazal, White Nile, and Sobat were occupied and dominated by the Dinka, Shilluk, Annuak and Nuer, the four largest groups of South Sudanese peoples. Not only did they control the rivers, but much of the adjoining pastures and plains as well.²¹⁵

The territory and people of present-day Southern Sudan first had its unity under a single rule following the Turco-Egyptian conquest of the Sudan by Muhammad Ali's troops in 1821.²¹⁶ Throughout the nineteenth century, the South's integration consisted primarily of being the target of slave raids to fill the domestic and military demands in the Muslim North, Egypt, and the Middle East.²¹⁷ While the South remained largely unaffected by the Mahdist wars (1881–99), it nonetheless fell under British control after the latter's defeat in 1898, though "pacification" lasted until well into the 1920s.²¹⁸

In response to nationalist uprisings in Egypt and Northern Sudan, Britain instituted the "Southern Policy" that was administered separately from the North through the "Closed District Ordinance

²¹⁵ Alier Abel .*Too many agreements dishonored; Southern Sudan*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Ithac Press.1992.Pp,25.

²¹⁶ Hobs bawm, Eric J., *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, Cambridge University press (Cambridge: 1990)

²¹⁷ Gray, Richard, *A History of the Southern Sudan 1839-1889*, (London: Oxford University Press. 1961)

²¹⁸ Beshir, Mohamed O., *The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict*, (Lon-don: Hurst. 1968), Johnson, Douglas H., *Abyei: Sudan's West Bank: The Enough Project*, online: www.enoughproject.org/publications/abyei-sudans-west-bank (2011a).

Act". This political status existed until 1947 when it was reversed unceremoniously by both Britain and Egypt, this arrangement meant to segregate the South from the North while devoting precious few resources to development.²¹⁹ Consequently, when the Southern policy was repealed in 1946 and the South, where "a regional Southern identity had begun to take root",²²⁰ became part of independent Sudan in 1956, it had hardly any trained personnel and Southerners were severely under-represented in the new administration.²²¹ This underrepresentation combined with economic neglect and the central government's "policy of Arabization and Islamization in the South" sparked the Anyanya in surgency, the first civil war lasting from 1955/1963 until 1972.²²²

The South attained regional self-government with the 1972 Addis Ababa Peace Agreement, granting the South regional autonomy on all matters except national defense and foreign policy. The agreement was unilaterally dissolved by the president at the time. In order to continue wielding power, President Nimeiry enacted minimal Shariah law in 1977, provoking protests especially in the South. Nimeiry's policies culminated in the enforcement of strict Shariah law. The enactment of complete Shariah law resulted in the break-out of a second, full-scale war for independence, triggered the founding of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the second largest civil war from 1983 to 2005,²²³ in which about 2 million people died.²²⁴

²¹⁹ Aleng Elijah, *The Southern Sudan struggle for liberty*. Nairobi: East African Publishers.,(2009).Pp3.

²²⁰ Rolandsen, Øystein H., A False Start: Between War and Peace in the Southern Sudan, 1956–62, in: (*The Journal of African History*, 2011),109

²²¹ Johnson, Douglas H., *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce*, (Oxford: Currey. 2011b),30

²²² Ibid

²²³ Kymlicka, Will, Nation-Building and Minority Rights: Comparing Africa and the West, in: Bruce erman, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka (eds.), *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, Athens: (Ohio University Press, 2004), 54-71.

²²⁴ Leitenberg, Milton, *Deaths in Wars and Conflicts in the 20th Century*, Cornell University Peace Studies Program,

This war displaced large numbers of people; what had initially been a war between the government of Sudan and the SPLA also became a war between different Southern factions when the SPLA split in 1991.²²⁵ This South–South war also led to a more rigid conception of ethnic identity as the warring parties resorted to presenting the war as being fought between Dinka and Nuer, two of the South’s largest ethnic groups.

By the turn of the century, it had become obvious that neither side could win the war militarily. With exports from Southern oil fields (since 1999) making peace more attractive and the 9/11 attacks putting the Islamist regime in Khartoum (in power since Omar al-Bashir’s coup in 1989) under renewed international scrutiny, a series of internationally sponsored peace negotiations starting with the 2002 Machakos Protocol led to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accords (CPA) in 2005, granting self-government to the South under SPLM leadership and providing for a referendum on the region’s future status to be held by 2011.²²⁶ Although the SPLM/A, in contrast to the Anyanya, had not called for South independence but rather for a reformed, unitary “New Sudan”,²²⁷ the movement’s position had shifted in the course of the 1990s and there were very few proponents of unity left after John Garang died in a helicopter accident shortly after the signing of the CPA.

The results of the referendum in January 2011 (where more than 98 per cent were in favor of independence) are, unfortunately, evidence of a remarkably universal preference for separate

Occasional Paper, 29, 3rd ed., Ithaca, NY: (Cornell University, 2006)

²²⁵Nyaba, Peter Adwok, *Politics of Liberation in South Sudan*, Kampala: (Fountain Books.1997)

²²⁶Ahmed, Einas, The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Dynamics of Post-Conflict Political Partnership in Sudan, in: (*Africa Spec-trum*, 2009) 133-147.

²²⁷Garang, John (1992), *The Call for Democracy in Sudan*, London: Kegan Paul International.

statehood. This superficial overview of South Sudan's history provides a view that the presence of an aggressive and often predatory "other" be it the central government or a rival faction in South Sudan that serves to unify those under attack has been a near constant. Consequently, confronting and fighting a common enemy has been more important in defining the South Sudanese nation than have internal dynamics of unifying around a positive common denominator (shared ancestry, language, destiny, etc.).²²⁸

With Southern Sudanese living in their own state for the first time in history, the question arises of what will hold it together now that the North-South divide no longer serves to mute intraregional differences and ethnic or tribal fragmentation.²²⁹ Presently, relations with the Republic of Sudan remain tense, and the short independence period has already seen outbreaks of violence in the contested area of Abyei,²³⁰ as well as a public spat over the division of oil revenues.²³¹

Though an external enemy or cultural disparagement from the outside may be a necessary condition for the birth of nationalism, it may not be a sufficient instrument.²³² If the argument that exclusion from power and relative resource deprivation serves to heighten the cultural identity and solidarity of subordinate groups holds, then the lack of Northern Sudanese oppression as welcome as it is for obvious reasons may strain the sense of togetherness in

²²⁸ Ibid

²²⁹Deng, Francis M., Sudan's Turbulent Road to Nationhood, in: Ri-cardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism, and the African State*, Boulder: (Lynne Rienner, 2005) 33-86

