

JOHN GARANG AND SUDANISM: A PECULIAR AND RESILIENT NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY

By Matthew J. Delaney

Perspectives

Dialogue about John Garang and his Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) usually falls into two separate camps. One camp includes many who tend to perceive Garang as a militaristic, power-hungry, dictatorial leader who was not as concerned with democracy as he had claimed. Scholars such as Sarah Hutchinson, Jok Madut Jok, John Young, Claire Metelits, Alex de Waal, and Oystein H. Rolandsen discredit aspects of Garang's movement and ideology because of his human rights abuses and inability to implement effective civil administrations in southern Sudan.

Mansour Khalid is of the second camp, and he most overtly supports John Garang's leadership and nationalist agenda. Abel Alier, M.W. Daly, and Douglas Johnson also tend to sympathize with Garang and credit him with having achieved effective civil administrations in the southern Sudan. They perceive his democratic goals as mostly genuine, but they do not deny his human rights abuses. However, they tend to address his autocratic behavior objectively by trying to understand it in the context of the SPLA/M's violent and propagandistic opposition in Khartoum and among factions in the South.

Francis M. Deng remains relatively neutral with regard to Garang's success as a politician and as a defender of democracy. Garang plays a small role in Deng's argument that Sudan's conflict since independence has been a conflict of identity between the largely Arab north and the mostly African south. Deng claims that long term peace in Sudan will not be realized until the problem of the Sudanese identity is resolved. My exposition of Garang's nationalist ideology, Sudanism, is in agreement with Deng's thesis, which is that Sudan's conflict is identity-driven.¹ The purpose of this paper is to explain Garang's perspective of the Sudanese identity, which is embodied in his nationalist ideology, "Sudanism."

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.²

These are the zealous words of Dr. John Garang de Mabior, Commander-in-Chief of the SPLA/M, in April of 1985. He was addressing the people of Sudan after a recent popular people's uprising, which overthrew the President of Sudan, Jaafar Nimeiri. Nimeiri was a voracious despot who was the embodiment of the "monster's head" in the opening quote. Garang did not only necessitate the removal of the monster's head, but also the destruction of the body. The monster's body is Nimeirism, which is a term that describes the various policies and dictatorial, exploitative actions of President Nimeiri. Nimeirism is a model of oppression against which John Garang pitted his ef-

¹ 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.

Francis M. Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 515.

² John Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 9 April 1985, following downfall of Nimeiri," in *The Call for Democracy in Sudan*, ed. Mansour Khalid (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1992), 41.

forts of liberation. In defiance of Nimeirism, Garang offered a new nationalist ideology, which he called Sudanism, and which recognized the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of Sudan and called for a new, uniquely Sudanese identity.³ Garang's Sudanism was therefore inherently opposed to divisiveness and separatism, and was disposed to unity. This thesis examines the conflicts 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 Garang remained consistent and persistent in heralding a new, united Sudan based on Sudanism, which was at heart a nationalist ideology. Using James L. Gelvin's model of the development and nature of nationalisms I will demonstrate that Garang's Sudanism was a peculiar form of nationalism.⁴ I will describe his nationalist ideology in contrast to Nimeirism and secessionism.

NIMEIRISM VERSUS SUDANISM

John Garang defined Nimeirism as a policy of divide and rule that oppressed the people of Sudan.⁵ He said that "the oppressor has divided the Sudanese people into Northerners and Southerners; Westerners and Easterners...Muslims and Christians, and into Arabs and Africans."⁶ 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 by 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."⁷ Garang

³ Garang, "Seminar with John Garang de Mabior at the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. Friday, 9 June, 1989," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 213..

⁴ 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.

