JOHN GARANG AND *SUDANISM*:
A PECULIAR AND RESILIENT NATIONALISM

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BY

MATTHEW J. DELANEY

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Introduction

 "You, the people, in your popular uprising succeeded in cutting off the monster's head,

but the lifeless body continues to deceive you that the monster is still dangerous. No, It is

not! Having cut off the monster's head, it is your sacred duty to push down the monster's

body, not stand in fear of it."[1]

These are the bold words of Dr. John Garang de Mabior, Commander-in-Chief of the

Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) in April of 1985. He is addressing the

people of Sudan after the recent popular people's uprising, which overthrew the President of

Sudan, Jaafar Nimeiri. Nimeiri is seen as an oppressive dictator and is depicted as the

"monster's head" in the opening quote. However, Garang does not only call for the removal of

the monster's head, but for the destruction of the body as well. The monster's body is

Nimeirism, which is a term that describes the various policies and dictatorial, exploitative actions

of President Nimeiri. Garang lists several "provocations" by Nimeiri that help give us a base

understanding of the physical manifestation of Nimeirism. Garang accuses Nimeiri of

"institutionalizing corruption and bribery," and of "dismantling" the Addis Ababa Agreement,[2]

and of trying to change the Southern boundaries in order to "deprive" the South of fruitful

agricultural land.[3] He also condemns Nimeiri for calling for the division of South Sudan into

three "mini-regions,"[4] and for forcing all Sudanese to abide by Islamic Shari'a law.[5] Finally,

Garang accuses Nimeiri of being a "one-man dictator who clings to power by means of use of

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[1] John Garang,"Speech by John Garang, 9 April 1985, following downfall of Nimeiri," in *The Call for Democracy in Sudan*, Mansour Khalid ed. (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1992), 41.

[2] The Addis Ababa Agreement is the peace accord that ended the first civil war between North and South Sudan in 1972, and which began shortly after their independence in 1956.

[3] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid, *Call for Democracy*, 20-1.

[4] Ibid., 22.

[5] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at the Opening Session of the Preliminary Dialogue between SPLM/SPLA and the National Alliance for National Salvation, held at Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 131.

savage repression, torture, unlawful detention, harassment and murder of innocent citizens by the security apparatus."[6] Garang resolves that he is prepared to "fight a long war" in order to defeat all "institutions of oppression that have been evolved in Khartoum to oppress the masses of the Sudanese people."[7]This is the monster that John Garang sought to destroy in his lifetime. Nimeirism is a model of oppression against which John Garang pitted his efforts of liberation. In defiance of Nimeirism, Garang offered a new nationalism, which he called *Sudanism*, which recognizes the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of Sudan and calls for a new, uniquely Sudanese identity that acknowledges all of this diversity in Sudan.[8] Garang's *Sudanism* is therefore inherently opposed to divisiveness and separatism, and is disposed to unity. This thesis examines the wars between *Sudanism* and Nimeirism and *Sudanism* and secessionism in the context of the second civil war in Sudan starting in 1983. In the following pages I will argue that John Garang remained consistent and persistent in heralding a new, united Sudan based on *Sudanism*. *Sudanism* was at heart a nationalist movement. Using James L. Gelvin's model of the development and nature of nationalisms I will demonstrate that Garang's *Sudanism* was a peculiar but authentic form of nationalism.[9]

Garang had a vision for a new, restructured Sudan based on a nationalism of *Sudanism* rooted in optimism and hope for the long neglected, exploited, "excluded" and impoverished people of Sudan. He fought with fervor against the oligarchy of the Northern Arab elites, with a hope of redistributing power to all the different peoples in Sudan, in order for there to be peace and prosperity for all.

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[6] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy,* 27.
[7] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 22 March 1985," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 27.
[8] Garang, "Seminar with John Garang de Mabior at the Brokings Institution, Washington, D.C. Friday, 9 June, 1989," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 213.
[9] James L. Gelvin is Associate Professor in History at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire* (1998) and *The Modern Middle East: A History* (2004), and other topics on nationalism and the social and cultural history of the modern Middle East during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

John Garang and the Jonglei Canal

The foundations of Garang's nationalism can be detected in his dissertation on the "socio-economic" development of the Jonglei Canal, which he writes at Iowa State University in 1981. Garang writes at a time when the "vast agricultural production potential of Sudan is estimated at more than 200 million feddans suitable for agricultural use."[10] One feddan of land is 1.038 acres, which means that Sudan was estimated to have 207,600,000 acres of viable agricultural land.[11] Garang continues that it is based on this estimation that he views Sudan as the potential "Breadbasket of the Middle East" as a "major granary of the world."[12] He saw this as a national goal that should serve to benefit all of Sudan, not just the more industrialized North.[13] Garang supported the modernizing of agriculture in Sudan, in part to help sustain North-Central and North Eastern Sudan, which is located in the mostly desert region of Sudan.[14] He criticized the Executive Council of the National Council for Development Projects because they were only offering "marginal improvements" to the inhabitants near the Jonglei Canal in southern areas where most of the rainfall takes place.[15] This implies that the Khartoum government was continuing its legacy of neglect of the Southern Sudan by manipulating the Jonglei Canal to benefit Khartoum. Although the source of most of the rain water used by the canal would be located in the South, Khartoum neglected Southerners and used their resources to

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[10] John Garang de Mabior, "Identifying, Selecting, and Implementing Rural Development Strategies For Socio-Economic Development in the Jonglei Canal Projects Area; Southern Region, Sudan" (PhD diss., Iowa State University, 1981), 219.

[11] Ibid., 259.

[12] Ibid., 219.

[13] Ibid., 219.

[14] Ibid., 219.

[15] Ibid., 220.

benefit the "minority clique regime."[16] Garang perceived it to be Khartoum's responsibility to make the transition from subsistence agriculture to "modern commercial production" through "deliberate government policy" and interventions in traditional agriculture."[17] All of this should take place according to *national* goals and interests.

According to John Garang, the construction of the Jonglei Canal was a necessary step for modernizing agriculture in Sudan and for realizing Sudan's agricultural potential. If properly used for the common good of all Sudanese, then it would have been highly beneficial. However, Garang suggests that Khartoum's facilitation of the canal did not espouse "regional equity," and was a continuation of its historical neglect of non-Northern regions, especially of the South. As we will see later, Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) halts the building of the Jonglei Canal in order to weaken the Khartoum government. He claims to have stopped the canal project until power is taken from Nimeiri.[18] Garang's goal will be that the benefits of the Jonglei Canal will be distributed among all Sudanese for the benefit of all.

Garang's goal for the use of the Jonglei Canal for the "common good" of all Sudanese coincides with Gelvin's ideas about nationalism, and how nationalist ideologies are based on the "common interest" or the "common good" of the people. Gelvin writes that "all nationalists believe that nations possess something called a 'common interest,' and it is the role of the state to

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[16] Minority clique regime is a term that Garang uses frequently to describe any oppressive Khartoum governments that promote sectarianism, and who exploit the Sudanese masses for the benefit of the few, ruling elite in Khartoum. This minority clique often comprises Arab elites, and has also been referred to as the Arab hegemony, or the hegemony of the North or "clique-chauvinism."
    "Sudanese Rebel Leader's Appeal to the People," Text of appeal, with introduction Radio SPLA in English (1300 gmt 10 Nov 84), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/7800/A1 (November 14, 1984).
[17] Garang, PhD diss., 43.
[18] "Sudanese Dissident Leader Interviewed by Libyan Radio," Excerpts from poorly heard interview given 'somewhere outside Jamahiriyah,' Tripoli Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland (2230 gmt 10 May 84), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/7642/A/1 (May 14, 1984).

promote it."[19] As a nationalist who promoted *Sudanism*, Garang sought to utilize the Jonglei

