

The Crisis of the Sudanese Post-colonial State and Conflict in Darfur

by Noah Bassil B.A (Hons)

Dissertation in completion of requirements of PhD Degree
for the School of Modern History, Politics and International
Relations
Macquarie University

Submitted September 2009

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where references in the text or footnotes state otherwise, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

Noah Raffoul Bassil
Sydney, Australia,
15 September 2009

Acknowledgements

The people who have made this thesis possible deserve more than the few brief words that I grant them here. Nonetheless, I will attempt to acknowledge those whose help, support and encouragement made this thesis possible.

Associate Professor Geoffrey Hawker, Head of Politics and International Relations at Macquarie University was a source of much encouragement and support, especially during the most difficult periods of my candidature. Without his guidance and timely interventions, I doubt very much whether I would have had the confidence to finish this thesis. Geoffrey's feedback and suggestions were invaluable and his support in other academic activities has ensured my student experience was well-rounded and fulfilling.

I also would like to thank Professor Stephanie Lawson for providing important suggestions on how to improve the thesis by looking beyond the boundaries of the specific issues the thesis raises. Stephanie has always made herself available to discuss intellectual problems and ideas, despite her own busy schedule and her advice has also helped to make me a better intellectual and academic.

Dr Penny Griffin has also encouraged and advised me at crucial times during my candidature and her comments on earlier drafts were invaluable. Penny is not only a close friend but a source of intellectual stimulation, and her own success is an example of what can be achieved with dedication and hard work.

I would also like to extend thanks to the people associated with the Macquarie University Centre for Middle East and North African Studies. Involvement with the Centre has provided a source of intellectual inspiration and of new friends. Both Dr Gennaro Gervasio and doctoral candidate Jumana Bayeh have become close colleagues and friends. Their support and encouragement, and interest in the work I have undertaken, has been incredibly important. In many ways, my journey of the past few years has been shared most closely with the two of them because of the shared teaching and research interests that continually bring us together, and in the ways that our working lives have overlapped. Gennaro's passion for Arab culture and politics has been infectious and even though I have an Arab background, Gennaro has taught me much about the Middle East that can only come through years of intimacy with the region and its people.

A special thanks to Sarah Turner, who generously volunteered to read a complete draft of the thesis. Sarah's keen eye for detail picked up numerous mistakes which would have made their way to the examiners without her intervention, and her comments ensured the thesis was easier to read and understand than otherwise would have been the case.

My family have been a constant source of support for my studies and have always encouraged my scholarly pursuits over many long and at times difficult years. I will never forget their support and encouragement. They have always shown a keen interest in my academic career and my research and allowed me to share with them the travails and the successes that I have experienced.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Rachael who has been my strongest supporter. Rachael's encouragement and patience during the several years of research and writing were unwavering, even when many evenings and weekends were occupied with work on the thesis. Her encouragement was never greater than in those final months when the thesis consumed every waking moment of our lives. Rachael read a complete draft of the thesis, assisted in the formatting, took our dog Lulu for early morning walks while I sat at the computer and was always on hand to encourage me over the finish line. It is no understatement to say this is Rachael's thesis as well.

Abstract

This thesis examines the causes of the conflict in the western Sudanese region of Darfur within the context of the crisis of the post-colonial African state. The Sudan's political instability, recurrent civil wars and crisis of identity provide an important context for understanding the pressures which motivated Darfur's rebels to take-up arms against the government in 2003.

The thesis argues that the crisis of the African state that has unfolded since independence is a basis for contextualizing the conflict in Darfur. The crisis of the African state is explained by exploring the colonial legacies and the international trajectories which have shaped the decisions made by political actors at the national and local levels. Colonial legacies are important markers for the post-colonial state in Africa but those legacies have been influenced by powerful post-colonial forces including the cold war, the 1970s economic crash, and neo-liberalism and the African economic disaster that followed.

The Sudanese post-colonial state and politics have been profoundly affected by colonial legacies and international factors but the conflict in Darfur is still inextricably entangled within questions of state-power and national identity which have been recurring problems in the Sudan. The thesis integrates Darfur into the wider machinations and dynamics of Sudanese politics to explain what influence Darfur has had on the questions of state-power and national identity, as well as how Darfur has been influenced by those same issues. Wider international forces also play a role but the vital piece in understanding the conflict is located in the changes to state-power and national-identity that occurred with the rise of the Islamist movement that

captured state power in the Sudan in the 1990s and the fracturing of the movement in 1999/2000.

The part played by the Islamist state and the politics that followed the demise of the Islamist state is the crucial final piece in forming a fuller appreciation of what led to the war in Darfur.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Abstract.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
Map	xii
Chapter One: Introduction - The Political Crisis in Sudan and Conflict in Darfur ..	1
1.1 Post-colonial Politics in Africa and Darfur.....	1
1.2 Beyond the Mainstream Representations of the Conflict in Darfur: Bringing the State Back In	8
1.3 Conceptualising the Conflict in Darfur.....	16
1.4 Placing Post-colonial Identities in the Context of International and National Politics.....	20
1.5 Research Theory and Methodology	23
1.6 Outline of the Study	30
Chapter Two - The African Colonial State: The Political Structures of Conquest and Domination.....	35
2.1 Introduction:.....	35
2.2 The Legacies of Colonialism in Africa.....	36
2.3 Colonial Domination in Africa	40
2.4 The Foundations of Colonial Domination in Africa	47
2.5 The Architecture of the Colonial State in Africa	53
2.6 Colonialism and the Contradictions between Capitalism and Control	63
2.7 Decolonizing Africa and the Legacies of the Colonial State.....	73
2.8 Conclusion: The African Colonial State in Retrospect.....	77

Chapter Three - The Crisis and Collapse of the African Post-Colonial State	81
3.1 Introduction.....	81
3.2 Transferral and Transition: African Anti-Colonial Nationalism and Independence	83
3.3 Nation-State-Building in Post-colonial Africa: Overcoming the Legacy of the Construction of the Colonial State.....	93
3.4 Underdevelopment and the African Post-colonial State.....	100
3.5 The Demise of the African State: Debt, Structural Adjustment and the End of the State-Building Project.....	108
3.6 State Crisis in Retrospect: The “Politics of the Belly” or “Colonial Legacies”	116
3.7 The Impact of Economic Crisis on African Politics: The resurgence of identity conflicts.....	119
3.8 Conclusion: The African Crisis as a Basis for Explaining the Conflict in Darfur.....	123
Chapter Four - The Rise and Demise of the Keira Sultanate and the Formation of Sudan.....	126
4.1 Introduction.....	126
4.2 The Darfur of the Keira Sultanate.....	129
4.3 The Keira Sultanate: Occupying the “Crossroads” of Africa	133
4.4 Islam and the Keira Sultanate: Assimilation and Integration through Islamisation in Darfur	137
4.5 The Expansion of the Keira Sultanate	142
4.6 Trade and Power: The Pre-Colonial Economy of Darfur	147
4.7 The Decline and Conquest of the Keira Sultanate.....	153

4.8 The Turko-Egyptian Occupation: 1874- 1898	157
4.9 The Defeat of the Turko-Egyptian Regime: The Mahdiyya in Darfur	161
4.10 The Restitution of the Sultanate under ‘Ali Dinar and the Conquest of the Sultanate by the British	168
4.11 The Final Stand of the Last Keira Sultan	170
4.12 Conclusion	173
Chapter Five - The Construction of the Colonial State in Sudan: Tribalism, Regionalism and Race in Colonial Sudan.....	
5.1 Introduction.....	176
5.2 The Formation of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium.....	178
5.3 The “Thin White Line” of British Rule in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium	186
5.4 Native Administration, Tribalism and the Construction of Ethnic Identity in Darfur	192
5.5 The British Policy of Segregating Darfur	200
5.6 Colonial Racial Ideology in the Sudan	207
5.7 Colonial Religious Policy and the Consolidation of neo-Mahdism in the Western Sudan	215
5.8 Economic Policy during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium: Gezira and not much More in Sixty Years	220
5.9 Conclusion: The Colonial Legacy for Darfur and Sudan	223
Chapter Six - The Failure of the Sudanese Post-Colonial Politics, 1956-1969: Change in Darfur and the struggle for Inclusion	
6.1 Introduction.....	226

6.2 The Transition from Colonial to Post-colonial Rule: Sudanese Nationalism and Anglo-Egyptian Influence	229
6.3 The Independent Sudan: Towards Political and Economic Crisis.....	233
6.4 Regional Disparities in the Sudan: Darfur's marginalization	247
6.5 Regional Movements in Sudan: The Darfur Development Front.....	257
6.6 Conclusion	269
Chapter Seven - The Collapse of the Sudanese State in Darfur: A Prelude to War?	
.....	271
7.1 Introduction.....	271
7.2 Dismantling the Colonial State? Native Administration and Land Tenure Reform	274
7.3 Nimeiri's State-building Program: Breadbasket to Basket-case.....	287
7.4 The Unravelling of National Unity and the Disintegration of the Sudanese Economy	293
7.5 Sudan and the War for Chad.....	308
7.6 Libya in Darfur: The Abrogation of Responsibility by the Sudanese State	311
7.7 The Legacies of the Libyan presence in Darfur.....	316
7.8 Conclusion	319
Chapter Eight - The NIF and Darfur: The Islamist State Project and the Revolt of Darfur.....	322
8.1 Introduction.....	322
8.2 War by Proxy in Sudan: The Militarisation of Sudanese Society	326
8.3 The Rise of Political Islam in Sudan: The NIF in Power	330
8.4 Continuing Economic Crisis in Sudan: International Political Economy of a Pariah State	337