⁵ Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 19.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. "Minority clique regime" is a term that Garang used frequently to describe any oppressive Khartoum governments that promoted sectarianism, and that exploited the Sudanese masses for the benefit of the few, ruling elite in Khartoum. This minority clique often comprised Arab elites, and has also been referred to as the Arab hegemony, or the hegemony of the north or "clique-chauvinism."

formally listed Nimeiri's offenses against the Sudanese people and condemned him for corruption, bribery, resource exploitation, and other forms of subjugation.⁸ Garang's cardinal theme was 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."⁹ Garang boldly condemned this resource exploitation and said that "natural resources, wherever they are found in the Sudan, belong to the whole Sudanese people."¹⁰ This is readily applicable to the case of the Jonglei Canal, in which Khartoum wanted to manipulate the canal in order to benefit Northern Sudan, making the rest of Sudan a low priority. Similarly, Garang argued that Nimeiri promoted an Arab nationalism that showed exorbitant partiality to Arab Muslims in Sudan. The full extension of this nationalism is seen in the implementation of the "September Laws" of 1983, which obliged all Sudanese to abide by Islamic Shari'a law.¹¹ Ultimately, in Garang's perspective Nimeirism is a practice of governance that keeps power in the hands of a few (Arab Northern elites) at the expense of the masses.¹² 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 James Gelvin's argument about nationalism, we can conclude that Garang's nationalist ideology was formed in response to Arab and Islamic nationalist agendas in Sudan. Gelvin articulates that "all nationalisms arise in opposition to some 'other'" and that they are "defined by what they oppose."¹³ Sudanism is defined as the enemy of sectarian nationalisms, of models of dictatorial rule such as Nimeirism, and of secessionism as we will see later. Garang struggled against nationalist ideologies that sought to fetter diverse Sudanese peoples to strictly Arab, African, Christian, or Islamic identi-

⁸ Ibid., 20-1.

⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Sudanese Southerners Ask to End Islamic Law," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April 18, 1985.

¹² Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 21.

¹³ James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 93.

ties. Sudanism is among the many nationalist ideologies that “defined itself by what it opposed.”

Nimeirism is the face of “sectarian chauvinism” and “religious bigotry.”¹⁴ According to Garang it created and perpetuated the suffering of Sudanese civilians. Sudanism is the antithesis of Nimeirism, and it also contends against separatism and heralds the unity of all Sudanese of every race, gender, religion, and ethnicity. It recognizes that Sudan’s identity can be self-defined and established by the people.

In commenting on the formation of nation-states Garang said 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.¹⁵ He also argued that “Argentineans speak Spanish and are Christians, but they are Argentineans not Spaniards and are proud of being Argentineans.”¹⁶ His point was that Sudan can create its own “unique Sudanese civilization” or a “New Sudan.”¹⁷ By asserting that Sudan can found its own national identity, Garang confirms Gelvin’s argument that nationalist movements create nations.¹⁸ Nationalist movements do not bring “preexisting nations to a state of self-awareness,” but they are the authors of their own, “imagined” nation-states.¹⁹

Garang elaborates on the problems in Sudan that are addressed in Sudanism and says that Sudan has “over 400 different ethnic groups” and that although it is a “multi-nationality country” the Khartoum governments since 1956 have “treated the Sudan as a mono-nationality.”²⁰ He further expounds that Sudan is a multi-religious country, but Khartoum governments “favor one religion, Islam,” which is fully expressed in the imposition of Shari’a law.²¹ According to Garang “nobody is anybody’s minority and nobody is anybody’s

¹⁴ Garang, “Statement by John Garang on 26 and 27 May 19,” in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 73.

¹⁵ Garang, “Statement by John Garang de Mabior at...Koka Dam, 20 March 1986,” in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 128.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Garang, “Excerpt from John Garang’s Policy Statement, 12 July 1988,” in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 192.

²¹ *Ibid.*

majority. We are all Sudanese, full stop.”²² He believed that the union of Sudan’s numerous ethnicities, cultures, and religions eliminated the concept of a minority. Everyone had equal representation and everyone was a majority. From this perspective there was no “southern problem,” because if there was a problem for anyone in Sudan, no matter what region, then it was the problem of all Sudanese. Garang’s Sudanism arduously struggled to create a New Sudan “in which all nationalities and all religious groups coexisted.” Arabs, Africans, Christians, Muslims, Dinka, and Nuer are all united under Sudanism, and none is valued above the other.²⁴ The unity of diverse people groups is fundamental to Sudanism. Garang could have given his alliance to a southern-Sudanese nationalism, or a Dinka nationalism, or something of the like, but he did not offer such submission. This makes his nationalist ideology peculiar and distinguishable from other ideologies in Sudan.