²³⁰Johnson, Douglas H., *Abyei: Sudan's West Bank: The Enough Project*, (2011a)

²³¹ Ibid

²³²Berlin, Isaiah, Nationalism: Past Neglect and Present Power, in: Isaiah Berlin, Henry Hardy and Roger Hausheer (eds.), *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001) 346

independent Southern Sudan.²³³ As one of the world's poorest countries, Southern Sudan is not in a position to buy loyalty with hand-outs to the population; hence, appeals to nationalism and a widely accepted "imagined community"²³⁴ would be a much more plausible option.²³⁵ Regrettably, this is not a process that happens automatically, as identification has to be made to matter, through the power of symbols and ritual experiences, for example.²³⁶ And loyalty does not come free: consequently, people are loyal to ethnic, national, or other imagined communities not because they were born into them, but because such foci of loyalty promise to offer something deemed meaningful, valuable, or useful.²³⁷

3.3 Independent South Sudan

Southern Sudan was declared independent from the Republic of Sudan in July 2011, and officially became the Republic of South Sudan. An event that was accompanied by headlines proclaiming the "birth of a nation".²³⁸ Despite the fact that South Sudan has received international recognition for its claim to statehood by virtue of joining the United Nations, the question of what kind of nation has been born or whether there is but one nation in the new state cannot be answered quite as easily. Unlike the beginning of nationalist projects in Ireland, Croatia or, in fact, the United States, South Sudanese collective action and collective identity have historically been primarily reactive and can be traced back to resistance to external forces. In the case of

²³³Markakis, John, Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Horn of Africa, in: Paris Yeros (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Africa: Constructivist Reflections and Contemporary Politics*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999),65-80.

²³⁴Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed., (London: Verso. 2006)

²³⁵Herbst, Jeffrey, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.2000)

²³⁶Jenkins, Richard, *Social Identity*, (London: Taylor & Francis.2008),6

²³⁷Eriksen, Thomas Hyland, A Non-ethnic State for Africa?, in: Paris Yeros (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Africa: Constructivist Reflections and Contemporary Politics*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999),45-64.

²³⁸Ibid

South Sudan, the “other” which is instrumental in defining the identity of the group “self”²³⁹ has been the Northern Sudanese elite in its attempt to forcefully impose an Arab-Muslim national identity on the whole of Sudan.²⁴⁰

South Sudan is coming into existence after long wars of liberation, inheriting poor infrastructure, a volatile political climate, limited capacity for governance, weak state institutions, a financial crises, violent ethnic divisions, and an uncertain regional and international political atmosphere. Scholars have asserted that the new nation will be driven more by the euphoria of independence from Sudan, the political pronouncements of its leadership, and the history of an extremely violent conflict with the north than by its practical abilities as a nation-state.²⁴¹ Currently, South Sudan is only slightly more than a geographical expression. It contains more than sixty cultural and linguistic groups, each of which has a stronger sense of citizenship in their tribes than in the nation. The main glue that binds the country’s multiple ethnicities together is the history of their struggle for freedom and collective opposition to the north. The most recent phase of this struggle, long and hard, under the leadership of the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement (SPLM), was an experience that transcended ethnic boundaries, emphasizing unity of purpose during the war.²⁴² This accelerated the concept of and conviction about separate nationhood from the north, especially leading up to the 2011 referendum on self-determination, as the dream of independence was turning into reality.

²³⁹Said, Edward W., *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books.1979)

²⁴⁰Sharkey, Heather J., Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity, and Race, in: *African Affairs*, (2008),21-43.

²⁴¹Lesch, Ann Mosely, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities*, Indiana Series in Middle East Studies, Oxford: James Currey. 1998),3

²⁴²Khalid, Mansour, *The Government They Deserve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan’s Political Evolution*, (London: Kegan Paul. 1990),387;

Despite violent discord within the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) and the creation of ethnic militias that fought bitter wars against it, the undeniable fact is that all South Sudanese remained motivated by the need for unity of purpose and ranks in their struggle for self-determination. However, South Sudan's unity remains undefined: At independence, the country has found itself with only a hazy notion of a collective national identity beyond its unified opposition to the north, making its viability as a nation a matter of speculation.²⁴³ Given the history of internal political rivalries along ethnic lines, the state's inability to immediately provide the highly anticipated peace dividends and fruits of independence, as well as the violence and insecurity that is likely to accompany the mechanics of separation; there have been predictions of possible disintegration.²⁴⁴

Scholars have asserted that there have been presumptions that ethnic squabbles within South Sudan will increase over the allocation of state resources and services, which could dissipate the vague sense of national unity among the people of the new country.²⁴⁵ They argue that such rivalries, if not managed in the most tolerant and inclusive manner possible could easily thwart the nation-building project. In response to these predictions, the South Sudanese political leadership, while acknowledging the challenges of building a nation from scratch, has discounted talk of failure and collapse; it has given assurances that it will deliver to the people their long-denied state services, address peoples' expectations for what independence holds, deal

²⁴³Ibid

²⁴⁴Rolandsen, Øystein H.), *Guerrilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*, Uppsala: (Nordic Africa Institute. 2005)

²⁴⁵Manby, Bronwen, *International Law and the Right to Citizenship in Sudan*, Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa,(2011)

with corruption and insecurity, and establish a stable and unified country.²⁴⁶

The government's conviction regarding its ability to cater to its people of South Sudan will have an arduous journey to nationhood. Its development projects will need a strong foundation of security and stability, which the new state is currently short of.²⁴⁷ The current questions many are asking is that, will there be a need for a kind of new north that is, an external factor that South Sudanese will need to galvanize against? or do they have enough historical connections to feed the new fervor for national belonging, no matter the country's internal ethnic, political, and class differences?²⁴⁸

3.4 Ethnic Diversity in South Sudan

After the July 2011 independence, South Sudan has experienced many inter-ethnic conflicts over resources, underscoring the need for well-defined property rights as well as a strategy for conflict anticipation and resolution.²⁴⁹ In an environment where land rights are not well-specified and a huge amount of small arms are in circulation, violent conflict over grazing rights becomes pervasive. For example, violence broke out between the Murle and Nuer ethnic groups only a month after independence. This particular episode resulted in the killing of 600 Nuer people, the kidnapping of children and the slaughter of tens of thousands of cattle.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶Ibid

²⁴⁷ Abdulbari, Nasredeen, South Sudan Needs to Recognize Citizenship, in: *sudantribune.com*, (2011)

²⁴⁸Ibid

²⁴⁹ Gettleman, J. "Born in Unity, South Sudan is Torn Apart Again." (*The New York Times*. 2012)

²⁵⁰ibid

Currently, interethnic conflict is concentrated in Jonglei State, where the Murle and Lou Nuer have a long history of revenge attacks against each other primarily over cattle. However, the long civil war introduced weapons to these groups and arms have made these attacks increasingly deadly. Unfortunately, the central government in Juba has not done enough to prevent these types of violent confrontations.