8.5 <i>Almashrou Alhadari Al-Islami</i> (The Islamic Project for Renewal): Power and Repression in Sudan.....	342
8.6 NIF Repression in the Peripheries: Sowing the Seeds of War in Darfur.....	349
8.7 The Fracturing of the NIF- Is Darfur a Front in the inter-party conflict?	356
8.8 Conclusion	362
Chapter Nine: Conclusion - The Crisis of the Post-colonial State.....	364
9.1: Does Darfur have a Future in the Sudan?	364
9.2 What can be learnt from the Conflict for Darfur?.....	369
Glossary of Arabic Terms	373
Bibliography	376
Monographs and Edited Books	376
Book Chapters.....	385
Journal Articles and Conference Papers	392
Working Papers.....	402
Reports	403
Websites, Newspaper and Magazine Articles.....	404
Web Articles	405
Book Reviews	406

Sudan 2007: Provincial Boundaries and National Borders



Chapter One: Introduction -

The Political Crisis in Sudan and Conflict in Darfur

1.1 Post-colonial Politics in Africa and Darfur

In order to understand the complex circumstances that led to conflict in the westernmost province of the Sudan this thesis focuses attention on the instability of the post-colonial Sudanese state. Like other states in Africa, the Sudan was created by the act of colonial conquest.¹ The character and impact of the colonial state in Africa is disputed, but as Christopher Clapham explains, in African studies:

One can, see without straining generalization too far, broadly discern a ‘conventional’ view of African politics which sees African states as essentially artificial and external creations, derived from an imposed European colonialism.²

In a similar manner to elsewhere in Africa, the Sudanese political framework was largely shaped by the exigencies of colonial control, which first and foremost was concerned with the question of how to preserve power and further the geo-strategic and economic interests of the metropole. With this in mind, it is no surprise that colonial states in Africa were authoritarian, both in terms of the suppression of political representation and in the way that colonial states controlled the principal components of production: land, labour and capital. The authoritarianism masked

¹ While the Sudan was never formally a colony of Britain, officially being administered jointly by Britain and Egypt, Sudan was effectively under British rule from 1898 onwards. The institutions, ideology and practices of the British in the Sudan were intrinsically colonial even if appointments to the Sudan were made by the Foreign Office and not the Colonial Office. Egyptian joint administration of the Sudan was a façade which neither the Egyptians nor the Sudanese ever believed. This is why Sudan is taken to have been under colonial rule. The role of the British and the Egyptians in the Sudan is discussed at some length in chapter 5.

² Christopher Clapham, “Review Article: The longue duree of the African State”, *African Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 372, 1994, p. 433.

fundamental weaknesses of the colonial state which were exposed by the world crisis of the 1930s and the 1940s. The efforts by both British and French authorities to transform colonialism at the end of World War Two only hastened the demise of the colonial system. As decolonization spread across Africa during the 1950s and 1960s, a wave of optimism swept across the continent as new states led by African leaders emerged to take their place in the international system.³ Despite the initial confidence associated with the end of colonial rule, few African states have since managed to overcome the major structural weaknesses that they inherited upon independence, namely underdeveloped state institutions and infrastructure, and the lack of political legitimacy. Much has also been made of the heterogeneity of identities and sub-national ethnic and trans-national religious affiliations within each of the fifty or so states in Africa. However, as this thesis argues, the problem of national disunity is a direct result of the weakness of the state and a symptom of the failure of the nation-state building project in post-colonial Africa.

The conflict in Darfur represents the most recent case of the breakdown of politics in the Sudan. Civil wars are not something new to the Sudan. Even before the declaration of Sudanese independence in 1956, the Sudan was facing the threat of a revolt by soldiers from the southern regions of the country. And, since independence, the northern and southern Sudanese have been engaged in warfare for thirty-eight of

³ In the African context, Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia joined the United Nations on different dates during the second half of 1945, as did South Africa which remained under minority white rule until 1994. Other African states were granted membership after they achieved independence from colonial rule. The vast majority of African states achieved their independence in the 1950s and 1960s, with thirteen African states achieving independence in the year 1960 alone. The process of decolonization was considered incomplete even after the break-up of the last of the European empires when the Portuguese Empire fell apart in 1975. Over the thirty years from 1945 until Portugal's exit from the continent almost fifty African states emerged from colonialism to be joined by latecomers in Zimbabwe (1980), Namibia (1990) and Eritrea (1993). But it was the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 which for many Africans finally brought an end to the colonial era. Despite the different end dates for colonialism in individual cases, the post-colonial period can be said to refer the shift that occurred in international politics in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis.

Sudan's fifty-three years of self-rule. Even in this context of almost continual conflict, events in Darfur represent a disjuncture from the past. When war broke out in Darfur in 2003, the homogeneity of the Muslim north was revealed to be as fragile as the notion of the unity of the Sudanese nation-state. With Muslim unity in Sudan in disarray, the conflict adopted a racial and ethnic façade which only led to obscure the deeper structural and the immediate political causes for the emergence of an anti-government insurgency in Darfur. While the façade is one factor of the conflict in Darfur, it is a factor that has been shaped by the colonial and post-colonial political structure, and the weakness of the Sudanese state. From this perspective, the Sudan can be said to be emblematic of the problems facing many of Africa's post-colonial states, and by examining the causes of conflict in Sudan's Darfur region this thesis can contribute to a better understanding of the implications of the colonial legacies and post-colonial condition on African states and societies.

Sudan is emblematic of Africa in other ways. Sudan is often described as a microcosm of the African continent. Geographically, Sudan is the largest country in Africa. It ranges from the arid Saharan expanse in the north of the continent to the deep jungles in the very heart of Africa. The Sudanese people, themselves, are said to epitomise the racial, ethnic, and religious diversity of the African mosaic. Sudan, also straddles the ever-shifting frontier between an Arabized and Islamized North Africa and Black Africa.⁴ Sudan is a member of both the African Union and the Arab League reflecting the fact that it is situated in both "regions". But Sudan's place in Africa, and in the Middle East, is not always clear.

⁴ Of course this is a huge generalisation and the ideas around identities such as Arab or African, Arabized and indigenous cultures, and Islamic and "traditional" African religions are contested and using such terminology obscures the infinite gradations, complexities and interconnection between the realities of identities and culture/religion in Africa.

Sudan is often overlooked in studies of the Middle East and is sometimes included in studies of sub-Saharan Africa and sometimes it is not.⁵ Sudan, it seems, is simultaneously within Africa and the Middle East, and at the same without.⁶ This locational ambiguity is not without relevance for efforts to examine the cultural and historical legacies that contribute to contemporary issues, especially if it is believed that knowledge production is influenced by historically defined relations of power.⁷ The ambiguity is important as in some way “our” conceptualisation and understanding is always moulded by the wider regional studies that countries are placed within. In addition, location also plays an important part in ascertaining the crosscurrents of ideas and practices that contribute to the politics of post-colonial states.

Darfur’s location, historically at least, had been responsible for creating a region where a multicultural society emerged from centuries of cultural cross- fertilisation as

⁵ A recent publication covering the “entire” Middle East and North Africa but excludes Sudan is David E. Long, Bernard Reich and Mark Gasiorowski, *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, fifth edition, Boulder, Co. Westview Press, 2007. This is just one example of the exclusion of Sudan from studies of the Middle East. Examples of the ambiguity of the Sudan in terms of its relationship in the field of Middle East and North African studies can be found by searching through journals and monographs with some dedicating space to Sudan and others ignoring Sudan altogether unless with reference to Egypt.

⁶ Carolyn Fleur-Lobban and Richard Lobban, “The Sudan Since 1989: National Islamic Front Rule”, *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No.2, 2001, p.1, make a similar point and add that Sudan’s ‘important role in Islamic Africa is often ignored.’