It is especially peculiar when analyzed in juxtaposition to Gelvin’s argument about Zionism and Jewish nationalism. Gelvin 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 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.”²⁵ Garang was categorized as a black “African” from the Dinka ethnic group. In recent history Africans have been marginalized and categorized as inferior to other ethnic groups such as Arabs and Europeans. Zionism is, in part, formed in response to Jewish marginalization and exclusion. However, unlike Zionism, Garang’s nationalist ideology 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 ideologies such as Arabism and Zionism. It is very much its own in that it sought to unite many different people

²² Garang, “Response of John Garang to Dr. El-Gizouli, 1 September 1985,” in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 92.

²³ Garang, “Seminar with John Garang de Mabior at the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. Friday, 9 June, 1989,” in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 213.

²⁴ 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.

²⁵ Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 51.

groups within Sudan, and to include even those of the Arab ruling elites who had historically sought to unite Sudan according to Arabism in a discriminatory way.

ORIGINS OF SUDANISM

In Sudan's history we can trace the overt progression of the Arab/Islamic identity, and the gradual 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. The current divisions between Arabs and everyone else in Sudan took centuries to come to fruition, and have firm historical roots. Francis M. Deng, a former UN Secretary General for internally-displaced persons and an expert on Sudan, 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.²⁶ Garang took up arms against an unyielding division between the north and the south with his vision for a united Sudan. He claimed that "since [independence] a small parasitic clique from the 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."²⁷

Garang points out a "neo-colonialism" at work in Sudan that had adopted the oppressive policies of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule in the form of a "domestic colonialism."²⁸ 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 under the "Arab hegemony" was quite apparent to Garang. He conceded that Sudan's "major problem was that it had been looking and was still looking for its soul, for its true identity."²⁹ Therefore, Garang offered a new identity for Sudan that did not promote the exploitation or discrimina-

²⁶ Deng, 134..

²⁷ "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).

²⁸ Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at...Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 127.

²⁹ Great Britain and Egypt had a joint colonial regime that governed Sudan, and it was referred to as the "Anglo-Egyptian Condominium."

tion of any races, ethnicities, or religions. Sudanism is adamant about equality because Sudanese history has constantly witnessed the aggrandizement of the Arab race alongside 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 had become so blatantly dichotomized. 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 should cause us to wonder why Garang did not initially support a nationalist ideology that favored separatism and self-determination for the southern Sudanese.

Garang's response to this was that "the oppressor," which represented any ruling party or person in the Sudan that had oppressed and exploited the masses, had "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."³⁰ It is clear that Garang judged secessionism as a perpetuation of divisiveness in Sudan that had only served to weaken the Sudanese people, not empower them. Garang clearly articulated this view when he said 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."³¹ Secessionism is 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."³²

Garang heralded a nationalist ideology that opposed secessionism with the same zeal as it opposed the minority clique regimes. He made this undeniably clear when he said 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."³³ He describes Sudanese unity as something to be achieved within a piece of real estate that we call Sudan, but that has territorial boundaries delineated by the British. Using Gelvin's model, clearly

³⁰ "Sudanese Rebel Leader's Appeal to the People."

³¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³² Garang, "Speech by John Garang, 3 March 1984," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 22.

³³ Garang, "Statement by John Garang de Mabior at...Koka Dam, 20 March 1986," in Khalid *Call for Democracy*, 137.

Garang was “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.”³⁴ Garang’s commitment to the unity of the invented Sudanese “nation” was ceaseless. Sudanism has absolutely no tolerance for secessionism of any kind. Both minority clique regimes, which are embodied by Nimeirism, and secessionism are enemies of Sudanism.