Canal for the benefit of Nubians, Darfurians, Arab Northerners, Dinka, Nuer, and all Sudanese

alike. He perceived the agricultural benefits of the canal as being a common interest of the

"Sudanese" nation that he represented. The case of the Jonglei Canal is also interesting in the

context of Gelvin's theory about nationalist movements because he emphasizes the connection

between the "spread of modern world economic and state systems" and nationalism in the

Middle East.[20] The purpose of the Jonglei Canal is to facilitate more reliable agriculture to all

regions of Sudan, and to realize Sudan's potential to be a source of agricultural abundance and

proliferation. Any nationalist movement in Sudan must represent the people who are served by

the Jonglei Canal. Garang wants the canal to serve everyone within Sudanese borders (as were

delineated by the British at independence), and therefore his nationalism represents all ethnic

groups in Sudan. From Garang's perspective, therefore, the Arab Northern government sought

to serve itself with the Jonglei Canal and virtually neglect all other Sudanese, and had a

nationalism that represented Arabs in Sudan. Hence, the Khartoum government under Nimeiri

implemented Shari'a and obliged every Sudanese of all races and religions to adhere to Islamic

law.[21] They sought to create an Arab national identity that discriminates many Sudanese people

by default. In this effort, they used the Jonglei Canal to benefit Arabs. John Garang had an

inspiring hope for Sudan that sought to benefit all regions with equity. It was a sleepless hope

that fought ardently to provide abundance to all Sudanese peoples who have long suffered under

neglect and exploitation.

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[19] James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 198.

[20] Ibid., 199.

[21] "Sudanese Southerners Ask to End Islamic Law," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April 18, 1985.

Nimeirism and Sudanism

      John Garang defines Nimeirism as a policy of divide and rule that oppresses the people of

Sudan.[22] He says that

> "the oppressor has divided the Sudanese people into Northerners and Southerners;
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> Westerners and Easterners…while in the South, people have been politicized along tribal
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> lines resulting in such ridiculous slogans as 'Dinka Unity,' 'Great Equatoria', 'Bari
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> Speakers', 'Luo Unity' and so forth. The oppressor has also divided us into Muslims and
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> Christians, and into Arabs and Africans."[23]

      According to Garang, separatism, or sentiments among Southerners that called for

secession from the North, was a result of oppressive divide-and-rule tactics by the ruling elite.

The divisions reflected in the Nimeiri regime were meant to weaken the "just cause" of the

Sudanese people. Nimeiri had perpetuated the "neo-colonial system" in which a "few people

had amassed great wealth at the expense of the majority;" the "few" being those of the "minority

clique regime."[24]As was mentioned earlier, Garang formally lists Nimeiri's offenses against the

Sudanese people. Garang's overarching theme is that Nimeiri exploited and neglected all

Sudanese outside of the oligarchy of the Arab ruling elite with policies of divide and rule, and by

abrogating the Addis Ababa Agreement, which ended the first civil war in Sudan in 1972. He

points out that Nimeiri wanted to "deprive the South of mineral rich or prime agricultural land

such as Hofrat el Nhas, Kafia Kingi, Northern Upper Nile, Bentiu, etc."[25] He boldly condemns

this resource exploitation and says that "natural resources, wherever they are found in the Sudan,

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[22] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 19.
[23] Ibid., 19.
[24] Ibid., 19.
[25] Ibid., 21.

belong to the whole Sudanese people."[26]This is easily applicable to the case of the Jonglei Canal, where Khartoum wanted to manipulate the Jonglei Canal to benefit Khartoum; making the rest of Sudan a low priority. Similarly, Garang argues that Nimeiri promoted an Arab nationalism that only served Arabs in Sudan. The full extension of this nationalism is seen in the implementation of the "September Laws" of 1983, which forced all Sudanese to abide by Islamic Shari'a law.[27] This does not necessarily mean that Nimeiri's motivation for implementing Shari'a was for reasons of Arab/Islamic nationalism. It reflects the sentiment of Arab/Islamic nationalists who wanted to make Sudan an Arab/Islamic nation. Also, Arab nationalism and Islamic nationalism are not necessarily the same thing, although they may go hand in hand. Ultimately, in Garang's perspective Nimeirism is a practice of rule that keeps power in the hands of a few (Arab Northern elites) at the expense of the masses.[28] It is also inherently divisive and does not promote unity among the many different ethnic groups of Sudan, but is exploitive and oppressive. In following Gelvin's argument about nationalism, we can conclude that Garang's nationalist ideology was formed in response to Arab and Islamic nationalisms in Sudan. Gelvin articulates that "all nationalisms arise in opposition to some 'other'" and that they are "defined by what they oppose."[29] *Sudanism* is defined as the enemy of sectarian nationalisms, against models of dictatorial rule such as Nimeirism, and against secessionism as we will see later. Garang struggles against nationalist ideologies that seek to oblige diverse Sudanese peoples to adopt a strictly Arab, African, Christian, or Islamic identity. *Sudanism* is among the many nationalist ideologies that "defines itself by what it opposes."

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[26] Ibid., 21.
[27] "Sudanese Southerners Ask to End Islamic Law."
[28] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 21.
[29] James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 93.

For Garag, Nimeirism, as a force of opposition to *Sudanism*, embodies all oppressive regimes in Sudan. It can continue to exist even though the physical person of Jaafar Nimeiri may die. This is evidenced when Garang refers to the "continuation of Nimeirism in a different uniform"[30] and to the "struggle against all faces of Nimerism."[31] Nimeirism is the face of "sectarian chauvinism" and "religious bigotry."[32] It creates and perpetuates the suffering of Sudanese civilians. John Garang's nationalism, *Sudanism,* is the antithesis of Nimeirism.

Garang's *Sudanism* is committed to the "establishment of a NEW and democratic Sudan in which equality, freedom, economic and social justice and respect for human rights are at the core."[33] *Sudanism* seeks the liberation of the "whole" Sudan and the unity of its people and its "territorial integrity."[34] Its goal is to "enable the masses, and not the elites from different regions, to exercise real power for economic and social development of their regions."[35] Garang's nationalism fights against separatism and heralds the unity of all Sudanese of all races, genders, religions, and ethnicities. It recognizes that Sudan's identity can be self-defined and decided by the people.

In a statement at the Opening Session of the Preliminary Dialogue between SPLM/SPLA and the National Alliance for National Salvation at Koka Dam on March 20, 1986, Garang stated that the British went to America and formed a new nation, and although Americans have British origins they do not claim to be British, but American.[36] He also argued that "Argentineans speak

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[30] Garang, "Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 1985, on the Second Anniversary of the Bor, Pibor and Fashalla resistance and Ayod Revolt," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 49.

[31] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 118.

[32] Garang, "Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 19," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 73.

[33] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 22 March 1985," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 26.

[34] Ibid., 26.

[35] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 9 April 1985, following the downfall of Nimeiri," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 43.

[36] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 128.

Spanish and are Christians, but they are Argentineans not Spaniards and are proud of being

Argentineans."[37] His point is that Sudan can create its own "unique Sudanese civilization" or a

New Sudan.[38] By asserting that Sudan can create its own national identity, Garang confirms

Gelvin's argument that nationalist movements create nations.[39] Nationalist movements do not

bring "preexisting nations to a state of self-awareness," but they are the authors of their own,

"imagined" nation-states.[40] Garang recognized the validity of all religions, languages, cultures,

and ethnicities in Sudan. An example of this is when he says that "there are Muslims and

Christians in both the North and South, but some Sudanese are neither" and that "religion should

never be a divisive force."[41] *Sudanism* recognizes that there are many different religions that are

practiced in many different regions of Sudan, and that all of these religions should be accepted

under the umbrella of the New Sudan, which represents all Sudanese peoples. The New Sudan

will "contribute to the Arab world and to the African world and to the human civilization."[42]

Sudanism replaces Arabism, Africanism, Islamization, Christianization, and all other forms of

sectarianism. It encompasses all of these religions and cultures and expresses them as a uniquely

Sudanese identity. Since *Sudanism* is democratic, it is inherently irreconcilable with

sectarianism of any kind.