The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, while focused on state-building, has been silent on important considerations such as the establishment and protection of farmers' grazing rights, indigenous mechanisms for people to amicably settle their disputes and more importantly, an institutional framework for conflict anticipation, prevention and resolution.²⁵¹ The only provision of the constitution that connects with conflict in some form is Article 149, Chapter VII, which provides for the creation of an independent demobilization, disarmament and re-integration commission.²⁵² However, this commission is intended to be backward-looking as it is aimed at dealing with the consequences of the past war.²⁵³ Nowhere in the constitution is there any anticipation of future ethnic conflicts. The inadequacies of the transitional constitution seem to have been catered for in the 2011–2013 South Sudan Development Plan, which notably provides for the creation of county-level consultative peace platforms.²⁵⁴ However, these efforts have not yet materialized.

²⁵¹ Jok, Jok Madut, *The New Nation of South Sudan Cannot Afford Cultural Exclusion*, (2011a)

²⁵² *Ibid*

²⁵³ *Ibid*

²⁵⁴ GoSS. "South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013: Realizing Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for All." (2011)

The right to graze cattle and other animals on communal fields is central to the interethnic conflict in South Sudan.²⁵⁵ During the rainy season, groups occupying flooded lowlands are forced to flee to upland areas, putting the migrating groups and their livestock in conflict with upland residents. Since property rights over grazing lands are neither well defined nor complete, ownership is realized only through capture. Moreover, rivalry over possession and use has created significant tension between groups.²⁵⁶ For example, a group may claim the right to own and use a piece of grazing land because it is their ancestral territory; yet, another group may claim the right to graze their livestock on that same piece of land because they have accessed and occupied it and hence have actual possession of it.

The formation and strengthening of sub-national governments (especially local governments) the level of government at which effective institutions to address conflicts could be developed has been hampered by austerity measures.²⁵⁷ For example, operational and capital budgets of government agencies have been cut by more than half in the recent budget cycle, leaving virtually no resources available for the central government in Juba to undertake a comprehensive system of consultation with the various local communities.²⁵⁸

According to Finance Minister Kosti Ngai's austerity budget speech, massive budget cuts of 85 percent were "being made on South Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund, Local

²⁵⁵ *ibid*

²⁵⁶ Abd al-Rahim, Muddathir (1969), *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan: A Study in Constitutional and Political Development, 1899-1956*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*

²⁵⁸ GoSS. "South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013: Realizing Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for All." (2011)

Government Board, Employees Justice and Public Grievance Chambers.²⁵⁹ This does not augur well for the establishment and maintenance of a unified and peaceful South Sudan.

3.5 Language Diversity in South Sudan

Sudan is home to a great number and diversity of languages. Laitin argued that this is unfriendly to the creation of “unique national cultures”.²⁶⁰ A more visible step toward shaping the new nation’s look therefore comes in the form of replacing place names dating from the time of Northern domination or even the colonial period. Thus, in Yei County, village elders opted for the renaming of streets and of a *payam* (small administrative unit) to remove what they saw as colonial names. Replacing them with local names was to help “conserve the communities’ cultural and traditional values”²⁶¹ as each instance of renaming was to be accompanied by cultural ceremonies.

Apart from natural designations derived from rivers, mountains and the like, names of martyrs and local “great men” are to be used, thereby also reminding people of the liberation struggle and providing historical background to Southern Sudanese cultural values.²⁶²

Michael Modi Apollo, chairman of the local renaming committee, has been mentioned to be advising parents not to give foreign names to their children.²⁶³ The draft constitution’s refused to grant official-language status to Arabic or even Juba Arabic (the vernacular spoken by many in

²⁵⁹GoSS, Budget Speech to the National Legislative Assembly (2012).

²⁶⁰Laitin, David D., *Nations, States, and Violence*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2007)

²⁶¹Ibid

²⁶²Ibid

²⁶³Amos, Angele Benson (2011), Streets in Yei River County to Get Native Names, in: *People’s Voice*,

Southern Sudan.²⁶⁴ On the other hand, the Ministry of Education made a decision to discontinue teaching in Arabic in secondary schools.²⁶⁵

The precedent given is the Africanization of Belgian names conducted by the former president of Zaire, Mobutu SeseSeko. “A name tells of who we are. We must have names with our identity and meanings”.²⁶⁶ The use of language in education and official matters primarily concerning the use of Arabic and English but also including vernacular languages – has long been at the centre of politically charged debates in colonial and independent Sudan.²⁶⁷ Judging by the debates in the new state, this state of affairs appears poised to remain unchanged.

Summary of the Chapter

Though South Sudan has never enjoyed proper statehood, it does have experience with self - government going back to the Southern Regional Government from 1972 through 1983. During its last years of existence, one of the most critical issues became the proposal to split the South into three distinct regions: Equatoria, Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile.²⁶⁸ While this suggestion proved to be merely a strategy by the Nimeiry government to dismantle Southern self-government altogether, the tension, ill will and dissent it bred in the South has not been forgotten.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴Leonardi, Cherry (2011b), *Interpreters, Interlocutors and an Intermediary Language: Chiefs, the State and Colloquial Arabic in Southern Sudan*,

²⁶⁵Upper Nile Times ,The Government of Southern Sudan has Outlined a Strategic plan to Eliminate Arabic in Secondary Schools by 2014(2011)

²⁶⁶Ibid

²⁶⁷James, Wendy (2008), Sudan: Majorities, Minorities, and Language Interactions, in: Andrew Simpson (ed.), *Language and National Identity in Africa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 61-78.

²⁶⁸Johnson, Douglas H. (2011b), *The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars: Peace or Truce*, rev. ed., Oxford: Currey.