SOUTHERN SEPARATISTS VERSUS GARANG AND SUDANISM

Garang’s unyielding determination for Sudanese unity, and his intolerance of secessionism, galvanized much factionalism among the SPLA leaders and other southern Sudanese. The SPLA-Nasir faction was a prominent, southern rebel faction among others 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, issued a radio message that called for the removal of Garang from leadership.³⁵ Initially Machar and Akol blamed their defection from the SPLA/M on the dictatorial leadership of Garang,³⁶ and on the accusation that Garang committed countless human rights abuses against SPLA/M members.³⁷ However, on January 24, 1992, the SPLA/M Nasir faction expressed their goals for southern self-determination and the separation of the south from the north.³⁸ The Nasir faction did not endorse Sudanism, and saw the hope for a united Sudan as unrealistic.³⁹ Issues of ideology were fundamental to factional movements against the SPLA/M.

At a delegation between Lam Akol and the Nasir faction with the Nigerian Government, it was proposed that “secession is the will of the Southern people and Garang knows this very well.” It was concluded that Garang’s movement was “doomed” because it did not reflect the goals and “aspirations” of the southern people.⁴¹ There was a real fervency against Garang’s mission

³⁴ Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, 17.

³⁵ Dr. Lam Akol, SPLM/SPLA: *The Nasir Declaration* (New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2003), 12.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 306.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 312.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 332-3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 332.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

for a united Sudan based on Sudanism. We see bold condemnation of Garang's nationalist ideology, and claims against him that said he was not representing the will of the people, but was instead promoting a self-interested agenda. According to Gelvin, this would invalidate Sudanism because in this instance it would not reflect the "common interest" of the people whom it was attempting to unite.⁴² Garang faced much opposition from southern separatists, which resulted in manifold human rights violations and the slaughter of innocent civilians by all parties involved. Sudanism could not co-exist with separatist ideologies, and this is reflected in the violent conflict between Garang's SPLA/M, the Nasir faction and other southern factions.

There are claims against Garang's unity stance, as mentioned earlier, that posit 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 much pressure put on Garang to renounce his position for a united Sudan, and to concede to self-determination and secession for the South. This would have inevitably forfeited the implementation of Sudanism. Scholars tend to agree that the unity policy was important for causing factionalism.⁴³ Further, there is overwhelming unanimity among scholars regarding the southern sentiment toward secession. Most acknowledge that the majority of southerners favored secession rather than a united Sudan, and that they fought under Garang with this underlying sentiment in their hearts.⁴⁴ Obviously Lam Akol agreed with scholars and claimed that the "Southern Sudanese received the call for a United Sudan with great skepticism and finally total rejection."⁴⁵

⁴² James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 198.

⁴³ Oystein H. Rolandsen, *Guerilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s* (Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell Tryckeri AB, 2005), 40; Douglas H. Johnson, "The Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Problem of Factionalism," in *African Guerrillas*, ed. Christopher Clapham (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 63.

⁴⁴ 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? Democratization, Global Norms, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army," *Africa Today* 51, no. 1 (Autumn 2004): 72.

⁴⁵ Akol, 76.

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 Garang was, in fact, not representing the political goals and hopes of the southern Sudanese people. 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 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 were other reasons that fueled and perpetuated southern factional conflict, but ideology played a prominent role.

Ultimately, if Sudanism did not reflect the majority sentiment of the marginalized people of Sudan, then it seems that it was a self-interested nationalist ideology. It was not a valid nationalism according to Gelvin if it did not reflect the “common interest” of the Sudanese populace. Sudanism was not a legitimate movement of liberation if it was only favorable to one ethnic group in Sudan. It was futile and unreflective of southern aspirations if the “excluded” people of Sudan favored secessionism, and not unity.

SOUTHERN SENTIMENT: UNITY OR SECESSION?