In a conference with John Garang regarding the relief crisis at the U.S. Capitol in June

1989, Garang elaborates on the problems of Sudan that are addressed in *Sudanism*. The

problems that he describes are dealt with under the umbrella of *Sudanism*. He says that Sudan

has "over 400 different ethnic groups" and that although it is a "multi-nationality country" the

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[37] Ibid., 128.
[38] Ibid., 128.
[39] Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 14.
[40] Ibid., 14.
[41] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 129-30.
[42] Ibid., 133.

Khartoum governments since 1956 have "treated the Sudan as a mono-nationality."[43] He

continues and says that the Sudan is a multi-religious country, but Khartoum governments "favor

one religion, Islam," which is fully expressed in the imposition of Shari'a law.[44] According to

Garang "nobody is anybody's minority and nobody is anybody's majority. We are all Sudanese,

full stop."[45] He believed that the union of Sudan's numerous ethnicities, cultures, and religions

eliminated the concept of a minority. Everyone has equal representation and everyone is a

majority. From this perspective there is no "Southern problem" because if there is a problem for

anyone in Sudan, no matter what region, then it is also the problem of all Sudanese. Garang's

Sudanism fought to create a New Sudan "in which all nationalities and all the religious groups

coexist."[46] Arabs, Africans, Christians, Muslims, Dinka, and Nuer are all united under *Sudanism*,

and none is valued above the other.[47] The unity of diverse people groups is fundamental to

Sudanism. Let's remember that Garang is referring to diverse groups of people that all reside

within the "piece of real estate" that was given to them by the Anglo-Egyptian colonial

government at independence. Garang could have chosen to support a Southern Sudanese

nationalism, or a Dinka nationalism, or something of the like but he did not do this. This makes

his nationalism peculiar and distinguishable from other nationalist movements in Sudan. This is

especially peculiar when analyzed in juxtaposition to Gelvin's argument about Zionism and

Jewish nationalism. He claims that Jews needed their own "homeland" as a result of the anti-

Semitism that they faced in Europe and Russia, and that Zionism called for Jews around the

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[43] Garang, "Excerpt from John Garang's Policy Statement, 12 July 1988," in Khalid *Call for Democracy,* 192.

[44] Ibid., 192.

[45] Garang, "Response of John Garang to Dr. El-Gizouli, 1 September 1985," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 92.

[46] Garang, "Seminar with John Garang de Mabior at the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. Friday, 9 June, 1989," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 213.

[47] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 9 April 1985, following the downfall of Nimeiri," and "Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 1985," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 42, 58.

world to "embrace the idea that they constitute a single nation, united as in the case of all nations, by the ties and travails of history."[48] Garang was categorized as a black "African" from the Dinka ethnic group. Africans have been historically marginalized and categorized as inferior to other groups such as Arabs and Europeans. *Sudanism* represents the excluded and oppressed peoples. Zionism is, in part, formed in response to Jewish marginalization and exclusion. However, unlike Zionism, Garang's nationalism did not seek to unite all "Africans," but included all peoples within the Sudanese territory, including Arabs. Zionism does not do this, but instead unites all Jews, observant and nonobservant alike. It does not invite other non-Jewish people groups to be a part of its nation. This is what makes *Sudanism* distinct from other more universal nationalist movements such as Arabism and Zionism. It is very much its own in that it sought to unite many different people groups within Sudan, and to include even those such as Arab ruling elites who had historically sought to unite Sudan according to Arabism in a discriminatory way.

Origins of *Sudanism*

John Garang's "search for *Sudanism*" was a result of Sudan's pre-colonial and colonial history. He says that "modern Sudan is a product of historical development before, during, and after the alternate colonial rule of the Turks, the British, and the Egyptians" and that "our immediate task is to form a new Sudan."[49] Garang acknowledges the importance of colonial Turkish, British, and Egyptian influences in shaping Sudan's contemporary ideas of nationalism and identity. *Sudanism* seeks to make sense of and reconcile the identity crisis wrought from Turkish, British, and Egyptian influence. It is hard to understand the significance of *Sudanism* and its origins if we do not understand the Ottoman and Anglo-Egyptian influence on Sudanese

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[48] Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 51.
[49] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at...Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy,* 127.

identity. Anglo-Egyptian colonial rule also influenced the territorial delineation of the present

Sudan. It is within this delineated territory that John Garang sought to unite all ethnicities, races,

and religions.

Perhaps the best synopsis of this history is provided by the well acclaimed author on

Sudanese identity, who served as the United Nations secretary-general for internally displaced

persons, Francis M. Deng.[50] Hundreds of years BCE Arab traders settled among the Sudanese

and were very affluent.[51] This association between Arabs and wealth gave Arabs privilege

among the Sudanese. In the seventh century the Arab Muslim Empire invaded and conquered

the Sudan. Arab Islamic wealth and privileged position made them an "appealing class for

intermarriage with the leading Sudanese families."[52] Few Arabs settled in the South due to

natural barriers.[53] In 1820-1 the Turko-Egyptian forces took over the northern region of Sudan

and it was a regime that was "politically and ideologically Islamic." The Turko-Egyptian regime

was committed to Islamic orthodoxy through Shari'a law, or Islamic laws that applied to the

whole country. Their main reason for occupying Sudan was to obtain African slaves for the

Egyptian army. The Turko-Egyptian regime exacerbated notions of black African inferiority, and

reinforced the superiority of Arabism and Islam. It also introduced Shari'a law, which

previously played "a minor role in Sudanese life." The Sudanese opposed the Turko-Egyptian

rule and saw them as "infidels" who were not deeply religious.[54] The Turko-Egyptians were then

overthrown by Muhammad Ahmed al-Mahdi (a Northern Arab) in the Mahdist revolution in

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[50] Francis M. Deng is a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies program at the Brookings Institution, and has served as the Sudan's minister of state for foreign affairs; as its ambassador to Canada, the United States, and Scandinavia. He is currently the Special Advisor to the UN-Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide.

[51] Francis M. Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 9.

[52] Ibid., 10.

[53] Ibid., 10.

[54] Ibid., 43, 46, 47, 48.

1885.[55] The Mahdist regime maintained an Islamic identity in the Sudan, and slave raids continued in the southern regions of Sudan. Shortly thereafter a joint British-Egyptian Condominium force conquered Sudan in 1899.[56] The British implemented separate administrations for the North and the South, and favored Islamic education.[57] This is a part of Britain's "separatist" policies that worsened divisions between Northerners and Southerners.[58] Many British administrators "adopted" Arab attitudes toward African Southerners and regarded them as savages.[59] Finally, the colonial administration spent much of their effort developing the North politically, economically, socially, and culturally, but ignored the South and left them "isolated, secluded, and undeveloped."[60] This is the historical backdrop from which John Garang forms his nationalist idea of *Sudanism*. This is a very superficial, brief history of the Arabization and Islamization of Sudan, and there are many details missing. However, it gives us a base understanding of the development of Arab/Islamic superiority (or of the "Arab hegemony") in the North, and the neglect and inferiority bestowed on the African Southerners.