²⁶⁹Beswick, Stephanie, *Sudan’s Blood Memory: The Legacy of War, Ethnicity, and Slavery in Early South Sudan*,

By promoting the cultural heritage of all of South Sudan's ethnic groups equitably and on a national stage, the state should enable each and every citizen to feel like a proud member of the South Sudanese nation and state. Avoiding ethnic marginalization and disenchantment with the state is particularly crucial for Southern Sudan as it constituted the very reason for breaking away from the North in the first place.²⁷⁰ Instead of pursuing the course of action preferred by the Northern elites eliminating diversity in order to impose a single (Arab, Islamic) identity – South Sudan has to take another path. In order for national institutions like the army to function, they have to be inclusive and prevent the marginalization of segments of society. Only in this way will national institutions have the capacity to eradicate tribalism by realizing inclusiveness and fair representation.²⁷¹

Rochester, NY: (University of Rochester Press 2006).

²⁷⁰Jok, Jok Madut, The New Nation of South Sudan Cannot Afford Cultural Exclusion, in: *newsudanvision.com*, (2011) Pp.37-42.

²⁷¹Ramba, Justin Ambago, Don't Blame Federalism for Tribalism, in: *gurtong.net*, (2011)

Figure 3.1: Map of Republic of Sudan and Republic of South Sudan (World Atlas 2011)



CHAPTER FOUR

AN EVALUATION OF ETHNICITY AND NATION BUILDING IN SOUTH SUDAN

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data from both secondary and primary sources. The study targeted Government Officers, Social/Political Activists, Non-Governmental Organization NGOs and members of the General Public.

Nation-building entails the efforts of newly-independent nations, particularly the nations of Africa but also in the Balkans, to redesign territories that had been carved out by colonial powers or Empires without regard to ethnic, religious, or other boundaries.²⁷² These transformed states would then become viable and coherent national entities. Nation-building embraces the creation of national paraphernalia such as flags, anthems, national days, national stadiums, national airlines, national languages, and national myths. At a deeper level, national identity needed to be deliberately constructed by molding different ethnic groups into a nation, especially since in many newly established states colonial practices of divide and rule had resulted in ethnically heterogeneous populations.

4.1 The Extent To Which Ethnicity Has Been Entrenched Among The Communities In South Sudan

Sudanese ethnic identities have been since constructed by historical and cultural habits. Therefore, the perceived common ancestry, history or customs, rather than biological and

²⁷²Jok Madut Jok (2011) *Diversity, Unity, and Nation Building in South Sudan*. Special report, United States institute of Peace. Washington, DC 20037

physical characteristics, have contributed to the ethnical identification of the self.²⁷³ Consequently, conflict in Sudan have been regarded as ethnic an idea that has been disputed because ethnic groups are not conflictive per se. Alan Phillips, the Director of Minority Rights Group International, wrote in 1995 that attempts to portray the conflict in North-South or Arab-African terms disguise ‘the complexities of a war fought by multi-ethnic groups where religious differences colour struggles over access to land or political power.’²⁷⁴ Indeed, the relative peacefulness of the previous centuries suggests that ethnic diversity does not constitute a major problem in Sudanese multi-ethnic societies. Ethnic diversity becomes conflict as a consequence of external factors.

Various scholars have agreed that other factors, such as economic and political competition, marginalization and inequality, can have a negative impact on ethnic diversity. Ethnic identities in themselves are not conflictual, just as individuals are not inherently in conflict merely because of their different identities and characteristics. Rather, it is unmanaged or mismanaged competition for power, wealth, or status broadly defined that provides the basis for conflict.²⁷⁵ Judith Nagata argued that ethnicity depends on changing social circumstances and external forces. In other words, whether people feel their ethnic loyalties to be important depends not on the nature of the attachment itself but on the calculation of whether in these circumstances the ethnic tie is one which may be evoked, used and acted upon.²⁷⁶

Fenton adds that the variation in political consciousness and organization will depend on external

²⁷³Youngs, Tim, Sudan: Conflict in Darfur, Research Paper 04/51 for the House of Commons, 23 June 2004. From: <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2004/rp04-051.pdf>

²⁷⁴Ibid

²⁷⁵Deng, Francis M., *Reconciling Sovereignty with Responsibility*, *Africa in World Politics: The African State System in Flux* 3rd Edition. Edited by John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild. (Westview Press, 2000) 367.

²⁷⁶Fenton, Steve, *Ethnicity*, p. 85, Polity Press (2003, Cambridge)

social circumstances. In other words, the level of consciousness and political organization of an ethnic group or category will depend less on internal social and cultural features and more on external political and economic circumstances. This would certainly offer an explanation of why ethnic identities may be socially ‘quiet’ for long periods of time but burst into action when there is a critical change in circumstances.²⁷⁷

The study found out that the major ethnic groups in South Sudan are: Dinka Nuer, Shilluk, Bari, Zande, Latuko, Anuak, Acholi, Mundari among others. The general feeling of Social/Political Activists, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and members of the General Public is that the people of South Sudan do not see themselves as South Sudanese but define themselves in terms of ethnicity or tribal bases such as Dinka, Nuer, Lotuho, Acholi, Bari, Lango or sometimes regionalism such as an Equatorian, Bahr el Ghazalian etc. A respondent from the general public reiterated that most South Sudanese see themselves as members of the tribe they belong to first and South Sudanese second. The respondent added that the so called leaders have contributed to this divide by only surrounding themselves with people from their own villages.

A respondent from Non-Governmental Organization said that, *“In South Sudan, some people see themselves in the mirror of their tribes because of the negative belief about other tribes. Some people see themselves as South Sudanese but the tribe element is here to stay for a while.”* The respondent added that ethnicity seems to be deeply entrenched in South Sudan – evident in a governance system that is hinged on representation rather than ability and competence – a clear indication that the people do not see themselves as South Sudanese but a specific ethnic group.

²⁷⁷Fenton, Steve, *Ethnicity*, p. 70, Polity Press (2003, Cambridge)

In ascertaining the impact of ethnic affiliation on the pace of state building the respondents admitted that the pace of nation building has been slowed down by the feeling that the new state belongs to certain ethnic groups who have since dominated all sectors of the nation both in social and economic issues; for instance there a feeling that some groups are left out when it comes to employment and vital national decision making touching on issues such as security and distribution of the nation's resources. The respondents admitted that majority of other communities view South Sudan as a property of a particular ethnic group. Absolutely, this has a negative impact in national building because tribalism today in South Sudan is open and actually a cornerstone of employment. Certain communities are dominant in government institutions. E.g. Police, Immigration, customs, Diplomatic etc. They even speak their languages in government institutions and government meetings which has a negative impact on development of the country.