It is difficult to attach a specific figure to the southern will for secession during the 1980s and 1990s. However, the true, contemporary southern sentiment regarding secession was recently unveiled in the referendum vote in January 2011. The final count showed that of the 3.8 million registered voters in southern Sudan, 98.83% voted in favor of seceding from the north.⁴⁶ There is overwhelming unanimity in favor of secession in the south, which causes us to question Garang’s commitment to the “common interests” of the southern Sudanese. Garang was an out-spoken opponent of secession, and in this regard he was in disagreement with most of the people for whom he claimed to fight. The southern sentiment for secession may have been strong during the Garangian era, but at that time it was not a point of enough contention

⁴⁶ “Sudan,” *New York Times*, February 8, 2011, under “World,” <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/sudan/index.html?scp=1&csq=sudan%20referendum&st=cse> (accessed April 6, 2011).

to oust Garang from his position of Commander-in-Chief of the SPLA/M. Despite what may have been unanimous secessionist sentiments, Garang remained consistent and persistent with his goals for a united New Sudan, while Riek Machar and Lam Akol seem to have compromised their objectives and the objectives of liberation for the southern Sudanese.

In a radio message to all units of the SPLA on August 28th, 1991, Machar and Akol spoke untruthfully when 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.”⁴⁷ The reality is that Garang was not deposed and that he remained the leader of the SPLA/M. 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. Secession was not an issue of such importance at that time that it was cause for Garang’s removal. Even though Garang was not deposed, we cannot neglect the fact that Garang did not seem to reflect the “common interest” of the southern people with regard to secession. This further confirms the peculiarity of Sudanism, and causes us to question Garang’s unyielding commitment to unity when so many of his followers advocated separation. Nonetheless, the secessionist will of the Nasir faction was not strong enough to overthrow Garang even though it weakened the movement by resulting in brutal conflict between southern factions and in the wanton slaughter of thousands of civilians.

After unsuccessfully attempting to overthrow Garang, Machar and Akol began to collude with the Khartoum government and received government military support to combat Garang’s SPLA-Torit.⁴⁸ The government also sponsored other anti-Garang groups such as the Anyanya II and Arab militias militarily in order to weaken Garang’s movement.⁴⁹ The Nasir faction, the Anyanya II movement, and the Arab militias such as the Murhallin, all committed inhumane atrocities against Sudanese civilians, especially against the

⁴⁷ Akol, 12.

⁴⁸ SPLA-Torit is another name given to Garang’s faction of the SPLA Movement. Sam Kiley, “Khartoum Supplying Guns to Inflamm Rebel Infighting,” *The Times*, September 5, 1994.

⁴⁹ 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).

Dinka.⁵⁰ One of the most notorious acts of atrocious violence against civilians by government-sponsored Arab militias was the massacre of approximately 1,500 Dinka civilians in the town of Al-Daein in 1987.⁵¹ Amnesty International accused Machar's Nasir faction in 1993 of killing approximately 2,000 Dinka.⁵²

Garang's SPLA also had a record of human rights abuses, although it was less egregious than that of the government-funded southern factions and militias. I point out the atrocities of the Nasir faction in order to show that Machar and Akol initially opposed Garang because of his dictatorial and inhumane leadership, and because he did not support the true secessionist goals of the Sudanese masses.

Yet, soon after its origin, the Nasir faction began receiving military support from the government, and then committed heinous human rights abuses against southern Sudanese civilians. The Nasir faction especially targeted Dinka civilians because of their association with Garang, who was also a Dinka and had been accused by some as leading a movement that was seeking Sudanese domination by the Dinka.⁵³ Dinka civilians were also targeted by the Arab militias employed by the government, as is seen in the Al-Daein massacre of 1987.

Why is it that the Nasir faction claimed to fight on behalf of the secessionist sentiments of southerners and their liberation, but also colluded with an oppressive government and massacred 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

⁵⁰ 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.

⁵¹ "Police Aided in Massacre, Sudanese Survivors Say," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April, 25, 1987.

⁵² Robert M. Press, "Civil War Hurts Sudan's Civilians," *Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)*, July 23, 1993.

⁵³ Hutchinson, "A Curse from God," 308.

perpetuated the conflict between the Nasir faction and Garang.⁵⁴ 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 abundant military support from the “minority clique regime” and massacre civilians in order to defeat Garang. There may have been substantial pro-secessionist aspirations among the southern Sudanese, but anti-Garang sentiments 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 the dominant rebel army in Sudan.