We see this progression of the Arab/Islamic identity in Sudan, and the neglect and "exclusion" of the South. Garang recognized that the current racial disparities and class distinctions between Northern Arabs and Southern Africans were a result of historical development. He understood that the current divisions between Arabs and everyone else in Sudan took centuries to develop, and are firmly rooted in Sudanese history. Deng suggests that Anglo-Egyptian colonial policy in Sudan exacerbated these divisions, and that ultimately, these divisions led to the first civil war in Sudan in the 1950s. Garang took up arms against an

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[55] Ibid., 11.
[56] Ibid., 11. 52.
[57] Ibid., 55, 111.
[58] Ibid., 134.
[59] Ibid., 85.
[60] Ibid., 11.

unyielding division between the North and the South with his vision for a united Sudan. He claimed that in

> "1956 our country gained formal independence and entered the era of neo-colonialism. Since then a small parasitic clique from pre-independence system of exploitation took over the former instruments of oppression for their own interests and against the wishes of the majority of the Sudanese people."[61]

John Garang points out a "neo-colonialism" at work in the Sudan that has adopted the oppressive policies of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule in the form of a "domestic colonialism." He used *Sudanism* as an opposing force against the colonial legacy left by the Anglo-Egyptians and against the domestic colonialism of the Northern Arabs. The development of the Sudanese identity and of the "Arab hegemony" was quite apparent to Garang. He concedes that Sudan's "major problem is that it has been looking and is still looking for its soul, for its true identity."[62] Therefore, Garang offers a new identity for Sudan that does not promote the exploitation or discrimination of any races, ethnicities, or religions. *Sudanism* is adamant about this equality because Sudanese history has constantly seen the aggrandizement and escalation of the Arab race and the exploitation and neglect of other races, especially of Southern Africans. It is peculiar that Garang should seek to unite two groups of people who have become progressively more dichotomized and completely divided. The Arab-African division has grown worse over many centuries, along with the development of the Arab ruling elite in the North who have neglected the Southern Sudanese. This would cause one to wonder why Garang did not initially support a nationalism that favored separatism and self-determination for the Southern Sudanese.

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[61] "Sudanese Rebel Leader's Appeal to the People."
[62] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 127.

Garang's response to this is that "the oppressor," which represents any ruling party or person in the Sudan that has oppressed and exploited the masses, has "time and again played various politics in order to destroy and weaken the just struggle of our people, including that most historic policy of divide and rule."[63] One of President Nimeiri's main provocations of the Sudanese people was his "redivision" of the Southern Sudan into "three mini regions" in June 1983, which Garang claims is "consistent with his policy of divide and rule."[64] It is clear that Garang viewed secessionism as a perpetuation of divisiveness in Sudan that had only served to weaken the Sudanese people, not empower them. Garang clearly articulates this view when he says that "it was therefore natural that secessionist movements…developed in different periods in different areas of Sudan thereby jeopardizing the unity of the people and prolonging their suffering and struggle."[65] Secessionism is merely a manifestation of the inherent "divide and rule" tactics of the oppressor. It does not help the cause for peace and prosperity of the exploited Sudanese, but actually weakens their struggle and "prolongs their suffering." Garang heralded a nationalism that opposes secessionism with the same zeal as it opposes the minority clique regimes. He makes this undeniably clear when he says that "if anybody wants to separate even in the North, we will fight him because the Sudan must be one. It should not be allowed to disintegrate or fragment itself."[66] He is talking about a piece of real estate that we call Sudan, but that has territorial boundaries that were delineated by the British. Using Gelvin's model, clearly Garang is "inventing the notion that a population used to exist" in Sudan that had a "common interest" and that this united population should not be allowed to "fragment itself."[67]

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[63] "Sudanese Rebel Leader's Appeal to the People."

[64] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 22.
[65] Ibid., 19.
[66] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 137.
[67] Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 17.

Garang's commitment to the unity of the invented Sudanese "nation" is ceaseless. *Sudanism* has

absolutely no tolerance for secessionism of any kind. Both secessionism and minority clique

regimes are enemies of *Sudanism*.

Another reason for Garang's adamant policy of unity for the Sudan, and his intolerance

of secessionism is because the first rebel movement of the Southern Sudan in the first Sudanese

civil war that began in the 1950s was a secessionist movement. Garang points out that during the

formation of the SPLA/M in 1983 there was "bitter struggle" for six months in deciding the

direction of the Movement because many separatists wanted a Movement that was "similar to the

Anynya I rebel movement" of the first civil war that called for a "separate and independent

Southern Sudan."[68] He exclaims that the "forces of reaction and separatism were defeated."[69]

This language and description of the struggle between unity and separatism reflects the enmity

between *Sudanism* and secessionism. Garang comments on the Anyanya I Movement and says

that the "separation of the South was the primary objective of the Anyanya Movement."[70] He

disagrees with this position and instead concludes that the

> "problem in the Sudan is not that of the South separating or the West separating or the
>
> East separating, it is essentially a problem of justice. If justice is brought about then
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> nobody would wish to separate and so we would build a unity of the country."[71]

In Garang's model of nationalism, justice is brought about by the complete restructuring of

political power in Khartoum, so that all races, religions, and cultures are represented in Sudan.[72]

With this restructuring of power comes the implementation of *Sudanism*--a Sudanese nationalism

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[68] Garang, "Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 1985," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 52.
[69] Ibid., 52.
[70] Garang, "Excerpt from the Speech of John Garang to the Media and the Sudanese Community in London (Africa Hall) June 1989," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 202.
[71] Ibid., 202-3.
[72] Ibid., 203.

that unites all ethnicities, religions, and cultures in Sudan under a secular, democratic, socialist system that honors human rights.[73]

Factionalism and Secessionism

Garang's unyielding determination for Sudanese unity, and his intolerance of secessionism, created much factionalism among the SPLA leaders and other Southern Sudanese. This is not to say that Garang's unity policy was the only source of factionalism, but it definitely played a substantial role. The Anyanya II movement, one of the first Southern factional rebel groups in the 1980s, opposed the SPLA on ideological grounds. In some statements, the Anyanya II accuses Garang of being a Communist and of wanting to spread communism throughout Sudan.[74] Gabriel Gany, a council member of the Anyanya II, also points out that the Anyanya II movement wanted "federal rule in the South while the SPLA fought for liberating the whole Sudan."[75] They also accuse Garang of human rights abuses against the Southern citizens, and of dictatorial leadership.[76] Ultimately, it is ideological differences between the Anyanya II and Garang that play a substantial role in the fierce Southern conflicts.

The SPLA-Nasir faction was another prominent, Southern rebel faction that opposed Garang's SPLA/M on ideological grounds. The Nasir faction was formed in August of 1991 when two former members of the High Command of the SPLA, Riek Machar and Lam Akol

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[73] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 23.

[74] "Sudanese Anti-SPLA Radio Broadcasts Voice of Anyanya II Programme," Excerpt from commentary (b) People's Armed Forces Programme in Arabic (1405 gmt 13 Nov 86), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/8420/A/1 (November 19, 1986). "Sudan: Anti-SPLA Radio Denounces Garang Speech," Excerpts from report National Unity Radio, Omdurman (1400 gmt 13 Jul 88), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/0206/A/1 (July 18, 1988).

[75] "Sudan: In Brief; Anyanya-II Press Conference," Sudan News Agency in English (1810 gmt 25 Apr 85), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 1 The USSR; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/7937/A/1(April 29, 1985).