A respondent from Political Activists group reiterated that tribal ideology in South Sudan has also introduced an element of insecurity where members of the government seem to be working hard to protect their communities against others. This has resulted to arming the population. The arms are misused in cattle raiding and indiscriminate killing. He gave the case of Jonglei, Unity, Warrap and Lake State. The tribal agenda has a bearing on failure to disarm armed population. Corruption comes together with tribal affiliation in that people acquire positions to enrich their relatives so that they are worshiped in their constituencies. This has affected wealth distribution and service delivery.

Indeed this has impacted negatively as any decision that the government comes out with reads along tribal lines, this includes appointments and any nomination in government post. And in many cases, people would always try to interpret appointments on how many persons are from this region and state and which tribe. In other offices people even use the native language as the medium of communication. As a result, the nation has suffered in carrying out any kind of development.

Despite the initial excitement and anticipation towards the new nation, there have been claims of corruption, nepotism, exclusion, and domination of government and business by some ethnic groups have substantially dampened and erode public's enthusiasm for the upcoming transition into nationhood. There is lack of a respectable constitution that would spell out a clear social contract between government and citizens. Though there is currently a transitional constitution in place, owing to the opaque and controversial nature of its preparation and promulgation, it has not received universal mandate from the citizens. Hence, it has failed to act as a unifying symbol that all South Sudanese could be proud of.

The main stumbling block to a long lasting peace and unity in the new nation is ethnic strife and rivalries. For instance, the ethnic relations in the city of Juba have been extremely volatile due to accusations that the Dinka, South Sudan's largest ethnic group, have dominated the government. This is couple with the unflattering claims of violence by Nuer and Dinka dominated army personnel; and suspicions of land grabbing by people who are not indigenous residents of the town.

Since this widespread suspicion of ethnicity-based exclusion from the national platform and other aspects of South Sudanese national life comes with tragic consequences for national unity, human life, and development programs, the main problem facing policy makers in Juba is the question of whether the historical experiences (a negative unity driven by opposition to the north that have long united the old south) will endure in the new south, enabling the young country to become a unified political, cultural, and social entity in short, a nation.

4.2 How Ethnic Affiliation Determine The Allocation Of Job Opportunities In The Government Institutions In South Sudan

Since the independence of South Sudan there have been witnessed a very dangerous form of ethnic domination which is seen would ultimately lead the South to become a failed state. Prior to July, 2011, Dinka elite controlling power began to practise ethnic discrimination and marginalization within the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) that was formed after the conclusion of the CPA on January 9, 2005.²⁷⁸ However, the people didn't notice the gravity of the situation thinking that the practice would be addressed after the independence of the South. Many South Sudanese focused on the implementation of the CPA and the exercise of the right of self-determination and ignored the glaring practice of tribalism in each ministry of the GoSS.

When the ministries were set up in 2005, there were practices of tribal exclusions that made a lot of people to question the underlying policies and vision of Dinka elite.²⁷⁹ For instance, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development which was under the guidance of Michael Makuei Lueth employed mostly Dinka Bor. Majority of employees of the Ministry were

²⁷⁸Deng, Francis M., *Reconciling Sovereignty with Responsibility*, *Africa in World Politics: The African State System in Flux*, p.367. 3rd Edition. Edited by John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild. Westview Press (2000, Boulder, CO)

²⁷⁹ Ibid

from Dinka tribe. This was the same thing in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development which was also dominated by Dinka tribe.

Filling ministries with one's tribe, a practice mostly demonstrated by Dinka ministers has since continued to date and many ministries in Juba are dominated either by one tribe or a clan depending on where the Ministers who set them up in 2005 came from. Majority of employees in the Ministry of Finance are from Dinka Bhar-el-Ghazal because Arthur Akuein Chol, who was the GoSS Minister of Finance and Economic Development in 2005, hailed from that region.

Public realm tribalism being practised by Salva Kiir's regime is responsible for ministries to be filled by one tribe; it is also responsible for land grabbing in Juba, Numeli, Yei and etc. The on-going political violence in the South is a manifestation of negative aspect of tribalism as opposed to tribalism being practiced in the villages. The concern of the people of South Sudan is the state-sponsored tribalism because ethnic domination at the level of state, as opposed to ethnic consciousness in Dinka land, is divisive, and of parochial form that can lead to violence.

After the independence of South Sudan, the regime of Salva Kiir did not deviate from practising state tribalism that he started in 2005. On August, 26, 2011, he formed the post-independent cabinet which was made up of 42% Dinka giving all the key posts to his Dinka Rek clan.²⁸⁰ He awarded his State, Warrap, ten Ministerial posts in addition to his post, the Chief of Security, Chief Justice of South Sudan Supreme Court and the Governor of the Bank of South Sudan. Although Greater Equatoria region has higher population than Greater Bhar-el-Ghazal according

²⁸⁰New Sudan Vision, The Meaning Behind South Sudan Declaration of Independence, in: *newsudanvision.com*, 8 July, online: <www.newsudanvision.com>(2011)

to 2008 National Census, the latter was awarded twenty ministerial posts in which ten of them went to Warrap state alone.

On March, 9, 2012, Lt. Gen. Salva Kiir appointed ambassadors and again awarded the lion's share to his tribe, that is, Dinka appointed as ambassadors constituted 53% while all the other tribes in South Sudan combined were only 47%.²⁸¹ The population of Dinka in South Sudan is about 25% and the non-Dinkais 75%. If fairness guided the appointment of ambassadors, Dinka tribe, which is a demographic minority when their population is compare to the rest of South Sudan ethnic groups, cannot have 53% of ambassadors. The decision to give 53% of ambassadorial posts to one tribe is based on the arithmetic of tribal domination which can also be noticed between the regions and within Dinka clans.

Among the Dinka clans, the Dinkas of Unity and Upper Nile states have been severely marginalized and are not represented at all in the ambassadorial positions. In comparison, the Dinka clans of Greater Upper Nile have fewer ambassadors than the Dinka clans of Greater Bhar-el-Ghazal. Going by the percentage of ambassadors from region to region, the Greater Bhar-el-Ghazal's share of ambassadors is 38.36% while the population of the region is only 2.71 million according to 2008 National Census.²⁸² Warrap state, which is the home state of Salva Kiir, once again dominated the rest of Bhar-el-Ghazal states in the ambassadorial appointments and became the second state in the South with thirteen ambassadors despite the fact its population in the South is 11% (the states of Lakes, Northern Bhar-el-Ghazal and Western Bhar-el-Ghazal combined have only 17 ambassadors).