⁷ The body of literature dedicated to explaining the colonial and postcolonial “construction” of knowledge has multiplied dramatically in the period since colonies received their independence. While a dramatic and profound intellectual movement took shape after the publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in 1978 known as postcolonial studies the idea that the powerful shaped dominant ideas about the world has a longer heritage back to Marx and later refined by Antonio Gramsci, Max Horkheimer and other members of the Frankfurt School. For a comprehensive review of postcolonial theory predating Said see, Robert C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2001. Bob Jessop, “Gramsci as a spatial theorist”, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2005, pp. 421 – 437, refers to Antonio Gramsci’s spatialization of history and politics. For Gramsci, location was an important factor in understanding political interests and in coming to terms with historical power-relations, Italy’s “southern question” in particular represented for Gramsci an example of the deep connection between politics, history, culture and geography.

merchants, holy men, explorers, mercenaries and “slaves” from the Mahgreb, East Africa, West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa traversed the region. This process has produced distinctive hybrid cultures across Darfur that were neither African nor Arab, but an amalgam of the rich diversity of people that have traversed the Sahel.⁸ Since 2003, Darfur has ceased to be a region of cultural crossover and connectivity and has come to resemble the commonly posited post Cold War “Clash of Civilizations”⁹ as a brutal civil war has raged across Darfur, destroying lives, livelihoods and livestock, creating millions of refugees and threatening to engulf Chad, a country as troubled and unstable as Sudan. Today, instead of hybridism in Darfur, there is a tendency towards dichotomy, instead of cultural tolerance there is increasing racial and ethnic antagonisms, instead of peace there is now war.

The question of Arab racism plays a part in explaining the Darfur crisis. The extent that Arab supremacism in Darfur originated with policies of the state or as a result of local factors is disputed by the recent scholarly accounts.¹⁰ However, any explanation of causes must also examine much broader questions. Too often have explanations of conflict in Darfur relied on race and ethnicity as the source rather than the symptom, as explanatory, rather than something as, Martin Doornbos argues, requires

⁸ The historical ethnic and tribal fluidity and symbiosis evident in Darfur will be dealt with later in this thesis.

⁹ Samuel Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1996) is not taken in this thesis to accurately describe the shifts in the world system since 1990 but as a way that conflicts in the world have come to be described, see Fred Halliday, ‘Transnational Paranoia and International Relations: The Case of the ‘West versus Islam’ in Stephanie Lawson (ed.), *The New Agenda for International Relations*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002, pp3. 6-52 for a critique of “Clash of Civilizations”.

¹⁰ Gerard Prunier (2005), Julie Flint and Alex de Waal (2005 and 2007), and R.S. O’Fahey (2004, 2005, 2008) despite differences argue Arab racism is introduced to Darfur by external influences especially the Libyan factor. Michael Kevane disputes the significance given to Arab racism as a factor in Darfur. In his review of Prunier’s *The Ambiguous Genocide*, Kevane’s argues that, “ethnicity remains the organizing structure, rather than a new or stronger racial identity” (review found at <http://lsb.scu.edu/~mkevane/book%20reviews/review%20of%20Gerard%20Prunier%20Darfur%20Ambiguous%20Genocide.pdf>). Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivor: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*, New York: Pantheon Books, 2009 makes a similar argument that ethnic identities are more important than racial identities.

explanation.¹¹ Understanding the role that race and ethnicity plays is a complex question linked to broader political and historical issues located within discussions of the colonial legacies, including state formation and malformation, and development and underdevelopment. Additionally, the wider regional and international factors have also dramatically influenced the trajectory of Sudanese politics since independence. In this sense, race and ethnicity are but one part of a much larger puzzle.

The puzzle, so to speak, is based on the question of how to understand the causes of the civil conflict in Darfur. So, to reiterate an important point, race and ethnicity are central to the recent tragic events in Darfur but:

Discussion of ethnicity *per se* does not make too much sense...as there is no way of establishing what orientation or underlying motive any ethnic consciousness raising may have without first understanding the context of the social forces and the issues concerned.¹²

An understanding of the conflict in Darfur cannot start and end with a focus on Darfur itself. This fact would be true of almost all conflicts; it is especially true for understanding events in Darfur. While local actors are at the forefront of the fighting and local issues dominates the rhetoric of the antagonists, there is a much wider national context and broader theoretical concepts through which the civil war in Darfur must be analysed and explained. If race and ethnicity have been overplayed in the small but growing literature that has emerged since 2003, it is also true that these analyses tend to extract Darfur from the politics of the Sudan and from the wider

¹¹ Martin Doornbos, "Linking the Future to the Past: Ethnicity and Pluralism", *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 52, 1991, p. 53.

¹² Ibid, p. 56.

politics of Africa, the *dar al-Islam*, and contemporary global politics.¹³ Patrick Chabal provides a salient reminder of the centrality of the state in Africa, when he argues that, '[W]ithout an adequate understanding of the African post-colonial national-state there can be no understanding of contemporary African politics.'¹⁴

To return to the question of location, Darfur is also commonly portrayed as a distant and forgotten corner of the world where for '...decades Darfur has been neglected by the forces of globalization and development.'¹⁵ In contrast, Darfur has been increasingly integrated into the international sphere. Darfur may be located in the centre of the least "globalized" continent of the world but since at least the seventeenth century, with the adoption of Islam by the Keira Sultanate, the region has been increasingly shaped and reshaped by the processes of world politics. Colonialism is just one example of Darfur's integration into world politics. Analyses of conflict in Darfur have largely ignored the broader international historical context in which events have occurred. Thus, to understand events in Darfur, it is incumbent on any political analysis to examine issues such as the disintegration of the African state¹⁶, the move toward Islamism as a nation-building project and the shifting fortunes of the

¹³ One notable exception is the valuable study by Gerard Prunier (2005) which makes some effort to explain the outbreak of violence in the context of the shifting fortunes of the Sudan in the regional and international levels. However, despite placing the conflict in a national and wider regional framework, Prunier returns to the local level to explain the immediate causes of the conflict. In some ways, Prunier's account is most insightful but due to brevity and some lapses in application of the conceptual framework there are major weaknesses apparent with the study, especially with his perspective of the forces that shaped Darfur's Arab and African identities, which was in a number of ways superfluous to the main issues Prunier was analyzing.

¹⁴ Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa: An Essay in Political Interpretation*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 120.

¹⁵ Michael Kevane, "Book Review", <http://lsb.scu.edu/~mkevane/book%20reviews/review%20of%20Gerard%20Prunier%20Darfur%20Ambiguous%20Genocide.pdf>

¹⁶ The African state as such is a generalization and the huge differences in the size, composition, history and capacity of the numerous states in Africa is not overlooked. However, the African state can be said to share a number of similarities which makes the claim of an African state possible, see Martin Doornbos, "The African State in Academic Debate: Retrospect and Prospect", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28, 2, 1990, pp. 179-198.

Sudanese economy as a part (even if it is peripheral) of the international economy. To end this section by coming (almost) full circle, if Sudan is a microcosm of Africa then any explanation of the civil war in Darfur must be grounded in the wider politics of the continent and contextualised within the broader trajectories of international trajectories, and in the deep crisis of the post-colonial state.

1.2 Beyond the Mainstream Representations of the Conflict in Darfur: Bringing the State Back In

Much has been written about Darfur since the war in that part of the world made international headlines in 2004. Some of the analyses have helped to form a better understanding of the region and the various issues and events preceding the outbreak of the conflict. Other commentaries have been less useful, mainly because they have distracted readers from key issues by focusing attention on the racial, ethnic, or tribal dimensions of the conflict. This focus on identity and cultural difference has been observed as one of the problems increasingly associated with social science scholarship in recent decades.¹⁷

Explanations of the conflict in Darfur have also fallen into this “trap” of relying on cultural differences whereas structural weakness of the state and the economic

¹⁷ The debate regarding the turn to “culture” are beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, the problems associated with “cultural turn” are eloquently put by Terry Eagleton, 1998/9, p26 quoted in Stephanie Lawson, *Culture and Context in World Politics*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 20, ‘...the significance of ‘culture’ in human affairs while marginalising the issues that really count in the production of misery, including the unjust consequences of certain trade regimes, militarism and the like. And whereas class struggle is now ‘embarrassingly *passe*’, the affirmation of cultural identity remains in vogue even when it gives the illusion that the ‘ethnically marginalized’ occupying the lowest socio-economic strata are actually the victims of culture wars rather than capitalist economic forces.’ Edward Said, “The Clash of Ignorance” *The Nation*, October 4, 2001, provides a salient reminder of what the context in which culture and identity should be placed when analysing politics should be about when he argues that: ‘These are tense times, but it is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities, the secular politics of reason and ignorance, and universal principles of justice and injustice, than to wander off in search of vast abstractions that may give momentary satisfaction but little self-knowledge or informed analysis.’

pressures faced by the Sudan are regularly underrated. This thesis contributes to an understanding of the conflict in Darfur by overturning the tendency to place cultural factors before analysis of the Sudanese state (and the struggles within the state) that have taken place since the formation of the modern political entity known as the Sudan. Approaching the conflict in Darfur from the context of a struggle for power in the Sudan provides two benefits. First, it allows for the politics of Darfur to be included within Sudanese politics, and not apart from it. Secondly, identities, whether they be religious, racial, ethnic or tribal become variables that can be explored within the context of political, economic and cultural changes in the Sudan, within Africa, and the wider world. Before turning to the approach of this thesis and the wider implications of this study, the following section is a brief exposition of the way that representations of Africans, Muslims, and the Sudan, predominately in the US, have led to the shaping of a widely accepted international view of the conflict in Darfur.¹⁸

On the eve of the commemorations marking the ten year anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda news of another acute African humanitarian crisis trickled out via the international media. In the western Sudanese province of Darfur, an anti-government rebellion launched a year earlier had escalated into an intense civil war. As world leaders, including the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and US President George W. Bush were undertaking to create an international system that would prevent genocide from occurring, news was filtering out that a conflict in the western Sudan

¹⁸ I recognise that the scholarly (or the wider media views) are by no means uniform and that a body of literature exists which is based on a nuanced understanding of identities in the region and the complex causes that lay behind the conflict. But as it will be shown, there is also a largely uncritical view amongst some scholars, public commentators and officials who all adhere to the view that conflict in Darfur is largely primordial and the result of irrational hatreds. While some scholars and commentators appreciate the complexities of the conflict, few if any, relate the events as a result of the precipitous decline of state capacity and the recent transformation of the Sudanese state. The failure of the Islamist state is also rarely recounted as a factor in the analyses of Darfur.

had resulted in the murder of thousands of civilians and the displacement of hundreds of thousands more.