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 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.⁵⁵ This confirms Garang’s theory that the “oppressor” constantly sought to “divide and rule” the Sudanese people to their demise. The government supported the Nasir faction in order to divide and subjugate the whole rebel cause. Garang must have despised the Nasir faction’s adultery against the Sudanese people as they slept with the enemy in Khartoum.

Ultimately, we can, at the very least, conclude that 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 countless civilians, Garang remained consistent about achieving a new, united Sudan that was democratic and that did not discriminate based on race, religion, or culture, and that redefined the Sudanese identity. However, Garang’s hope for a united Sudan could not succeed in the midst of overwhelming support for secession among southerners.

⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch Report/Africa 1994, 3.

⁵⁵ Hutchinson, “A Curse from God,” 310; Hutchinson and Jok Madut Jok, 130; Sam Kiley, “Khartoum Supplying Guns to Inflamm Rebel Infighting.” The southern faction led by Riek Machar and Lam Akol was referred to as the “Nasir” faction, and John Garang’s movement was referred to as the “Torit” faction. Khartoum gave military support to the Nasir faction in order to weaken Garang’s movement.

CONCLUSION

Using James L. Gelvin's argument about nationalist ideologies, which claims 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 nationalist ideology, Sudanism. It is defined in opposition to Garang's idea of Nimeirism, which is an ideology that does not include the "excluded" and that does not unite all of the ethnic groups, religions, and cultures within the territorial boundaries of Sudan. Sudanism also opposes secessionism much in the same way that Zionism opposes dissension among Jews who refute the idea of global Jewish unity. 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 Garang's optimism, and who trusted in him to implement a viable peace for the "excluded" Sudanese, Garang was killed in a helicopter crash on a flight from Uganda to southern Sudan on the weekend of July 31, 2005.⁵⁶ The excluded people of Sudan have spoken, and it seems that Sudanism and the hope for a united Sudan has perished with Garang. The true sentiment of the southern Sudanese people is for secession, and in this current era it seems doubtful that Sudanism will ever be realized. Even if Sudanism did not reflect the secessionist interests of the southern peoples, we are still left to wonder if Dr. John Garang de Mabior pushed down the monster's body, the body of Nimeirism, or if the monster still stands. Is the monster falling down or is it lifting itself up, only to ruin the hope of Sudan? It is the people who removed the monster's head in the first place, and it will be the people who decide what becomes of its body. Sudanism, in its entirety, will not be the sword with which Nimeirism is permanently slain, but whatever the sword may be, it will be the people who wield it. May they wield this sword in unity and "dig out a mountain with shovels!"⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Marc Lacey, "New No. 2 in Sudan, an Ex-Rebel Leader, Dies in a Copter Crash," *New York Times*, Aug. 1, 2005.

⁵⁷ 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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "A Death in Sudan." *New York Times*, 2 Aug 2005, A20.
- Africa Watch Report. Denying the "Honor of Living" Sudan: A Human Rights Disaster. Washington DC: The Africa Watch Committee, 1990.
- "Aid Agencies Reportedly Accuse Garang of Hampering Relief Efforts," National Unity Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic (1315 gmt 3 Dec 92), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4, The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; SUDAN; ME/1556/A/1 (December 5, 1992).
- Akol, Dr. Lam. *SPLM/SPLA: The Nasir Declaration*. New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2003.
- Alier, Abel. *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured*. Exeter: Ithaca Press, 1990.
- Bonner, Raymond. "Aid For Sudan's Hungry Keeps War Well Fed." *New York Times*, 11 Oct 1998, 20.
- Burr, Millard J. and Robert O. Collins. *Requiem For The Sudan: War, Drought, and Disaster Relief on the Nile*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.
- "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.
- Daly, M.W. and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, ed. *Civil War in the Sudan*. New York: British Academic Press, 1993.
- Deng, Francis M. *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan*. Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995.
- "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).
- "Ethiopia's Collapse Marks the End of Russian Influence," QNP, *Courier-Mail*, May 28, 1991.