²⁸¹ Ibid

²⁸² Ibid

These appointments demonstrated that political posts in South Sudan are based on the ideology of Dinka domination, a practice which is worse than marginalization of South Sudanese in the old Sudan when one compares the ethnic marginalization in the old Sudan and Dinka domination of post-independent South Sudan. In the old Sudan, South Sudanese were a minority within the state dominated by Muslims. But in the post-independent South, Dinka, who are only about 25% of the population, controlled 55% of state power. In terms of demography, Dinkas' domination of 75% of South Sudanese can only be compared to the Afrikaans' domination of black majority in South Africa.

The study found out that those in charge only appoint people they are related to regardless of qualifications and that the major dominant ethnic groups in government institutions are the Dinka and Nuer. The respondents noted that there is a chronic problem of certain ministries or departments dominated by certain groups, usually people from the same area, based on who is at the top. *“It means people just get into the government because one is my brother, or sister or uncle or fighter even if one is not qualified for that matter. If qualified people are occupying those positions there wouldn't have been any problems. But there is a virus known as founder syndrome which is deep into the country. Founder virus states that we fought the war, we brought the peace, therefore we have the right to occupy positions regardless of qualification.”* noted a Social Activist.

A member of the general public noted that, *“there is a common phenomenon in South Sudan that once you apply for a job, the first question you are asked is which is your tribe or are you from which state, and when you look at these phrases, it simply mean that most of the jobs are ethnic*

affiliate. In short ethnic affiliation influence is what determines the employment in the Republic of South Sudan.”

In ascertaining whether the trend of employment has affected the pace of nation building in South Sudan, the respondents argued that the trend of employment in the government institution have led to the loss of confidence and lose social fabric and poor spirit of patriotism. *“It has greatly affected the pace of nation building because most of the people who are employed based on ethnic lines are sometimes not qualified to occupy such positions they will not deliver good services to the people, therefore this hampers the nation building process,”* argued a respondent from the general public. He added that the ethnic groups that feel that they are marginalised, may cause havoc in the country hence slow down the development of the nation.

One of the government officer noted that the employment pattern in South Sudan affects the spirit of nation building because competent individuals from other communities feel left out and they instead decide to live and work outside the country, where they feel they have better chance of getting better jobs based on their qualifications. She reiterated that this problem in essence denies the country much needed skilled and qualified professionals who can contribute greatly to the important work of nation building. Consequently, policies are not drafted focusing on good practice but how will they protect those in powers; suspicion and mistrust is build affecting government performance and ultimately the rule of law is compromised.

A respondent from the general public argued that since the Dinka and the Nuer are the first and second largest ethnic groups respectively, the ‘tyranny of numbers’ would dictate that majority of government employees come from the Dinka and the Nuer. And because majority of

government employees seem to be employed on the basis of ethnicity, more Dinka and Nuer ultimately take up few jobs available. Those employed on the basis of ethnicity rather than specializations may be poorly trained and this could lead to inefficiency in job performance and consequently poor outputs. On the other hand, the 'minority' ethnic groups may not be happy for being 'underrepresented' in the government and this could breed mistrust. Once mistrust develops, some minority groups could resort to forming rebel alliances for a chance to eliminate 'suppression.' The conflict then leads to displacement of citizens and other humanitarian disasters. Insecurity later compromises service delivery, development of human resources, investments etc. "It negatively affects the spirit of nation building as people do not think objectively but along tribal lines. No matter how you're your decision is, at times, it cannot be favoured as our thinking are geared along tribal lines." she added

The general feeling is that this pattern of employment has definitely slowed down not only the progress of nation building but also the process of state building because it has impacted how development contracts are awarded and how people are appointed to important government positions. People get jobs based on who they know, in most cases, people they are related with, so competent and qualified people, who can spearhead and accelerate development in the country, don't get the positions they deserve based on merit. Consequently, governance and good practice in the public service is overshadowed by our tribal way of looking at things.

4.3 The Extent To Which Ethnic Conflicts Among Communities In South Sudan Has Derailed Nation Building

In analyzing conflict in Africa, Emmy Godwin Irobi affirmed that it is important to note that most of these ethnic conflicts were caused by colonialism, which compounded inter-ethnic conflict by capitalizing on the isolation of ethnic groups. The divide-and-conquer method was used to pit ethnicities against each other, thus keeping the people from rising up against the colonizers. Distribution of economic resources was often skewed to favor a particular group, pushing marginalized groups to use their ethnicity to mobilize for equality.²⁸³ Stefano Bellucci argued that colonialism had a tremendous impact on postcolonial states, because it transferred to these states its patterns of violent and exploitative administration.

The causes of civil conflict are usually historical, which can be found in the European penetration in Africa, and in the colonial slave trade, which have introduced models of violent exploitation and domination in African societies that have taken roots in the whole continent, even after independence. During the decolonization period, the new states had been left by the colonial powers with scarce institutional and human resources. The under-development caused by colonialism and neocolonialism is at the base of social and political conflict in Africa, between the poorer and poorer masses and the rich elites. These imbalances generated the social discontent that subsequently fueled civil wars in Africa.²⁸⁴

²⁸³ Irobi, Emmy Godwin, *Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and South Africa*, *Research Paper*, May, 2005, at Beyond Intractability.org of the University of Colorado, at: http://www.beyondintractability.org/case_studies/nigeria_south-africa.jsp?nid=6720

²⁸⁴ Bellucci, Stefano, *Storia Delle Guerre Africane: Dalla Fine del Colonialismo al Neoliberalismo Globale*, (Rome: Carrocci Editore, 2006) 56

The politics of domination pursue in South Sudan for the control of economic and political power is the main source of incessant conflicts among ethnic groups in the country. In other African countries, the proportion in which ethnic groups that produce the national wealth have access to political power or excluded from it may account for ethnic conflicts in the nation. For instance, the entire budget of Unity State in South Sudan, including two per cent oil share of the state, is a property of the Governor. Sometimes civil servants take one year without receiving their salaries because the Governor and President Salva Kiir diverted the money to their private accounts.

In a country like South Sudan where the ruling elite favour their own kith and kin, competition for public jobs, admission into schools, distribution of state resources among others, constitute a source of conflict. In Nigeria, Sudan (before South Sudan independence) and Liberia, the ethnicization of state power led to civil wars. The international community could not be surprised to see South Sudan being engulfed in conflict six months after independence because Dinka domination of state power is creating internal explosions.