The first public statement of what was occurring in Darfur made by UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan Mukesh Kapila on 26 March 2004 played some part in shaping subsequent perspectives on the conflict that have unfolded. In an interview on the *BBC's Africa News Service* Kapila compared the events in Darfur to the genocide of a decade earlier:

The only difference between Rwanda and Darfur is the numbers involved of dead, tortured, and raped... This is ethnic cleansing, this is the world's greatest humanitarian crisis, and I don't know why the world is not doing more about it.¹⁹

Kapila's interview made the connection between events in Darfur and genocide and sparked the development of a US based activist movement aimed at galvanizing the UN and western powers to intervene on behalf of the "Black African" victims of violence in Darfur.

Within a week of Kapila's *BBC* interview, Nicholas Kristof of the *New York Times* had published two lead articles on the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.²⁰ In the context of the memorials being observed for the victims of the Rwandan genocide revelations by two of the world's most influential news services that a possible genocide was

¹⁹ Mukesh Kapila interviewed by the *BBC* 19 March 2004.

²⁰ Nicholas Kristof, "Ethnic Cleansing, Again", *The New York Times*, Wednesday March 24, 2004 followed by Kristof, "Will We Say 'Never Again' Yet Again?", *The New York Times*, Saturday March 27, 2004, a third article by Kristof followed on 31 March in the *NY Times* framed around the broader question of crisis in Africa which also mentioned the crisis in Darfur, see "Starved for Safety". These articles can be viewed at http://sitemaker.umich.edu/who.cares/kristof_s_new_york_times_editorials#27mar04

taking place in Africa, pushed Darfur into the international limelight. Kristof's exposé was timely and important, but in a number of ways his initial framing of the conflict as '... a campaign of murder, rape and pillage by Sudan's Arab rulers that has forced 700,000 black African Sudanese to flee their villages'²¹, translated into an explanation that focused on the "Arab" and "African" dimension while largely ignoring the most crucial dimension of the violence which was the conflict for control of Sudanese politics. Kristof's haste and clumsiness with the facts contributed to a popular misperception of Darfur which even today, some five years on, has yet to be corrected.²² The public perception of Darfur is still one that focuses on the genocidal intent of Darfur's Arab tribes²³, backed by an Arab Sudanese government, to eliminate Darfur's helpless Black African farmers.²⁴

The Arab versus African dimension of the conflict in Darfur has certainly been at the very centre of the mainstream media representation of events, a view dominated by

²¹ Kristof, "'Ethnic Cleansing, Again'", *The New York Times*, Wednesday March 24, 2004, http://sitemaker.umich.edu/who.cares/kristof_s_new_york_times_editorials#27mar04

²² Kristof's inaccuracy relating to the identities of the groups involved was matched by an equal error regarding the death toll. Initial figures of 200,000 violent deaths were highly inflated and, despite this, in 2005 Kristof raised the figure to 400,000 violent deaths. In 2008, when the UN estimated the excess death toll at less than 200 people a month, Kristof was still writing that genocide was being perpetrated in Darfur.

²³ The notion and vocabulary of "tribe" in both administrative and anthropological usage in Sudan has been largely political rather than cultural. The concept of tribe used throughout this paper refers to the administrative division of Sudan's population established originally by the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium and retained by successive governments after independence. The overturning of the vocabulary of tribe in the 1960s has itself been overturned with the term back in vogue from the 1990s on. In referring to the identity of different groups in Sudan the term ethnic group is preferred but the reality is that tribes were formed during the colonial era and as a result many groups in Africa now see themselves as tribes and for this reason the term has salience.

²⁴ Numerous websites and publications continue to subscribe to this one-dimensional view of the racial identities of the actors involved in the conflict in Darfur. The following quote taken from the *New York Times* in 2009 is representative of many of the on-line press and other media coverage of the conflict. In the paragraph preceding the short passage quoted, the article defines the government as Arab and then goes on to characterise the victims as Black Africans. Also, the article then fails to disclose the religious identities of the so-called "Black Africans" which leads the uninformed reader to believe that the conflict in Darfur is also along Muslim-Christian lines. The article then goes on to say: 'Darfur has been the focus of international attention since 2004, when government troops and militia groups known as *janjawid* moved to crush rebels who complained that the region's black African ethnic groups had been neglected by the Muslim central government.' *New York Times On-Line*, March 6, 2009 retrieved from <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/sudan/index.html>

the post-9/11 vilification of “Arabs” and “Muslims” in the age of the “war on terror”,²⁵ and an older colonial discourse of Africans as helpless and child-like and in constant need of western philanthropy.²⁶ Another discourse evident in descriptions of events in Darfur, and more widely in terms of Africa, is the belief in the absence of an organic African “history”, which has been a view evident in western representations of Africa from G.W. Hegel to Hugh Trevor-Roper, and more recently in the work of S.P. Huntington.²⁷ Images of Darfur as undeveloped region where primitive Black African tribal villages have been destroyed by a horde of marauding Arab “fanatics” on horse-back has been an intrinsic element in the discourse on Darfur. Equally evident has been an acceptance that Darfur is an unchanging and primitive part of the world.

Essentialized representations of “Africans” and “Arabs” have played an important part in shifting the focus from alternative explanations either by repeating the simplistic view that the conflict is racial and ethnic or by forcing scholars to continually address the question of why the conflict cannot be viewed from such a

²⁵ Hisham D. Aida, “Slavery, Genocide and the Politics of Outrage: Understanding the new racial olympics”, MERIP, No. 234, Spring, 2005, <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer234/aidi.html>, presents a strong case for viewing the representations surrounding the Darfur conflict in the US as being heavily influenced by the “war on terror” discourse and post-9/11 Islamophobia and anti-Arabism. Also, Aida also traces the relationship between representations of Darfur and US based Darfur activism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In summary, Aida’s analysis demonstrates the incredible degree to which the issue of Darfur has been politicized in the US.

²⁶ A large body of literature exists which can be said to be framed by an interest in the study of how representations of Africa are related to colonial and international institutions, and in what ways they persist in shaping contemporary ideas about Africa. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1993, p. 52, describes the approach to studying African identities taken by post-colonial critics as ‘...analysed not as god-given essences, but as results of collaboration between African history and the study of Africa in England, for instance, or between the study of French history and the reorganization of knowledge during the First Empire.’

²⁷ While Hegel and Trevor-Roper’s attitude towards the absence of historical change in Africa are well known there is also more recent examples of the resilience of this view including Huntington’s declaration in the *Clash of Civilizations*, that Africa is either a) a part of an undifferentiated Islamic civilization, b) European because “European imperialism and settlements brought elements of Western civilization... (and) Christianity...” to Africa or c) Ethiopia which has its own distinctive civilization (Christian). In each case, Huntington’s view of Africa resides with the force of external agents to determine the identity of African cultures and for this reason Huntington can be said to follow in a tradition that has denied Africa its own integral history.

one-dimensional and uncritical perspective. In either case, analyses tend to reify racial, ethnic and tribal identities as central to the question of Darfur. Representations of Darfur were also heavily influenced by an earlier understanding of the conflict between the north and south Sudan as having an “Arab” against “African” character. The conflict between the north and the south of Sudan was widely portrayed as a conflict based on easily distinguishable and inherently hostile Arab and African identities. This portrayal fixed the Arab and African dichotomy of the Sudan in the consciousness of the US (and other “western”) public and policy-makers. Few in the “west” stopped to examine the situation in Darfur before placing it within the same north-south, Arab-African, Muslim-Christian framework that had shaped perceptions of Sudan’s north-south conflict for so long. Thus, Darfur not only became Rwanda in “slow-motion”²⁸ but the “southern Sudan speeded-up”.²⁹

Darfur, as genocide, has also served the agenda of the supporters of US interventionism, of one kind or another, including Harvard Professor and former Barack Obama foreign affairs advisor Samantha Power. Power has written and lectured repeatedly that an international effort is urgently needed to end the genocide in Darfur.³⁰ In advocating for Darfur, Power often refers to the past failure of the international community to prevent actual genocide in Rwanda. In doing so, Power,

²⁸ CBS, “Darfur: Rwanda in Slow Motion,” October 20, 2004, at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/10/20/60II/main650457.shtml> also a report authored by the American Jewish World Service from October 2007 titled “Genocide in slow motion: How Darfur’s refugees are dying a protracted death”. The full report is available at [http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EMAE-76DSGZ-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EMAE-76DSGZ-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf) also Nicholas D. Kristof, “Genocide in Slow Motion,” *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 53, No. 2, February 9, 2006 and Anthony Lake and John Prendergast, “Stopping Sudan’s Slow-Motion Genocide,” *The Boston Globe*, May 20, 2004.