[76] "Sudan: Anti-SPLA Radio Denounces Garang Speech."

issued a radio message to the SPLA that called for the removal of John Garang from leadership.[77] This call for his deposition was outlined in a tract titled "Why Garang Must Go Now."[78] Initially Machar and Akol based their defection from the SPLA/M on the dictatorial leadership of John Garang[79] and accused him of committing countless human rights abuses against SPLA/M members.[80] However, on January 24, 1992 the SPLM/A Nasir faction expressed their goals for Southern self-determination and the separation of the South from the North.[81] The Nasir faction did not endorse *Sudanism*, and saw the hope for a united Sudan as unrealistic.[82] We can see that issues of ideology are fundamental to factional movements against the SPLA/M. At a delegation between Lam Akol and the Nasir faction with the Nigerian Government, it was pointed out that "secession is the will of the Southern people and Garang knows this very well."[83] It was concluded that Garang's movement was "doomed" because it did not reflect the goals and "aspirations" of the Southern people.[84] There is a real fervency against Garang's mission for a united Sudan based on *Sudanism*. We see bold condemnation of Garang's nationalism that claimed that he was not representing the will of the people, but that he was instead promoting a self-interested nationalism. According to Gelvin's argument this would invalidate his *Sudanism* because it did not reflect the "common interest" or "common good" of the people that it was attempting to unite. Garang faced much opposition from Southern separatists, which resulted in many human rights violations and the slaughter of innocent civilians by all parties involved. *Sudanism* cannot co-exist with separatist ideologies, and this is reflected in the violent conflict between Garang's SPLA/M and the Anyanya II and Nasir

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[77] Dr. Lam Akol, *SPLM/SPLA: The Nasir Declaration* (New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2003), 12.
[78] Ibid., 14.
[79] Ibid., 306.
[80] Ibid., 312.
[81] Ibid., 332-3.
[82] Ibid., 332.
[83] Ibid., 70.
[84] Ibid., 70.

faction. There may have been other reasons for the dissension between the SPLA/M and the Anyanya II and the Nasir faction, but among these sources of conflict, issues of ideology always arise.

There are claims against John Garang's unity stance, as was mentioned earlier, that say that the sentiment of the Southern people was for secession and self-determination. Therefore, separatists concluded that Garang was not fighting for the "common interest" of the Sudanese people. In the 1990s, there was a lot of pressure put on John Garang to change his position for a united Sudan, and to concede to self-determination and secession for the South. This would inevitably forfeit the implementation of *Sudanism*. Scholars tend to agree that the unity policy was important for causing factionalism.[85] There is overwhelming unanimity among scholars regarding the Southern sentiment toward secession. Most acknowledge that the majority of Southerners favored secession over a united Sudan, and that they fought under John Garang with this underlying sentiment in their hearts.[86] Obviously Lam Akol, John Garang's opponent, agrees with scholars and claims that the "Southern Sudanese received the call for a United Sudan with great skepticism and finally total rejection."[87]

There is a strong case to be made for this reality, because it is hard to understand why there was so much factionalism and internal, violent Southern conflict, unless John Garang was, in fact, not representing the political goals and hopes of the Southern Sudanese people.

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[85] Oystein H. Rolandsen, *Guerilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s* (Sweden: Almqivst & Wiksell Tryckeri AB, 2005), 40.
Douglas H. Johnson, "The Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Problem of Factionalism," in *African Guerillas*, ed. Christopher Clapham (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 63.
[86] Millard J. Burr and Robert. O. Collins, *Requiem for the Sudan: War, Drought, and Disaster Relief on the Nile* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 65.
Deng, 20;
Sharon E. Hutchinson, "A Curse from God? Religious and Political Dimensions of the Post-1991 Rise of Ethnic Violence of South Sudan," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 2 (June 2001): 307. Sharon E. Hutchinson and Jok Madut Jok, "Sudan's Prolonged Civil War and Militarization of Nuer and Dinka Ethnic Identities," *African Studies Review* 42, no. 2 (Sep 1999): 138. Claire Metelits, "Reformed Rebels? Democritization, Global Norms, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army," Africa Today 51, no. 1 (Autumn 2004): 72.
[87] Akol, 76.

Although Garang claimed to be fighting on behalf of all of Sudan, not just the South, it is important to mention the South because this is the group that has faced much of the historical marginalization and exploitation by the North. The South comprises many of the oppressed peoples for whose liberation Garang claimed to fight. Therefore, if Garang did not represent the sentiment of the Southern people then his movement was not for the "common good" of all. Obviously there are other reasons that fueled and perpetuated Southern, factional conflict, but ideology definitely seems to play a role. This is especially seen in the fact that the SPLA-Nasir faction and the Anyanya II Movement posed secessionist goals for the South in their public statements and documents.

Garang's opposition to Southern secession can best be explained by comparing it to Arabism and Zionism. Gelvin claims that Zionism seeks to unite all Jews into one nation and into one identity.[88] Arab nationalisms seek to unite people within different territorial boundaries according to Arab culture. Garang's *Sudanism* does a similar thing, but it is hard to discern this because he sought to unite 400 different ethnic groups into one Sudanese identity. Garang saw the eclectic Sudanese population as bearing an undeniable, distinct Sudanese identity in the same way that Zionists see Jews as all being distinctly Jewish, and as Arab nationalists see Arabs as being distinctly Arab. This elucidates Garang's motivations for struggling against secessionism and for detesting the fragmentation of the Sudanese nation. This, of course, is only relevant if Garang's nationalism promoted the true "common interest" of all the people of the "invented" Sudan.

If *Sudanism* does not reflect the majority sentiment of the marginalized people of Sudan, then it seems that it is a self-interested nationalism. It is not a valid nationalism according to Gelvin if it does not reflect the "common interest" of the Sudanese populace. *Sudanism* is not a

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[88] Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 51.

legitimate movement of liberation if it is only favorable to Northern Arabs, because Garang's

movement is meant to liberate people from the oppression of the Arab hegemonic system that

has exploited the non-Arab Sudanese. I am not saying that Garang's nationalism was appealing

to the Northern Arabs, although some argue that a united Sudan was appealing to Northerners,

but I am saying that if it did, then it would not be a nationalism of the Sudanese masses.

Garang's movement called for the overthrow of the existing Northern Arab political ruling

system, for the restructuring of power, and a redistribution of that political power equally among

all people groups of Sudan under a united Sudan. However, this model is futile and unreflective

of Southern aspirations if the marginalized people of Sudan favor secessionism, and not unity.

Southern Sentiment: Unity or Secession?

The extent of the Southern sentiment about secessionism is difficult to ascertain.

Obviously there is dissension at the Southern political level, as one of the main tenets of the

Southern factional movements called for an independent, self-determined South Sudan. If there

was a majority sentiment for secession in the South, then at the very least it was not strong

enough to oust John Garang from his position of Commander-in-Chief of the Movement. This

does not mean that there was not a strong secessionist sentiment in the South, but it simply

means that it was not overwhelming enough to unite all of the Southern Sudanese under a

secessionist position. Whether or not Garang's *Sudanism* reflected the true aspirations of a

majority of the marginalized Sudanese masses is hard to say in the context of this paper. I will

say that John Garang remained consistent and persistent with his goals for a united New Sudan in

the era of factionalism, while Riek Machar and Lam Akol seem to have compromised their objectives and the objectives of liberation for the Southern Sudanese.

The genesis of the Nasir faction headed by Machar and Akol is a helpful starting point for tracing the political progression of the two faction leaders. In a radio message to all units of the SPLA on August 28th, 1991, they claimed that Garang had been "deposed" as the Chairman of the SPLA/M and that Riek Machar would "take over as the interim leader until a National Convention was called to elect the leader of the Movement."[89] The reality is that Garang was not deposed and that he remained the leader of the SPLA/M. If this were not the case then he would not have been introduced and addressed as the Chairman of the Movement at different peace meetings thereafter. Machar and Akol's declaration against Garang did result in the creation of a new Southern faction and did have some popularity, but it did not have the restructuring effect for which they had hoped. If the Southern sentiment was so overwhelmingly secessionist and anti-Garang then it should have been unanimous enough to depose Garang. It was not strong enough to overthrow him though. It certainly weakened the movement as it resulted in brutal conflict between Southern factions and in the wanton slaughter of thousands of civilians.

After unsuccessfully attempting to overthrow John Garang, Machar and Akol began to collude with the Khartoum government and receive government military support to combat John Garang's SPLA-Torit.[90] The government also supported other anti-Garang groups such as the Anyanya II and Arab militias militarily in order to weaken Garang's SPLA Movement.[91] The Nasir faction, the Anyanya II Movement, and the Arab militias such as the Murhallin, all

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[89] Akol, 12.