The side effect of ethnic domination in Africa is that civil wars resulting from ethnic tensions and conflicts usually plunge nations and countries into economic mess. For instance, ethnic violence in Nigeria's Niger Delta area has partially paralyzed economic exploration of crude oil in that state. The ethnic tension between the Ijaws, the Itshekiris, and the Urhobos has seriously affected the business of oil companies located in that area. In the process, economic setbacks are usually experienced. No sane person could argue that economic development will take place in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity and Warrap states which are infested with rebel Movements fighting to topple the corrupt regime in Juba. The cause of all conflict in South Sudan is not North Sudan

as pathological Dinka elite would want the world to believe but the policy of ethnic domination which has become the manifesto of the ruling clique.

In addition to internal problems cited above, there are also the activities of the Khartoum government on the borders especially those that fuel and sustain local militias, rebel movements, and tribal warfare within South Sudan's borders. The fighting in the regions of Abyei, Blue Nile and Nuba Mountain is also threatening to draw in the Republic of South Sudan, particularly the oil-producing regions where security is paramount for the economic viability of the new state.

The study found out that there are numerous ethnic clashes which have claimed thousand lives in South Sudan before the independence and after the independence. The respondents noted that the typical example is the tribal clashes in Jonglei State. There have been skirmishes of ethnic based for instance: Jonglei State (Dinka versus Muler, Dinka versus Nuer, Nuer versus Murle); Western Equatoria (Dinka versus Zande); Eastern Equatoria (Dinka versus Madi and Dinka versus Acholi, Lakes State; (Dinka versus Nuer); Western Bahr el Ghazal (Dinka versus Balanda); Central Equatoria; (Bari versus Mundari).

The respondents noted that the major causes of ethnic clashes are arising from cattle rustling and child abduction, unresolved land disputes, underrepresentation in the government (politicians capitalize on this to fit tribes against tribes). Fighting for resources is one major problem. But there are also people who feel aggrieved that they are not represented in the system. Others have political grievances that the leadership of the country has forgotten the reason people fought for independence and are again behaving the same way those in the north behaved towards southerners.

In ascertaining the impact of ethnic clashes on nation building the respondents reiterated that the ethnic skirmishes has made most communities to be reluctant in committing themselves to nation building because they feel they are not part of South Sudan. “*The ethnic clashes affects not only the nation building but also the pace of state building because most people who are targeted and die during the ethnic clashes are youth and Children and the youths are the backbone of every nation if we lost then it hamper the development of the nation,*” argued a respondent from the general public.

A political activist interviewed argued that the ethnic clashes have undermined national building for instance this government is call Dinka Bahr el Ghazal government simply because President Kiir comes from Bahr el El Ghazal and it has been exacerbated by the behaviour and action of some people in government. Classic example is the current conflict in Jonglei which is now affecting the entire South Sudan for instance the report by the international community that the SPLA have been systematically targeting to eliminate the Murle community.

4.4 The Efforts By The Government In Turning South Sudan Cultural Diversities Into National Assets To Achieve Nation Building

The main challenge for South Sudan is to find ways to bring people from different ethnic groups together.²⁸⁵ Building a South Sudanese identity is a fairly recent process, triggered by the civil war. At first, people were united behind the idea of South Sudanese independence through the liberation movement. Now a state, South Sudan needs to promote a different message to the most remote groups of its population in order to foster national identity. The government has to work

²⁸⁵Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Ethnicity and Identity in Africa: An Interpretation*, p.703 *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African-American Experience*, Civitas Books (1999, New York)

hard to bring together people from different ethnic groups who have not really been engaged in the separatist movement so far.

The poor infrastructure, a volatile political climate, limited capacity for governance, weak state institutions, financial crises, violent ethnic divisions, and an uncertain regional and international political atmosphere are some of the evils that are seriously threatening the transformation of South Sudan into a viable nation.²⁸⁶ Despite the initial excitement and anticipation towards the new nation, claims of corruption, nepotism, exclusion, and domination of government and business by some ethnic groups have substantially dampened and erode public's enthusiasm for the upcoming transition into nationhood.

In addressing the question whether the government has established institutions to deal with the issues of cultural diversity, the respondents argued that there is minimal effort done by the government to address such issues. The respondents mentioned that the ministry of youth, culture, and sports is not doing enough in addressing these issues directly. Furthermore, the Peace Commission established by the government should have solved these issues of ethnic clashes has worked in vain and has totally failed to address the root causes of conflict. The South Sudan Peace Commission was tasked by the government to be dealing with peace issues in South Sudan. Since it is now under the office of the President, people and donor community have no place to channel their ideas because it is said to be no longer an independence commission. Consequently, the respondents added that the National Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

²⁸⁶ Ibid

would have been the right ministry to address cultural difference but it is underfunded and disregarded by the government.

In an effort to build the spirit of nation building in the independent Sudan the respondents argued that the best strategy or activities would be building capacities of government officials and institutions, investing in education for social transformation, investing in practices that uphold cultural cultures values; encouraging sports competitions between villages, wrestling matches, football games, traditional dances, to foster and build peace. Along these bonding activities, the government should allocate funds for building basic infrastructures; roads, schools, health and specialized hospitals, training centers for practical jobs to hasten the pace of state building.

The respondents noted several strategies which could be applied in an effort to realize a one independent and united nation; Combating tribalism/nepotism patronage and corruption; Social inclusivity and national formation in development plans and initiatives; Recognizing and respecting every communities in South Sudan irrespective of being small or big; Involvement of all communities at all stages of programme planning, development and implementation; Encourage intermarriages; involvement of every community in constitutional making and respect of constitution; Ensuring transparency and accountability; Promote cultural day and cultural awareness; Discouraging talking/ speaking in government offices/ South Sudanese embassies with native languages; Strengthen governance institutions, Establish the rule of Law, Proper devolution of powers and services, Recruitment should be based on merits; Introduction of Nationalism in the school curriculums; Promulgation of people's oriented philosophy such as ' Botu Pele' (people's first) of South Africa, or Omuntu (I am because we are) of Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

A respondent from the general public mentioned that the government should put more emphasis on building of Cultural centers; enacting a law that prohibit people from segregation and dividing base on ethnicity, for instant in Rwanda you cannot further ask whether you are Hutu or Tutsi and that is why there is no more ethnic clashes; Equal employment opportunity to all in respective of which ethnic group they are coming from; provision of compulsory primary education to all; finally building vocational centres for the adult to engage the youth and promote self-reliance along public service reform, community sensitization on the important of peace and stability, government should focus on rural development; strengthening local government Strict implementation of the rule of law, uniform disarmament of the civil population and encouraging communities to intermarry to create a sense of togetherness.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Nation-building refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. Nation-building can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth. It entails the development of behaviors, values, language, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and insure the future identity and independence of a nation.