²⁹ John Ryle, ‘Disaster in Darfur’, *New York Review of Books*, 12 August 2004. However, Ryles argument that the counter-insurgency policies used by the Government of Sudan in Darfur were similar in style and brutality to that used by the same military cabal in the southern Sudan is a pertinent one.

³⁰ Samantha Power, “Business as Usual at the U.N.,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 144, 2004, pp. 38-39,

amongst others, has led to the shaping of a popular idea that events in Darfur can be understood as one ethnic group acting to exterminate another.³¹ The complex political dimensions of the conflict are largely ignored by Power, as they are in the mainstream media and in political circles, where platitudes have replaced serious reflection in regards to the causes of the conflict. While Power is neither a scholar of Sudanese politics or history, nor an analyst of the causes of conflict in Africa, her unreflective representations of the conflict in Darfur have made their way into both popular perceptions of the conflict and scholarly approaches to Darfur.

A problem occurs when scholarly work such as the work on humanitarian intervention and genocide by Power's, and others such as Samuel Totten³², continues to represent Darfur in simplistic terms, as an instance of genocide by "Arabs" against "Africans" whether by "Arab" tribes or an "Arab" government. Given that the issue of the conflict in Darfur is examined in numerous scholarly fields where the analysis or background of the conflict is trivial compared with the issues that are at the core of the studies, there can be a tendency for misrepresentations and simplifications to

³¹ Aida is joined by Mamdani (cited above) and Edward Herman in criticizing Power and others for using the unfolding tragedy in Darfur for personal, nationalist and other reasons. See Herman's comments at <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/8538>. A particularly robust commentary on the selective use of genocide by campaigners for intervention in Darfur is given by Alex de Waal in an interview published in "Darfur Experts Debate Conflict", *Newsweek*, Nov, 8, 2006: 'If we applied the letter of the convention, any attempt to inflict harm on members of a racial, religious or ethnic group, with the intent to destroy them in whole or in part, would be genocide. That would mean that at least half a dozen episodes in the Sudanese civil war would be genocide, as well as episodes in Ethiopia in the 1980s, Uganda in 1983, Somalia in 1988 and 1992-3 and again in the last few months, numerous episodes in the DRC and various others would all be genocide.' Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/id/69004/page/4>

³² Samuel Totten, "The Darfur Genocide: The Mass Rape of Black African Girls and Women" in Samuel Totten (ed.), *Plight and Fate of Women During and Following Genocide*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009, pp. 137-169. In addition, not only does Totten use the term Black African in the title but to emphasise the racial dimension of the conflict he repeats the phrase "Black African" a further four times in the first paragraph alone (see page 137). Totten is still wed to the Arab and African explanation of Darfur some five years after the outbreak of the conflict and despite countless scholarly and non-scholarly reports questioning the accuracy (and usefulness) of depicting the conflict in such a one-dimensional and reductionist manner, Totten continues to apply the same paradigm to explain the conflict.

become reified. This has happened in this case where continual repetition of simplistic and largely inaccurate perspectives of Darfur by scholars working in fields such as the study of international law, international relations, international institutions, development economics, or environmental degeneration.³³ In particular, this scholarship tends towards reductionist explanations of the conflict, and is responsible for writing numerous distortions and misrepresentations into the discourse on Darfur, and more widely into dominant notions of the causes of African conflicts. It is for this reason that it is necessary to continue to produce further studies on why events in Darfur are much more than just identity conflict.

While most academic studies of Darfur are aware of the complexity of identities in the region and problematise any notion that the hostilities result from historic “Arab” and “African” antagonisms, there is evidence that an ethno-reductionist view is still detectable. Usman A. Tar, for example, in his study of conflict in Darfur, states that the causes can be located in ‘...the cumulative aftermaths of ages of conflict and confrontation between rival ethnic, religious and socio-economic groups in Western Sudan.’³⁴ Tar’s reliance on identity differences to explain what is occurring in Darfur is not an isolated case in the academic literature and even though, on the whole, academics address the “constructedness” of race and ethnicity and the complexities of the politics of identity in the Sudanese context, there remains an acceptance of identity as a major precursor of the civil war in Darfur.

³³ The use of the phrase ‘genocide in Darfur’ is extensive in the scholarly literature, especially in work that only refers to Darfur in passing as an one example of the failure of the international system, or of international law, or of the relationship between China and human rights abuses. In these cases, there is no attempt to analyse events in Darfur and no effort to examine whether Darfur is indeed a case of genocide, or whether the conflict is based on tribal warfare.

³⁴ Usman A. Tar, “Old Conflict, New Complex Emergency: An Analysis of Darfur Crisis, Western Sudan”, *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 15, No.3, p. 423 is an interesting example of the tendency of some scholars to understand the conflict from this perspective but also to offer insightful commentary on the situation in the Sudan and the multiple issues that plague the region. Usam A. Tar clearly understands many of the intricacies of Sudanese politics.

In exploring the causes of the conflict in Darfur this thesis moves beyond both “culture” and “identity”, instead taking the perspective that issues of race, ethnicity/tribalism and religion represent one dimension of the struggle for access to, and control over, the Sudanese state. One purpose of this thesis is to situate the explanation for conflict in Darfur in the much deeper crisis of the African post-colonial state, of which it is argued, the Sudan is emblematic.

1.3 Conceptualising the Conflict in Darfur

Despite numerous efforts to dislodge the “Arab” and “African” representations of the conflict in Darfur in both the academic and popular literature, a racial and ethnic conflict still dominates descriptions of the protagonists. The scholarly material which does engage with the fluidity and malleability of identities in the region of Darfur rescues the narrative from racial reductionism by demonstrating the “construction” of racial and ethnic groups and the complexity of identity markers in the region. Nonetheless, there remain conceptual problems with the use of analytical categories, even when they are recognized to be constructed, such as “Arab” and “African”.

First, “Arab” and “African” have become reified as static categories and accepted as clearly definable boundaries between groups, even if it is through a process of historical formulation. There has been a wide acceptance of the “Arab” and “African” descriptors in terms of racial and ethnic difference, as “western” academic social science has described them, leading to a failure to conceptualise and problematise the meanings attributed to Arab and African by the people of Darfur and the Sudan. For example, Ali Mazrui explains that in the historical relationship that was formed out of the Islamic expansion, principally by Arab expansion through conquest, trade and

migration with African societies, racial categories did not exist as they do today. According to Mazrui the ‘...term “Sudan,” meaning the “Black ones,” carries no pejorative implications. That is why Africa’s largest country in territory (capital Khartoum) still proudly calls itself “Sudan”...’³⁵ R.S. O’Fahey explains that in the documentation of the Keira Sultanate there is often a double-usage of the term Arab. In some cases, it is used to indicate genealogy, i.e. someone descended from ethnic Arabs. At other times, members of the Keira court used the label of Arab to deride a person or group of people because they are as uncivilised and backward as “Arab” nomads.³⁶ Therefore, just as people’s identities are immediately contextual and shifting, then it is also true that broad ethnic categories “Arab” and “African” are never fixed by space or time.

Secondly, the assumption has been that the construction of identities in Darfur occurred prior to the outbreak of the violence and especially as a consequence of an earlier phase of conflict. Sharif Harir’s study of the violence that ravaged Darfur from 1987-1989 has been taken to illustrate that the dichotomy between “Arab” and “African” came into existence in the 1980s and pre-dated the outbreak of hostilities in 2003.³⁷ But implicit in Harir’s representation of the events is that an “African” identity was introduced into the Darfur region at a time where identities were being shaped by drought and violence. The recognition that identities were shaped by events that occurred in Darfur in the 1980s is important. The problem that emerges from

³⁵ Ali A. Mazrui, “The Re-invention of Africa: Edward Said, V.Y Mudimbe, and Beyond”, *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 2005, p. 70.

³⁶ A similar duality in perceptions of Arab identity is evident in Ibn Khaldoun, *The Muqaddimah* and in a more recent anthropological account of Gulf Arab tourism in Egypt by Lisa Wynn, *Pyramids and Nightclubs: A Travel-Ethnography of Western and Arab Imaginations of Egypt, from King Tut and a Colony of Atlantis to Rumors of Sex Orgies, a Marauding Prince, and Blonde Belly Dancers*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.