“Fierce Fighting Reported Between Rival Rebel Factions,” Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, in Arabic (0430 gmt 18 Jan 96), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East; THE MIDDLE EAST; ALGERIA; ME/D2514/MED (January 20, 1996).

“Garang (de Mabior), John.” *Britannica Book of the Year, 2006. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. 24 Jan. 2010 <<http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9404254>>.

_____. “Identifying, Selecting, and Implementing Rural Development Strategies For Socio-Economic Development in the Jonglei Projects Area, Southern Region, Sudan.” PhD diss., Iowa State University, 1981.

_____. *The Call For Democracy in Sudan: John Garang Speaks*. Edited by Mansour Khalid. London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1992.

“Garang Says He is Still in Charge of the SPLA,” Text of dispatch datelined Kampala 30th September (a) AFP in English (1664 gmt 30 Sep 92), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa, and Latin America; SUDAN; ME/1501/A/1 (October 2, 1992).

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

_____. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Harden, Blaine, “Sudan Rebel Rejects Blame for Famine; Garang Defends Conduct of War,” *The Washington Post*, September 17, 1986.

“Heads of Rebel Factions Address Abuja Conference,” Text of dispatch datelined Khartoum, 27 May Suna in English (1615 gmt 27 May 92), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; SUDAN ME/1393/A/1 (May 29, 1992).

Hedges, Chris. “Sudanese Rebels Are Reported to Be Near Defeat.” *New York Times*, 26 May 1992, A9.

- _____. "Sudan's Strife Promises to Outlive Rebellion." *New York Times*, 19 Jul 1992, E3.
- Human Rights Watch/ Africa (formerly Africa Watch). *Civilian Devastation: Abuses by All Parties in the War in Southern Sudan*. New York: Human Rights Watch, June 1994.
- Hutchinson, Sharon E. "A Curse From God? Religious and Political Dimensions of the Post-1991 Rise of Ethnic Violence in South Sudan." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 2 (Jun 2001): 207-331.
- _____. "Nuer Ethnicity Militarized." *Anthropology Today* 16, no. 3 (Jun 2000): 6-13.
- Hutchinson, Sharon Elaine 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): 125-145.
- "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).
- "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).
- Johnson, Douglas H. *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.
- _____. "The Southern Sudan." *The Minority Rights Group*, no. 78 (Apr. 1988): 1-9.
- _____. "The Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Problem of Factionalism." In *African Guerillas*, edited by Christopher Clapham, 53-72. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Kaufman, Stuart J. "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice? Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence." *International Security* 30, no. 4 (Spring 2006): 45-86.
- Khalid, Mansour. *The Government They Deserve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan's Political Evolution*. London and New York: Keagan and Paul International, 1990.

_____. *War and Peace in Sudan: A Tale of Two Countries*. London and New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Kiley, Sam, "Khartoum Supplying Guns to Inflamm Rebel Infighting," *The Times*, September 5, 1994.

Krauss, Clifford, "The World; In Collapse, Ethiopia Calls on Washington," *New York Times*, May 26, 1991.

Lacey, Marc. "New No. 2 in Sudan, an Ex-Rebel Leader, Dies in Copter Crash." *New York Times*, 1 Aug 2005, A5.

_____. "Sudan and Southern Rebels Sign Deal Ending Civil War." *New York Times*, 10 Jan 2005, A3.

_____. "Sudan and Southern Rebels Sign Pact to End Civil War." *New York Times*, 1 Jan 2005, A3.

Lame, David. "Sudan's Rebellious South Offered Political Unity." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 April 1985, B29.

Lesch, Ann Mosely. "Confrontation in the Southern Sudan." *Middle East Journal* 40, no. 3 (Summer 1986): 410-428.

Malwal, Bono. *The Sudan: A Second Challenge To Nationhood*. New York: Thornton Books, 1985.

May, Clifford D. "Sudan Guerrillas Step Up Attacks." *New York Times*, 26 Aug 1985, A5.