Nation-building includes the creation of national paraphernalia such as flags, anthems, national days, national stadiums, national airlines, national languages, and national myths. At a deeper level, national identity needed to be deliberately constructed by molding different ethnic groups into a nation, especially since in many newly established states colonial practices of divide and rule had resulted in ethnically heterogeneous populations.

Because this widespread suspicion of ethnicity-based exclusion from the national platform and other aspects of South Sudanese national life do come with tragic consequences for national unity, human life, and development programs, the main problem facing policy makers in Juba, the report observes, is the question of whether the historical experiences a negative unity driven by opposition to the north that have long united the old south will endure in the new south, enabling the young country to become a unified political, cultural, and social entity in short, a nation.

The main stumbling block to a long lasting peace and unity is ethnic strife and rivalries. For instance, ethnic relations in the city of Juba have been extremely volatile due to accusations that the Dinka, South Sudan's largest ethnic group, have dominated the government. This is coupled with the unflattering claims of violence by Nuer and Dinka dominated army personnel; and suspicions of land grabbing by people who are not indigenous residents of the town.

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In addition to internal problems the activities of the Khartoum government on the borders especially those that fuel and sustain "local militias, rebel movements, and tribal warfare" within South Sudan's borders. The fighting in the regions of Abyei, Blue Nile and Nuba Mountain is also threatening to draw in the Republic of South Sudan, particularly the oil-producing regions where security is paramount for the economic viability of the new state.

5.2 Conclusions

Despite the initial excitement and anticipation towards the new nation, this report revealed that claims of corruption, nepotism, exclusion, and domination of government and business by some

ethnic groups have substantially dampened and eroded public's enthusiasm for the upcoming transition into nationhood.

There is lacking a respectable constitution that would spell out a clear social contract between government and citizens. While there is currently a transitional constitution in place, this study noted that owing to the opaque and controversial nature of its preparation and promulgation, it has not received universal mandate from the citizens. Hence, it has failed to act as a unifying symbol that all South Sudanese could be proud of.

The disillusionment from within and the fear from without have produced disunited and tribalized citizens in the Republic of South Sudan. While there is no question that most South Sudanese had remained focused on the need for unity of purpose and ranks during their struggle for self-determination, after independence though, the country has found itself with only a hazy notion of a collective national identity beyond its unified opposition to the north, making its viability as a nation a matter of speculation.

5.3 Recommendations

This report stresses that a country seeking unity, collective national identity, and stability must have a clear policy. According to this report, South Sudan's government should envision the new nation as standing on four pillars needed to hold up the country: political unity, a strong and disciplined military, a strong economy and services delivery, and a vibrant civil society. Political unity is feasible through concerted political cultivation and construction of South Sudanese collective identity out of the present conflict-ridden cultural diversity. It is the task of the

leadership, government, civil society, and private enterprise to do it by turning South Sudan's cultural diversity into a national asset.

The recognition that national education, a disciplined national army, a national anthem and flag and the celebration of the country's diverse culture through cultural centers, museums of heritage, and national archives would act as unifying symbols in the face of divisive ethnic and cultural diversity in South Sudan.

The most obvious impediment to national cohesion is exclusion from the national platform, especially exclusion along ethnic lines which regrettably precludes South Sudanese from having pride in their nation. The South Sudanese leaders, who are preoccupied with how to turn South Sudan ethnic and cultural diversity into a useful national asset, should reinforce fair representation of all ethnic nationalities and creation of a broad-based government is central to South Sudan's transition to nationhood. Molding the new nation from the ashes of war and negative ethnicity requires the turning South Sudanese cultural diversity into a national asset.

There is blame of unfair government employment and service delivery distribution practices for causing South Sudanese to support tribalism, even though most abhor it. If service delivery distribution were equitable, it would lessen calls for tribal representation in government. Although it is said that illiteracy and poverty contribute to tribalism among South Sudanese, contend that the action of those in power is what pushes citizens to demand their own tribesmen in government. There is a notion that people with tribesmen in government receiving basic services and believed qualified candidates are turned down for government employment by

members of other tribes. The nationals argued that because their government officials practice tribalism, they have no choice but to support their own tribesmen in the hope of getting services and jobs. One solution for reducing tribalism is for the government to ensure service delivery is equitable. This will end most calls for tribal representation in government because most citizens will feel adequately represented.

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APPENDIX I: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT (QUESTIONNAIRES)

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Please indicate your Gender. Male () Female ()

2. Please tick the age bracket in which you fall.

21-30 years () 31-40 years () 41-50 years ()

51-60 years () above 60 years()

3. The Institution/Organization from which you belong.

Government Officer () Social/Political Activists ()

Non-Governmental Organization NGOs () the General Public ()

SECTION B: ETHNICITY AND NATION BUILDING IN INDEPENDENCE SOUTH

SUDAN

4. The extent to which ethnicity has been entrenched among the communities in South

Sudan

i. Can you please name the major ethnic groups in South Sudan.....
.....
.....

ii. In your opinion, does the identity of the citizens of South Sudan defined by which ethnic community one belongs to? In other words, do the people of South Sudan see themselves as ‘Southerners’ or members of particular ethnic groups?.....
.....
.....

iii. How do you think this has affected the pace of nation building in independent South Sudan?.....

5. How ethnic affiliation determine the allocation of job opportunities in the government institutions in South Sudan

i. In your opinion, does ones ethnic affiliation influence his/her chances of job opportunity in government institutions?.....

ii. If the answer to the above question is yes, then which ethnic groups are the majority in the government institutions?.....

iii. How does this affect the spirit of nation building?.....

6. The extent to which ethnic conflicts among communities in South Sudan has derailed nation building.

- i. Has there been ethnic clashes since the separation of the South Sudan from the North?.....

- ii. If the answer is yes, what are the major causes of such ethnic animosities in South Sudan?.....

- iii. How has the ethnic clashes, if any, affected the efforts of nation building in independent South Sudan?.....

7. The efforts by the government in turning South Sudan cultural diversities into national assets to achieve nation building

- i. Are there government institutions that have been established in South Sudan to address issues touching cultural differences?.....

- ii. If the answer to the above question is yes, what role do such institutions play in bringing the different ethnic groups together towards nation building.
.....

- iii. In your own opinion what would be the best strategy or activities that would lead to a nation building in the newly independent country like South Sudan?
.....