³⁷ Sharif Harir, “The ‘Arab belt’ versus the ‘African belt’: ethnic and political strife in Darfur and its cultural and regional factors” in S. Harir & T. Tvedt (Eds.), *Sudan: Shortcut to Decay*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainsitutet, 1994.

most of the studies of Darfur is that there is a tendency to trace the racialization and ethnicization that occurred in Darfur to the 1980s, but no further.³⁸

Karen Willemse's study of gender and Islam, which was conducted in the 1990s in the town of Kabkibiya, situated due west of Darfur's capital El Fasher, portrayed no deep racial and ethnic divisiveness between the diverse population that inhabited Kabkibiya at the time.³⁹ If anything, Willemse's study found that the people she observed and interviewed in Kabkibiya, regardless of the racial or ethnic identities they subjectively held, coexisted peacefully, often working together to face the challenges of living in a part of the world where a lack of employment and government services created demanding conditions. Willemse also suggested a common attitude amongst Darfur's diverse population toward the Islamist government and the Islamization policies being enforced on the population. All in all, Willemse's enlightening study, presents a very different picture of Darfur than the academic work that have relied on Harir's analysis of racial and ethnic relations in Darfur in the late 1980s during a time of massive upheaval in Darfur. The coming to power of the National Islamic Front in 1989 is a disjuncture that many analyses have overlooked and one that requires rethinking in terms of the different political alignments that were consequently formed between the Sudanese Government and the various communities in Darfur. For example, there are strong indications that many of Darfur's so-called "Africans" embraced the Sudanese government Islamist project of the 1990s in the hope of building, what they believed, would become a unified and

³⁸ In particular, M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow* and Gerard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*,

³⁹ Karen Willemse, *One Foot in Heaven: Narratives on Gender and Islam in Darfur*, West Sudan, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2007.

reinvigorated Islamic state.⁴⁰ As a part of this project, many of Sudan's minorities believed the Islamist promise that Muslim identity would erase the inequalities which was identified as a characteristic of the Sudanese system. As this study will show, there was a strong tradition in Darfur of Muslim identity which at times minimized the importance of racial or ethnic differences. Studies that have failed to assess the impact of a decade of Islamist government on identities and group interaction present only a partial understanding of the causes of the conflict that broke out in Darfur in 2003.⁴¹

Following on from this point, it is clear that the dominant portrayal of the different groups in Darfur are in terms of "Arab" and "African" identities even though the Sudanese government and state has emphasised its Islamic character since 1989. The question of why rebels and *janjawid* have chosen to emphasise ethnic and racial identities above religious, regional or national identities requires some level of explanation above that of just an adherence to a putative "Arab" or "African" identity. It cannot just be assumed that actors choose distinctions such as "Arab" and "African" or that they accept these distinctions when entering into political struggles. Gunnar Haaland makes this point in relation to the different ethnic groups in Darfur which he argues that they '...do not in themselves constitute corporate groups that act as

⁴⁰ Alex de Waal & A.H. Abdel Salam, "Islamism, State Power and Jihad in Sudan" in Alex de Waal, (eds.), *Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004, pp. 71-113.

⁴¹ For example, Gerard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*, London; Hurst and Co., 2005 argues that the Arab and African divide resulted from political manoeuvring in Darfur between factions of the Umma Party in the lead up to the 1968 elections and then due to the introduction of a racialist doctrine by Gaddafi in the 1980s. While racial politics are evident in both cases, the assumption identities in Darfur ceased being constructed by further influences such as the coming to power of an Islamist government presents only a partial picture.

“players” in the political “game”.⁴² Ethnic identities that become politicised do so under pressure and in relation to other politicised identities. In many ways, ethnic identities are markers of political struggles and provide guidance to where the cleavages exist. The question that remains is why such cleavages occur and under what conditions such divisions can be overcome.

1.4 Placing Post-colonial Identities in the Context of International and National Politics

With decolonization came the opportunities and threat of sovereignty in an international system dominated by the US, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other. The former colonies were thrown into a fractious and competitive international environment with few resources and little diplomatic experience. The Cold War was far from “cold” in the Third World where the conflict between the US and Soviet Union was contested. In Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa local conflicts for power were inflamed by the geo-political interests of the superpowers who readily provided their African allies with sophisticated weaponry, logistical assistance and financial aid. Although we can agree with two long-time scholars of the international relations of African states that the superpower involvement in Africa was more complex than just external manipulation of internal or regional politics, the impact of US-Soviet involvement was disastrous.⁴³ Today,

⁴² Gunnar Haaland, “The Darfur Conflict in Evolving Politico-economic and Socio-cultural Contexts: The ‘games’, the ‘players’ and the ‘stakes’”, *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2005/2006, p. 105.

⁴³ Samuel Makinda, “Conflict and Superpowers in the Horn of Africa”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.1, 1992, pp. 93-103 and Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 161-163.

those weapons are responsible for the majority of violent fatalities in Africa. The Cold War continues to take lives in the poorest countries of the world.⁴⁴

The Cold War and international alliances provided Third World governments, including some of the most heinous regimes, with the financial support and the international legitimacy necessary to survive. The long-reign of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire is just one example of a dictator benefiting from being a partisan of the US in the Cold War conflict.⁴⁵ Another beneficiary of Cold War largesse was the Sudanese dictator Ja'afar Nimeri whose support for the pro-western forces fighting Ethiopia's Marxist government and also the anti-Libyan armies in Chad earned Sudan leniency from the International Monetary Fund, and substantial US military aid in its own war against the rebellious Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army.

The economic crisis of the 1970s, followed by structural adjustment neoliberal policies imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, placed further pressures onto a continent struggling from the dual demands of failing efforts at state and nation building. That African states, in almost every case, failed to construct viable institutional structures or social policies or invent a cohesive national identity is not surprising in retrospect, even if the crisis that has eventuated was precipitated by the policies and actions of most powerful actors in the international system including the former colonial powers, the superpowers, and IFI's and the reactions and

⁴⁴ Henny J. Van Der Graaf, "Proliferation of Light Weapons in Africa," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 30, No.3, 1997, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Peter J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 51, sums up the relationship between Mobutu and the US very well by quoting George Bush, Snr, from a speech given on June 29 1989, 'Zaire is among America's oldest friends and its President- President Mobutu – one of our most valued friends [on the] entire continent of Africa...'

responses to those policies by African regimes. As one long time scholar of African political economy has stated:

In sum, what turned the crisis of Sub-Saharan Africa into tragedy, with disastrous consequences not only for the welfare of the people but also for their status in the world at large, was the region's economic collapse of the 1980s.⁴⁶

Walter Rodney argued that to answer the question of what precipitated the African economic collapse of the 1980s:

...one needs to know why it is that Africa has realized so little of its natural potential, and also one needs to know why so much of its present wealth goes to non-Africans who reside for the most part outside of the continent.⁴⁷

Rodney's perspective leads back to the structural impediments Africa inherited from the colonial period and the failure of the state-building project of the 1960s and 1970s which left African states indebted and dependent on primary production in an increasingly competitive international environment. Debt, structural adjustment, and corruption extinguished any pretensions of state-building in Africa leaving African populations to largely fend for themselves. With the state under financial strain and increasingly estranged from everyday affairs, Africans began to search for other forms of protection and as John L. Comaroff argues, identities were reshaped by the new political and economic realities because,

⁴⁶ Giovanni Arrighi, "The African Crisis," *New Left Review*, 15, May-June, 2002, <http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2387>, p. 7.

⁴⁷ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981, p. 20.

Nothing is as likely to ensure that humans will assert (or invent) their differences than being made aware...of the indifference of the state to their predicament...Nor is it hard to understand why, when faced with such indifference, subordinate groups should stress their cultural distinctiveness in agitating against disempowerment.⁴⁸

In the way just described, ethnic, racial and religious conflict in Africa, such as that occurring in Darfur, become a symptom of the much larger conflagration enveloping Africa, in the form of the potential collapse of the African state and resurgence of sub-national and transnational identities. Such identities form the basis of movements of protest against ineffectual African politics. The resurgence of ethnic politics far from being tribal atavism is a post-colonial reaction to the disintegration of the post-colonial African state.

1.5 Research Theory and Methodology

This thesis is a conventional political study, in one sense, in that conceptually the state is the key focus. While the actions of colonial and post-colonial governments figure prominently throughout the thesis, the state remains the key concept. The state and the government are not to be confused, and neither should the state be viewed as being confined to the formal juridical organs of the state. Going beyond Max Weber's definition of the state, Abdullahi Gallab conceptualizes the state as:

...the overarching apparatus that includes the ideological, administrative, bureaucratic, legal, and security systems that act in certain degree of

⁴⁸ John L. Comaroff, "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an age of Revolution" in Edwin N. Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, (eds.) *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 174.

coherence to structure and administer relations within different levels of a particular territory.⁴⁹

In addition to the domestic power that the state possesses, there must be an appreciation of the role the state has in interacting with the external forces and the international system. It is this role as both a layer through which global pressures are refracted and as the arbiter of national politics that makes the state such a fundamentally important part of people's lives.⁵⁰ These roles that the state plays are crucial for shaping the lives of all Africans despite the weakness of the post-colonial African state. It is this importance of the African state that explains the scholarly interest it has provoked in recent times.