[90] SPLA-Torit is another name given to Garang's faction of the SPLA Movement. Sam Kiley, "Khartoum Supplying Guns to Inflame Rebel Infighting," *The Times*, September 5, 1994.

[91] Sudan: In Brief; Government Forces and Anyanya II Launch Assault on SPLA," Suna in French (1515 gmt 16 Dec 86), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/8845/A/1 (December 18, 1986).

committed inhumane atrocities against Sudanese civilians, especially against the Dinka.[92] One of

the most notorious acts of atrocious violence against civilians by government-sponsored Arab

militias is the massacre of approximately 1,500 Dinka civilians in the town of Al-Daein in

1987.[93] Amnesty International accused Machar's Nasir faction in 1993 of killing approximately

2,000 Dinka.[94] Garang's SPLA also has a record of human rights abuses, although it is less

atrocious then that of government funded Southern factions and militias. I point out the atrocities

of the Nasir faction in order to show that Machar and Akol initially oppose Garang because of

his dictatorial and inhumane leadership, and because Machar and Akol claimed to support the

true secessionist goals of the Sudanese masses. Yet, soon after the genesis of the Nasir faction,

they began receiving military support from the government, and then commit heinous human

rights abuses against Southern Sudanese civilians. The Nasir faction especially targeted Dinka

civilians because of their association with John Garang. John Garang was a Dinka,[95] and had

been accused by some as leading a Movement that was seeking Sudanese domination by the

Dinka. Riek Machar was a Nuer, which is sometimes seen as a rival of the Dinka, and there are

scholars such as Sarah E. Hutchinson who make strong cases for the tribal nature of the conflicts

between Garang's SPLA and Machar's Nasir faction.[96] This aspect of the Southern factional

conflict is too dense for the scope of this paper, but is necessary to mention when discussing the

violent acts of inhumanity committed by all of the Southern factions including Garang's SPLA-

Torit faction. To reiterate, however, Dinka civilians associated with Garang were not only

targeted by the Nasir faction, but were also heavily targeted by the Arab militias employed by

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[92] Human Rights Watch Report/Africa (formerly Africa Watch), *Civilian Devastation: Abuses by All Parties in the War in Southern Sudan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, June 1994), 90, 94, 95.

[93] "Police Aided in Massacre, Sudanese Survivors Say," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April, 25, 1987.

[94] Robert M. Press, "Civil War Hurts Sudan's Civilians," *Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA),* July 23, 1993.

[95] Hutchinson, "A Curse from God," 308.

[96] Ibid., 308.

the government, as is seen in the Al-Daein massacre of 1987. Why is it that the Nasir faction

claims to represent the secessionist sentiments of Southerners and for their liberation, but also

colludes with an oppressive government and massacres Dinka civilians? Were the Dinka people

so unanimously pro-Garang that the Nasir faction felt it necessary to slaughter them in order to

accomplish secessionist goals for the suffering Sudanese? Machar's Nasir faction was not alone

in its human rights abuses. Garang's SPLA also committed its share of human rights violations

against suffering Sudanese civilians and dissenters within the SPLA, which obviously

perpetuated the conflict between the Nasir faction and Garang.[97] However, if the oppressed

people of Sudan were so anti-Garang and so pro-secession, then the Nasir faction would not have

needed to garner a lot of military support from the "minority clique regime" and massacre

civilians in order to defeat Garang. The truth may be that anti-Garang and pro-secessionist

aspirations were not as prominent as Machar and Akol had claimed. This does not mean that

Garang reflected the majority sentiment of the marginalized Sudanese, but it does mean that he

had enough support to remain the leader of a prominent rebel army in Sudan.

I argue that there were two reasons for the collusion of the Nasir faction with the

Khartoum government. The first is that the Nasir faction lacked the resources and the popularity

to overthrow John Garang, and therefore had to acquire government support. Secondly, as is

widely accepted, the Khartoum government continually instigated Nasir-Torit conflict and used

the Nasir faction to weaken the whole Sudanese rebel movement.[98] This fits perfectly into John

Garang's ideology that the "oppressor" constantly seeks to "divide and rule" the Sudanese

people to their demise. The government supported the Nasir faction in order to divide the whole

rebel cause, and then continue to exercise control and exploitive power over them. Clearly,

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[97] Human Rights Watch Report/Africa 1994, 3.
[98] Hutchinson, "A Curse from God," 310; Hutchinson and Jok Madut Jok, 130; Sam Kiley, "Khartoum Supplying Guns to Inflame Rebel Infighting."

Garang must have despised the Nasir faction's adultery against the Sudanese people as they slept with the enemy in Khartoum.

Eventually Riek Machar's faction, which changed from being the Nasir faction to the Southern Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), along with four other Southern Sudanese rebel factions, signed the Khartoum Peace Agreement with the government in April of 1997.[99] These five Southern rebel factions "fused" together to become the United Democratic Southern Sudan Salvation Front (UDSSF). In that same year President Omar Bashir, who is currently the dictator of Sudan and who has a notoriously poor human rights record, "issued a decree" that made Machar the president and ruler of the Southern Coordination Council for a period of four years.[100] It is essential to note that Machar was appointed this leadership position by the command of the government, not by the decision of the Southern Sudanese people. A little more than a year after the signing of the Khartoum peace agreement there was already "fierce fighting" within the UDSSF. Paulino Matip, a pro-government commander at Bentiu, and another faction called the Bor group, both defected from the UDSSF because they claimed that Riek Machar "was unfair in distributing posts when he set up the administration in the south."[101] Although the Southern factions herald separatism, and claim to represent the true aspirations of the South, there is much internal conflict and dissension. Machar compromised their objectives, and compromised the long-term liberation of the Sudanese people by receiving government support to commit atrocities against pro-Garang civilians in the first place. Not only this, but Machar becomes a tool in a so called "democratic," government-run machine that only leads to more factionalism, and leaves the Sudanese identity unresolved. In this light, I do not believe

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[99] "Sudanese President Appoints Riek Machar to Rule Southern Sudan," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, August 7, 1997.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Albino Okeny, "Sudanese Pro-Government Rebels Turn Against Each Other," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, July 31, 1998.

that the Southern factions represented the true sentiment of the Sudanese people regarding

secession and unity. According to Garang's *Sudanism*, which calls for the overthrow of the

current government and the complete restructuring of political power, Machar compromised the

hope of Sudan. It makes sense that Machar and other Southern factional leaders would end their

struggle against the government after more than a decade of ceaseless violence and civilian

misery. Nonetheless, they submitted to the "oppressor" and enabled him to continue the legacy

of marginalization and discrimination of non-Arab Sudanese. The Nasir faction and all other

Southern Sudanese factions failed according to Garang's nationalist model because they did not

achieve a new national identity for Sudan that recognized all ethnicities, religions, and cultures

as being "Sudanese." Garang did not recognize the validity of the Khartoum Peace Agreement

because it did not solve Sudan's fundamental issues of identity.[102] The Khartoum Peace

Agreement signified the submission of those of the "just" cause, and could only appease the

Sudanese masses for a short time. Garang's *Sudanism* could not prevail in a political system that

was still regulated and controlled by the same oppressive government as before. He remained

zealous for *long-term* Sudanese unity that redefined the Sudanese identity. It seems that he was

correct to not compromise his goals by joining the UDSSF, because internal violence and

conflict ensued within the "united" Southern factions shortly after the signing of the Khartoum

Peace Agreement. *Sudanism* could not be nurtured or bear fruit under the stipulations of the

Khartoum Peace Agreement.