McEwen, Andrew, "A Champion of 'Sudanism' by Ballot or Bullet; John Garang; Man in the News," *The Times (London)*, June 17, 1989.

McKinley Jr., James C. "Sudan Foes Resume Talks As Famine Stalks South." *New York Times*, 5 May 1998, A9.

Metelits, Claire. "Reformed Rebels? Democratization, Global Norms, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army." *Africa Today* 51, no. 1 (Autumn 2004): 65-82.

- Miklowitz, Paul S. *German Philosophy: Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche: Lecture Notes PHIL 315*. San Luis Obispo: El Corral Publications, 2006.
- Miller, Judith. "Poverty and Divisiveness Work Against Reform in the Sudan." *New York Times*, 21 Apr 1985, E3.
- "Misguided Relief to Sudan." *New York Times*, 6 Dec 1999, A30.
- Montgomery, Charlotte, "Islamic Law Termed Main Obstacle to Success of Peace Talks in Sudan," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, November 29, 1989.
- "Nasir Rebel Faction Criticizes Garang," National Unity Radio, Omdurman in Arabic (gmt 2 Dec 92), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; SUDAN; ME/1555/A/1 (December 4, 1992).
- Okeny, Albino, "Sudanese Pro-Government Rebels Turn Against Each Other," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, July 31, 1998.
- "Omdurman Radio Says 17 SPLA Commanders Executed," Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman (1930 gmt 27 Dec 89), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa, and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/0651/A/1 (January 1, 1990).
- Ottaway, Marina. "Post-Numeiri Sudan: One Year On." *Third World Quarterly* 9, no. 3 (Jul 1987): 891-905.
- Paul, Jim and Diane James and Eric Rouleau. "Sudan's Revolutionary Spring." *MERIP Reports*, no. 135, Sudan's Revolutionary Spring (Sep. 1985): 3-9.
- "Police Aided in Massacre, Sudanese Survivors Say," *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April, 25, 1987.
- Powers, Charles T. "Sudan Rebels Reject Food Convoy Plan, Arousing Fear of New Famine." *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Mar 1986, B24.
- Press, Robert M., "Civil War Hurts Sudan's Civilians," *Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)*, July 23, 1993.

“Qadhafi Interviewed on Sudanese Developments: Garang Urged to Stop Fighting,” Tripoli Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland (2315 gmt 16 Apr 85), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America, A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/7931/A/1 (April 22, 1985).

“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).

“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).

“Report from the South: Khartoum’s Greatest Challenge.” *MERIP Reports*, No. 135, Sudan’s Revolutionary Spring (Sep. 1985): 10-14.

Rolandsen, Oystein H. *Guerilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*. Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell Tryckeri AB, 2005.

Salih, Kamal Osman. “The Sudan, 1985-9: The Fading Democracy.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 28, no. 2 (Jun. 1990): 199-224.

“The Shame of the Sudan.” *New York Times*. 17 Jun 1989, 22.

“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).

“Sudan Government Signs Peace Agreement With Four Rebel Factions,” *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, April 21, 1997.

“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).

“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).

“Sudan Rebels End Truce, Vow to Renew War.” *Los Angeles Times*, 20 Apr 1985, A30.

“Sudan Reports Rebels Killed 83 in Massacre.” *New York Times*, 15 Jan 1986, A7.

“Sudan SPLA Leader Garang’s New Year Message; Federal System Rejected,” Excerpts from New Year Message by John Garang, Radio SPLA in English (1300 gmt 4 Jan 91), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4 The Middle East, Africa and Latin America; A. THE MIDDLE EAST; ME/0963/A/1 (January 7, 1991).

“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).

“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).

“Sudanese President Appoints Riek Machar to Rule Southern Sudan,” *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, August 7, 1997.

“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).

“Sudanese Rebel Expresses His View of ‘New Sudan,’” Khartoum Monitor website, Khartoum, in English (11 Aug 02), BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (August 11, 2002).

“Sudanese Southerners Ask to End Islamic Law,” *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, April 18, 1985.