The other reason for the attention placed on the African state, is that since the end of the Cold War, a number of Africa's post-colonial states have ceased to meet the requirements of statehood. Most recently Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo have become "failed states". At one time or another, other African states, most notably Liberia and Sierra Leone have also earned the status of "failed".⁵¹ While few analysts would go as far as Pierre Englebert in arguing that Africa's states are not states at all, an equally small number of the same analysts would find it difficult to disagree with his assertion that, on the whole, African states are characteristically:

...a dubious community of heterogeneous and occasionally clashing linguistic, religious and ethnic identities; their claim to force is rarely effective and much

⁴⁹ Abdullahi A. Gallab, "The Insecure Rendezvous Between Islam And Totalitarianism: The Failure Of The Islamist State In The Sudan", *Arab Studies Quarterly (ASQ)*, Spring, 2001, p. 87.

⁵⁰ Graeme J. Gill, *The Nature and Development of the Modern State*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 1.

⁵¹ The Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia in recent times resemble anarchic states without effective governments in control of their respective capitals.

less monopolistic; their frequent predatory nature fails the test of legitimacy; and their territoriality is generally at best hesitant and contested.⁵²

Robert H. Jackson, while accepting Englebert's judgement on the character of the state in Africa, regards most of the territorial units in Africa as juridical states which exist principally because of the stability of the post World War Two international order, or just as importantly, as Samuel Makinda has shown, due to the acceptance of state sovereignty which was enshrined in the code of conduct of African heads of state since the establishment of the Organization of African Unity in 1963.⁵³ The majority of African states, from Jackson's perspective, rely on international rather than domestic legitimacy for their survival and are "failed" or "quasi-states" with:

...limited empirical statehood: their populations do not enjoy many of the advantages traditionally associated with independent statehood. Their governments [were] often deficient in the political will, institutional authority, and organized power to protect human rights or provide socioeconomic welfare.⁵⁴

Neither of the perspectives offered above provides the conceptual framework for interrogating the nature of the post-colonial Sudanese conditions. Studies of "failed states" have largely become a topic for security analysts, and since 9/11, particularly embedded in studies of terrorism and counter-terrorism.⁵⁵ In African studies, it can be said that the literature on state failure occupies a central position. Other than

⁵² Pierre Englebert, "The Contemporary African State: Neither African nor state", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.18, No. 4, 1997, pp. 767.

⁵³ Samuel M. Makinda, "Conflict and Superpowers in the Horn of Africa", pp. 94-95 explains that the motive behind this move was a realization that because the states that emerged were colonial in origin and as a result there was a fragility to them.

⁵⁴ Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 21.

⁵⁵ Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 4, 2002, pp. 127-140.

Englebert and Jackson, a large field, which covers a broad spectrum of ideas, has been involved in addressing questions related to the dysfunctionality of African politics and the problems of the African state. On the whole, most studies which take the African state as their central concern, agree that the vast majority are failing to meet the expectations of their citizens and have failed to fulfil the undertaking made by the first generation of nationalist leaders that independence would bring political freedom, economic and social development, and restore pride in the diversity of African cultures and identities. It is within this broader understanding of Africa's failed states that this thesis is situated.

There has also been a perennial failure of the Sudanese political system since independence which when combined with an economic collapse in the 1980s has undermined the operational capacity of state institutions, especially in the peripheral regions of the country, such as in Darfur.⁵⁶ The lack of uniformity in the institutional capacity of the Sudanese state is one-side of the problem and while Sudan is not a failed state per-se, there are large parts of the country where the capacity of the state is particularly weak. In the southern Sudan, it can be argued that beyond repression and violence, the Sudanese state has ceased to exist since the outbreak of the second civil war in 1983. In Darfur, and more broadly across Africa, '...the declining capacity of the African state for development and fulfilment of the post-independence "social-contract," ... is one of the key issues for understanding the character of regime behaviour.'⁵⁷ Shifting the focus of analysis from the local, to the national level

⁵⁶ Due to the absence of the rule of law in Darfur which permitted a state of anarchy to emerge in some of the western and northern reaches of Darfur the region was compared to the American "wild west", see "Sudan: The Wild West", *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 29, No.11, 27 May, 1988, pp. 6.

⁵⁷ Dauda Abubakar, "The Authoritarian State and Human Rights Violation in Postcolonial Africa: A case study of Nigeria" in Apollo Rwomire, *Social Problems in Africa: new visions*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2001, p. 72.

provides this study with the framework necessary for explaining the events in Darfur as a part of the further unravelling of the African nation-state⁵⁸, of which Sudan is one of the most salient examples.⁵⁹

The crisis of the post-colonial African state is reflective of the pressures which have emanated from the international sphere, including the impact of colonialism on Darfur. As a result of the need to transcend the immediate history and territorial borders of Darfur, the study is cast into a broad interdisciplinary methodology and an analytical framework that takes an historical approach within the context of internal and external historical socio-economic, political, economic and cultural crises. The complex nature of the causes of the conflict in Darfur requires that an equally complex multi-dimensional approach is undertaken that includes analysis of economic, political, cultural and environmental factors. The study aims to provide an understanding of the causes of the conflict in Darfur within a framework that investigates the instability and disintegration of the Sudanese state by probing both the complexities of the colonial legacies on Sudanese politics and the intricacies of post-colonial Sudanese politics as shaped by international factors. While the study is

⁵⁸ Here the hyphenated concept of the nation-state is used to illustrate that the crisis facing African states such as the Sudan is one associated with the lack of a coterminous nation and state, which for a number of scholars is a leading explanation for the crisis of political legitimacy of the postcolonial state. The issue of terminology and the implications for the study of nations and states is presented by Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding*, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1994, especially chapter 4, "Terminological Chaos ("A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a...")" for the relationship between the failure of nation-building and contemporary crises see Stanley J. Tambiah "The Nation-State in Crisis and the Rise of Ethnonationalism" in Edwin N. Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, eds., *The Politics of Difference : ethnic premises in a world of power*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996.

⁵⁹ Peter Woodward contends that Sudan '...has survived with increasing uncertainty...and by the late 1980s it was becoming an open question whether Sudan as legally constituted could continue.' Peter Woodward, *Sudan 1898-1989: The Unstable State*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder Colorado, 1990, p. 1.

cast in historical terms, it does not attempt to offer a complete history. History, to use Peter Woodward's phrasing, is the 'backdrop not the substance' of the study.⁶⁰

Much of the analysis is drawn from secondary literature exploring Sudanese politics: a literature that often makes no specific reference to Darfur.⁶¹ Analysis is also drawn from the numerous scholarly works that analyse the political, economic, cultural, and environmental features of the Sudan. What becomes increasingly evident from reading these works is how marginal Darfur has been to the study of Sudan. One of the significant elements of this work is located in the sustained and systematic manner that Darfur has been re-integrated into an analysis of Sudan. The material utilised in this thesis has been selected for the insight brought to the topic through the process of interpretation and reinterpretation. The synthesis of previously discrete studies offers an opportunity to reinterpret Sudanese politics in a way that highlights Darfur's role in shaping national political institutions, decisions, and events. It is through this approach that this study aims to contribute to an understanding of the root causes of the war in Darfur.

This thesis has drawn from an established body of literature from which to recast the politics of the Sudan within the themes and conceptual approach that frame this study. In addition, some of the colonial and Sudanese government reports and publications have been read as primary evidence of the colonial and post-colonial attitudes towards

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ A few examples drawn from the academic literature will demonstrate how relatively marginal Darfur was to the scholarship of Sudan until the outbreak of conflict in 2003/4. Peter Woodward's study on the Sudanese state which is mentioned above has four references to Darfur in the Index, pages, 23, 29, 31, 34. *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, edited by John O. Voll (1991) mentions Darfur on pages 65-66, but only in the context of the conflict in Chad!

issues of race, ethnicity and development in Sudan, and more specifically attitudes towards the people and the region of Darfur.

Also my views have been informed by discussions with Sudanese from all cultural backgrounds. Almost five years of consulting and engaging with the Sudanese people has only reinforced my reading of the literature and independent research that the conflict in Darfur is essentially political and stems from a sense that the Khartoum government ceased to be a government for all northern Sudanese. Many of my Sudanese friends and informants originally from Khartoum and other parts of the riverain Sudan have accepted that the grievances of the people of Darfur are legitimate and that the only acceptable future for the Sudan rests with the establishment of a government that is representative of the diversity that characterises Sudan's heterogeneous population.⁶²

The crisis in Darfur was never only local, even in the 1980s, but a national and regional crisis in its making and now in its repercussions. In addition, many of the factors that contributed to the outbreak of hostilities are still evident in the politics of the Sudan. Understanding the causes of the conflict in Darfur, it is hoped will provide useful insights for the future of that province and for resolutions to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Sudan.

⁶² It must be noted that the insights which I gained from speaking with Sudanese have not been used as formal research data for in this study. No formal interviews or surveys were carried out and nothing written in this thesis should be attributed to informants other than where indicated in footnotes. Rather, than part of the methodology of the study, the conversations and discussions with Sudanese friends and acquaintances are only part of a broader connection to the subject matter of this study.