Ultimately, we can, at the very least, conclude that John Garang was fervent and

unyielding in his pursuit of *Sudanism*. While adamant secessionists such as Machar and Akol

compromised their own objectives and colluded with the "oppressor" to the detriment of

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[102] "Sudanese President Appoints Riek Machar to Rule Southern Sudan."

countless civilians, John Garang remained consistent about achieving a new united Sudan that was democratic and that did not discriminate based on race, religion, or culture. He continued to fight for a new Sudanese identity that was an eclectic combination of all the races, religions, and cultures in Sudan, and that redefined the Sudanese identity.

Ethiopian Influence on Garang's Position of Unity

Having questioned the validity of the unanimity of the Southern sentiment for secession, and arguing for Garang's genuine persistence in fighting for a new, united Sudan, let us consider Garang's nationalist agenda in the context of Ethiopia's political and military support of Garang and the SPLA/M. It could be argued that John Garang remained adamant about achieving a united Sudan because he was receiving political/military support from Mengistu's Communist Ethiopian regime at a time when Ethiopia was fighting the separatist rebellion of Eritrea. In fact, some have made this argument or an argument similar to it, which, at the very least, recognizes the close connection between Garang and Mengistu.[103] Part of this argument is reinforced by the claim that after the fall of Mengistu's Marxist regime in 1991, Garang began gravitating toward more secessionist-type policies such as self-determination.[104] Eritrea waged a "secessionist" war against Mengistu's regime and earned their right to self-determination and ultimately voted for its independence from Ethiopia in 1991.[105]

It is true that Garang began promoting policies that were more favorable toward self-determination, and which seemed to be progressing toward secession. Most notably in the 1990s

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[103] Abel Alier, *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured* (Exeter: Ithaca Press, 1990), 252. Johnson in *African Guerillas*, 60.
Ann Mosely Lesch, "Confrontation in the Southern Sudan," Middle East Journal 40, no. 3 (Summer 1986): 426-7. Rolandsen, 39.
[104] Rolandsen, 40.
[105] "EPLF Leader Gives Pledges on Referendum and Use of Aseb," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; 4B. AFRICA; ME/1105/ii (June 22, 1991).

and onward, he espoused a policy of confederation, in which the North and the South would have had separate constitutions.[106] In an interview with Kenyan TV in 2000, he clarified that this confederation would be for an interim period of two to four years until the issue of the separation of religion and state was resolved, or more specifically the repeal of Shari'a law.[107] This policy basically offers self-determination to the Southern Sudan, which contrasts with Garang's former position that opposed self-determination. Garang's espousal of confederation seems to contradict the tenets of *Sudanism*, and seems to forfeit the hope of a united Sudan that represents all ethnicities, cultures, and religions. However, Garang defends his confederation policy against these accusations in a couple of ways. He basically claims that confederation is a last resort and that it is only a policy option because the Khartoum government will not "abandon Shari'a, and that the south refuses to be governed by it."[108] Shari'a law was so inherently discriminatory against the Sudanese people who Garang sought to liberate, that it forced him to compromise for a policy of confederation. Confederation is not a primary option for Garang by any means, but it was the only way that he could maintain the liberation struggle for the Sudanese populace in the midst of Northern stubbornness regarding the separation of religion and state. In a press interview in 1997 he defended his nationalist motives for a united Sudan against accusations of growing secessionist sentiments in his movement. He exclaimed that

> "Our objectives on the unity of Sudan have been principled and firm since 1983. We
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> fought for it and continue to stress and adhere to this unity. Talking about unity in
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> absolute terms creates vagueness. We are talking about a real unity on the ground, a unity

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[106] "Interview of Sudan's John Garang by Kenyan TV," KTN TV, Nairobi, in English (1600 gmt 06 Jan 00),BBC Worldwide Monitoring (January 6, 2000).
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

based on the historic and contemporary diversity of Sudan, a unity I am proud of and one

I am ready to defend."[109]

Six years after the fall of the Ethiopian regime, Garang still heralds the vision for a united Sudan with audacity and steadfastness. Some think that Garang had underlying secessionist motives, but I disagree. It is clear that confederation was not an attractive option to Garang, but was merely a better option than living under the regime of "clique-chauvinism" that perpetrated the racial, religious, and cultural oppression to which the Sudanese people had become so miserably accustomed. He did not call for blatant secession like Machar or Akol, and even his advocacy of self-determination is in the hope of a future united Sudan.

Garang reaffirms his position multiple times, including in an interview with an Egyptian Magazine in 1998 and he says

"The issue of a confederation came as a reaction to the government's stance and refusal to have a united Sudan on the basis of certain principles - the most important of which is the separation of religion and state. They rejected our proposal and hence we demanded a confederation because peoples from different religious faiths cannot live under a theocracy. This is the real reason."[110]

Garang's nationalism situates itself in opposition to Arab and Islamic nationalisms, because nationalisms define themselves according to what they oppose as Gelvin argues. *Sudanism* could not exist in the Arab dominated political system that forced all of its citizens to adhere to Islamic law. Therefore, it would have to lay dormant in a system of confederation until a united Sudan

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[109] "Rebel Leader Garang on Nairobi Talks, Sudanese Unity, SPLM Finances," 'Al-Watan al-Arabi,' Paris, in Arabic (12 Dec 97), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East; THE MIDDLE EAST; LIBYA; ME/D3102/MED (December 15, 1997).

[110] "John Garang Comments on Negotiations, Confederation, Unity," 'Al-Musawwar', Cairo, in Arabic (14 Aug 98), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East; SUDAN; ME/D3307/MED (August 17, 1998).

could be achieved; if it can ever be achieved. *Sudanism* can only be implemented when the existing political system is overthrown. Garang called for the complete restructuring of political power in Sudan and the repeal of Shari'a law so that there is complete equality of representation. It is only after this restructuring of power that the nationalism of *Sudanism* can be realized.

The SPLA/M's close relationship with Mengistu's Ethiopian regime very well may have obliged Garang to maintain a position that favored a united Sudan. However, Garang's hope for the "whole" Sudan as becoming the "Breadbasket of the Middle East" seems to be proof of less self-interested motives for espousing a united Sudan. Also, for successive years after the fall of the Ethiopian regime, Garang continued to maintain a fervent hope for Sudanese unity and for the liberation of the Sudanese people from discriminatory and oppressive regimes; from Nimeirism essentially. When Garang concedes to a system of confederation, he does it in the interest of a truly united Sudan for the future. He allows confederation because it protects Southerners and other Sudanese people such as the Nuba from the discrimination of the Arab/Islamic North. Garang's favor of confederation seems to follow Abel Alier's logic that "if a Northern government continues to want a new Sudan based on Islamic fundamentalism then Southern Sudan will be forced to seek independence."[111] This does not mean that Garang supported independence, but independence does seem inevitable if the Khartoum government does not yield in its pursuit of a purely Arab/Islamic identity for the Sudan. Confederation is not meant to be submission to secession, but is meant to leave the Sudanese people with an option for achieving a new, united Sudan.

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[111] Alier, 250-1. Abel Alier is a Southern Sudanese politician who wrote *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured.*

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005

A final analysis of John Garang's commitment to *Sudanism* is best made by observing the stipulations of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that was signed by the SPLA/M and the Government of Sudan in 2005. Some important stipulations in the agreement, for our purposes, include the right of the Southern Sudanese to self determination, which offers them the opportunity to vote on a referendum in 2011 that will decide whether or not the Southern Sudan will secede from the North or remain united.[112] The agreement also states that there will be a separate Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS), whose president would be John Garang until elections for new legislators and representatives are held after the six year interim period.[113] A main priority of the GOSS is to be a link between the Khartoum government and the Southern Sudanese people during the interim period, and to govern the affairs of Southern Sudan as a part of a wider, national, united Sudan.[114]

In some ways the CPA resembles a separation between Northern and Southern Sudan, and seems to pave the way for secession. This would cause us to infer that Garang had adopted secessionist sentiments and submitted to separatist policies. He addresses the issue of the self determination of the South as is stipulated in the CPA by saying that his hope for Sudan is that self-determination will result in the Sudanese people deciding by their "free will" to be a united Sudan.[115] His hope was for a "voluntary" unity of the Sudan that upholds "honor and dignity for all its citizens regardless of their race, regardless of their religion, and regardless of their

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[112] "The Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between The Government of The Republic of The Sudan and The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, 2005," http://www.aec-sudan.org/docs/cpa/cpa-en.pdf.CPA (accessed May 17, 2010), 2.
[113] "The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)," 21, 32.
[114] CPA, 32.
[115] "Rebel Leader Hails 'New Sudan' of Peace and Pluralism," Nation TV, Nairobi, in English (1210 gmt 9 Jan 05), BBC Monitoring Africa-Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring (January 10, 2005).

gender."[116] If this equality is not achieved, then Garang concedes that the "union" between the

North and South will be peacefully severed through the self-determination of the South.[117] The

independence of the Southern Sudan is therefore an option for John Garang when he signs the

CPA in 2005. This is fundamentally different from his policies of the 1980s, which vowed

complete enmity with all secessionists.[118] Especially, when previously in the 1980s, Garang

condemned secessionism as a tool of the "oppressor" used to "divide and rule" the "excluded,"

suffering Sudanese people.[119] Amidst Garang's lucid "compromise"of his previous aspirations,

he still hoped for a united Sudan. Secession was not his hope for the future of Sudan, but was

instead a buffer, or a safe-guard against falling back into the "old Sudan" of oppression and

Arab/Islamic clique regimes. Garang claimed that he aspired for a "real paradigm shift from the

old Sudan of exclusivity to the new Sudan of inclusivity achieved not through force but through

the exercise of the right of self determination."[120] Self-determination is meant to reflect the

Southern Sudan's "common interest" for a united Sudan. It is not meant to result in the

secession of the South, but is to be the realization of genuine Sudanese unity. Circumstance

most certainly forced Garang to compromise some of his initial policies, but not necessarily at

the expense of *Sudanism*. It seems that Garang resolved that he could change some of his former

policies without jeopardizing the implementation of *Sudanism*. He also submitted to "actually"

allowing the people to decide their fate rather than continue to wage a hauntingly brutal and

vicious war that seemed to have no end. He gave the Sudanese people the opportunity to create

their own nationalism, as Gelvin might agree. They can either be Southern Sudanese

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[116] Ibid.

[117]Ibid.

[118] Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at…Koka Dam, 20 March, 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 137.

[119] Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 19.

[120] "Rebel Leader Hails 'New Sudan' of Peace and Pluralism."

nationalists, or Arab nationalists, or Dinka nationalists, or Nuer nationalists, etc. The only nation that will be validated globally will be the one that is created and implemented as a result of the referendum in 2011. All of these nationalist ideologies are valid in so much as they truly reflect the aspirations of the people in the nations which they seek to create.

After 22 years of civil war, John Garang still hoped for and deeply advocated a united Sudan that accepted a new national identity of *Sudanism*. To reiterate, *Sudanism* is a national identity that refutes an Arab national identity, refutes an African national identity, and refutes both a Christian and Islamic national identity, and instead fuses all of the different religions, ethnicities, and cultures into one, uniquely Sudanese national identity. This is his peculiar nationalist ideology.

Conclusion

Using James L. Gelvin's argument about nationalist ideologies, which states that nations are created by nationalists and that nationalisms must promote the "common interest" of the populations of the nations they create, we have traced the development of John Garang's nationalism of *Sudanism*. John Garang was a nationalist and his movement was nationalist at the core. *Sudanism* is defined in opposition to all nationalisms and political practices that do not include the "excluded" and that do not unite all of the ethnic groups, religions, and cultures within the territorial boundaries of Sudan. It also opposes secessionism much in the same way that a Zionist would oppose dissension among Jews who refute the idea of global Jewish unity. John Garang remained consistent and persistent in his pursuit of his nationalist agenda, and hoped for a united Sudan and for a new, distinctly Sudanese identity.

To the great tragedy of those who shared John Garang's optimism, and who trusted in him to implement a viable peace for the "excluded" Sudanese, John Garang was killed in a helicopter crash on a flight from Uganda to Southern Sudan on the weekend of July 31, 2005.[121] The question of whether or not *Sudanism* will die with him will be decided in the Southern referendum vote in 2011. It is then that we will learn the true sentiment of the Southern Sudanese people. Will they adopt a new, permanent national identity based on *Sudanism*? Or will they fulfill the claims of many scholars, and decide to be an independent nation that is not united with Northern Sudan? Will *Sudanism* ever be realized, or will it merely die and be buried among many other unrealized nationalist ideologies in recent history? Is John Garang's death the "for-itself moment" of the Hegelian dialectic of *Sudanism,*[122] and will *Sudanism* only be realized after his death, or is he just another dead rebel?[123] Did Dr. John Garang de Mabior push down the monster's body, the body of Nimeirism, or does the monster still stand? Is the monster falling or is it lifting itself up, only to ruin the hope of Sudan? It is the people who removed the

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[121] Marc Lacey, "New No. 2 in Sudan, an Ex-Rebel Leader, Dies in a Copter Crash," *New York Times*, Aug. 1, 2005.

[122] There are three stages to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's dialectical process, which is a method of interpreting historical development. The first stage is the "in-itself moment" (thesis) where the "reality at issue" is "implicit." The second stage is the "for-itself moment" (antithesis), which I have attached to Garang's death. The ideology of *Sudanism* is implicit in Garang's struggle and is not fully realized in his life. In the "for-itself moment" the "reality" of *Sudanism* is made explicit or "exteriorized" in the person of John Garang. The third stage of Hegel's dialectic is the "in-and-for-itself moment" (synthesis) where *Sudanism* is realized as both explicit and implicit. It is fully realized, and replaces the old system of Arab oligarchies.

A helpful application of Hegel's dialectical method to a historical development is seen in the case of Julius Caesar. In the "in-itself moment" of the life of Caesar, he challenges the old republican form of government. In the "for-itself moment" Caesar's political position of "monarchism" is rejected and he is murdered. The "in-and-for-itself moment" is that the result of Caesar's murder is the implementation of the "new form of government," which is the era of the "Caesars" (monarchy). This explanation of Hegel's dialectic is taken from the University Course Reader of a class taught by Paul S. Miklowitz, Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy at California Polytechnic State University. *German Philosophy: Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche Lecture Notes,* for Philosophy 315, 2006, 46-47. He has also written *Metaphysics to Metafictions: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the End of Philosophy*.

Ultimately, I am suggesting that the "in-itself moment" of the dialectic of *Sudanism* is when John Garang challenges the existing system of "minority clique regimes" with his new nationalism of *Sudanism* that promotes the redistribution of political power, and promotes the unity of Sudan. The "for-itself moment" is when Garang, the physical manifestation of *Sudanism* in one person, dies. This logic suggests that *Sudanism* will be fully realized in the "in-and-for-itself moment," and will be established as a completely new form of government in the Sudan.

monster's head in the first place, and it will be the people who decide what becomes of its body.

If *Sudanism* is to be the sword with which Nimeirism is permanently slain, then it will be the

people who wield it. May they wield this sword in unity and "dig out a mountain with

shovels!"[124]

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[124] Quote by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 1985 on Second Anniversary of the Bor, Pibor and Fashalla resistance and Ayod revolt. It is meant to signify the power of Sudanese unity. He says "all reactionary and clique regimes in Khartoum must know that when the people are united and resolved they can dig out a mountain with shovels, let alone the May II regime with is much weaker than May I." (Garang, "Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 1985" in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 52).

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