1.6 Outline of the Study

The second chapter undertakes an examination of the colonial legacies in the shaping of the post-colonial African state. An important objective laid out in the thesis is to challenge the perception that crises in Africa have transcended the colonial interference that occurred in the first half of the twentieth century, without reducing the causes of post-colonial conflicts in Africa to the impact of colonialism on the continent.⁶³ Rather, the importance of the colonial period is located in the way that the colonial state created the structures, institutions, identities, and language in which political actors have operated in the post-colonial setting. The terrain of post-colonial politics in Africa was firmly entrenched during the colonial period. State boundaries, political institutions, political systems, economic relationships, economic production and trade relations, tribalisation, racialism and a host of other features of the modern Sudanese state were bequeathed to the Sudan upon independence and constitute an important element of any analysis of the current problems that plague that country, and the continent. The relevance of examining the colonial period, Patrick Chabal argues, is based on the idea that, '[T]o understand the post-colonial state in Africa, whatever its complexion and however it was born, it is necessary to start from the colonial state.'⁶⁴

Chapter three addresses the theoretical debates of the crisis of the post-colonial African state and the ramifications of the neoliberal program of structural reform for nation-building in the Third World. Much has been written regarding the efficacy or otherwise of development projects in the 1950s and 1960s when state led

⁶³ Some crises in Africa are a direct result of colonialism. The wars in the Congo, Angola and Mozambique, the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and the struggle of the Polisario movement of the Saharawi people emerged out of the immediate consequences of colonial withdrawal. In essence, these are cases of colonial wars that continued after colonialism came to a formal end.

⁶⁴ Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa*, p. 74.

development and the modernization paradigm dominated the perspectives on development of both the “left” and “right”. Modernization was also perceived to address the problems associated with a lack of national identity in the numerous “fabricated” post-colonial states in Africa and elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s. While state-building enjoyed success in some African states in the first decade of independence, the end of the post World War Two boom in the 1970s and the global recession that followed placed increasing pressure on Africa’s leaders to continue to develop state institutions and infrastructure and fulfil the promise of development made by nationalist leaders in the lead up to, and in the days after, independence. As economic crisis across Africa intensified in the 1980s, the post-colonial African state went into decline and the promised fruits of globalization seemed nothing more than a distant memory.⁶⁵ The restructuring of African economies under the auspices of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, Stephen Ellis argues was so profound that it ‘create[d] a comprehensive change in the prospects for African states and societies....’⁶⁶ Recent events in Africa, including the outbreak of conflict in Darfur, it is argued at the end of chapter two, should be placed in the context of colonialism and post-colonial crisis in Africa.

The objective of the remaining chapters is to address the conflict in Darfur from the perspective of the colonial legacies and the crisis of the post-colonial Sudanese state. The analysis commences with a chapter that examines the success and structure of the

⁶⁵ The literature on globalization covers a massive width of topics from a number of contending perspectives. In terms of understanding the “globalization” as economic restructuring of the world economy and an accompanying legitimating ideology see James Petras, ‘Globalization: A critical analysis’, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1999, pp. 37, also Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, “Globalization: A Necessary Myth” in David Held and Anthony G. McGrew (eds.), *The Global Transformations Reader: An introduction to the globalization debate*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000, pp.98-106.

⁶⁶ Stephen Ellis, “Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 43, No.1, 2002, p. 6.

pre-colonial Keira Sultanate of Darfur, and traces out the processes and events that led to the inclusion of Darfur in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. The next chapter examines the colonial state in Sudan and analyses the impact of colonial policies on the structure of the state, the political culture that was formed, and the way that identities were shaped by British intervention in Sudan. Darfur's place in Sudanese politics was determined by the exigencies of colonial rule and the prejudices of colonial ideology which when combined with the other policies of the British rulers of Sudan which located Darfur on the margins of Sudanese politics. Chapter six discusses the transition from colonialism to independence and the struggle of Sudan's peripheries for greater access to state power and state resources in the period from 1956 until 1969. The twenty year period covering the rule of Ja'afar Nimeiri, the Transitional Military Council, and the three years of democratic politics, is the focus of chapter seven. This was a period of great hope as the May Regime set about liberating Sudan from the colonial legacies of sectarianism, native administration, and economic underdevelopment. Within a decade, both the reformist agenda and the development project had been abandoned, and war in the southern Sudan had resumed. As with elsewhere in the Sudan during this period, the region of Darfur suffered from economic crisis and the disintegration of state institutions at a time of increasing levels of food insecurity and violence associated with regional instability.

Neither the Transitional Military Council nor the government of Sadiq al-Mahdi were able to resolve the many problems facing the country. In fact, many decisions taken by the leaders that followed Ja'afar Nimeiri only served to exacerbate the situation in Sudan. The disastrous handling of the civil war in the south and the further decline of the state due to an ever-worsening economy pushed Sudan towards collapse in the

second half of the 1980s. In this climate, the military intervened once again in 1989. The *coup d'état* heralded the beginning of the government-led Islamist political project in Sudan which faced its own demise in the late 1990s culminating with the arrest of Hasan al-Turabi in December 1999. Darfur's crisis then emerged from the dissolution of the Islamist project and the struggle for power in Sudan that ensued between Omar al-Bashir and his myriad of political opponents. The concluding comments of this chapter reiterate that the conflict in Darfur undoubtedly has a local dimension but it is in the national dimension and the external forces that have shaped Sudanese politics since the nineteenth century, that an explanation for the scale and the intensity of the conflict is located. Darfur's war is at first glance a war over local issues, but at a deeper level Darfur's crisis is symptomatic of the crisis of the African post-colonial state.

In the conclusion, it will be reiterated that this thesis is about the conflict in Darfur but it is also about more than this. It is about the legacies of colonialism and the dysfunctional Sudanese state that remains a symbol of those legacies. It is about the disintegration of the Sudanese state due to economic collapse and the structural reforms designated by the world's major economic institutions. It is about the brutal violence perpetrated by some members of the narrowly based Sudanese elite who have been challenged by the insurgent movements to share power and distribute economic resources more widely. It is about the manipulation of ethnic and religious identities for political purposes and the devastating affect of this. It is also about how all of these issues have led to the region of Darfur becoming the battleground between competing factions of the National Islamic Front, culminating in the "humanitarian disaster" that has overtaken the region. Above all it is about the failure of the

Sudanese nation-state project which was finally laid out for all to see when the largest communities in Darfur rejected the dominant northern Sudanese identity and launched a major insurgency against the Sudanese government.

Chapter Two -

The African Colonial State: The Political Structures of Conquest and Domination

2.1 Introduction:

In 1876 the vast majority of Africans carried on their lives without interference from external powers. European power had managed to gain some footholds on the continent. Algeria had succumbed to the brutal expansion of French power earlier in the century, and in 1882 the debt of the Egyptian crown forced the Egyptian Khedive accept British “assistance” which amounted to nothing less than colonial occupation. The Cape Colony stretched across the southern end of Africa and Portugal maintained colonies on coastal strips in both Angola and Mozambique. In West Africa, Senegal had fallen to the French, and the British had nothing more than toe-holds on coastal enclaves in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Lagos. Unlike India, South-East Asia, North America, South and Central America, and Oceania, Africa had largely escaped the expansion of European colonial domination.

Thomas Pakenham describes what happens next in these terms:

Suddenly, in half a generation, the Scramble gave Europe virtually the whole continent: including thirty new colonies and protectorates, 10 million square miles of new territory and 110 million dazed new subjects, acquired by one

method or another. Africa was sliced up like a cake, the pieces swallowed by five rival nations...⁶⁷

The colonial system which followed the European conquest of the continent in the final decades of the nineteenth century was responsible for engendering practices and erecting structures that reshaped the lives of most Africans. An interrogation of the rationale, intent, context and processes by which certain decisions were made by colonial governments offers an opportunity to assess the impact of colonialism on Africa and a basis on which a later analysis of the post-colonial crisis in Africa can be assessed.

2.2 The Legacies of Colonialism in Africa

The extent that colonialism affected Africa is still disputed. Jean François Bayart's⁶⁸ study of contemporary Africa is primarily a study of "African politics" 'as the authentic expression of a 'governmentality' (or set of attitudes towards power and politics) which are deeply rooted in African historical experience.'⁶⁹ The colonial period and the architecture of colonial rule, for Bayart, were a short episode in the much longer and resilient history of African politics. Colonialism, Bayart argues, failed to erode pre-colonial political culture and practices. Bayart's perspective has clearly long departed from the culturally deprecating views held by many modernisation and neo-modernisation theorists who held that Africa's post-colonial woes were the result of the continuation of pre-colonial anarchy. And while Bayart's intentions differ dramatically from less culturally-sensitive efforts to explain African politics, there are implications from his work that can be seen to share similarities

⁶⁷ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876-1912*, London: Avon Books, 1992, p. xxiii.

⁶⁸ Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, London: Longman, 1993.

⁶⁹ Christopher Clapham, "The *Longue Duree* of the African State", p. 434.

with views that argue that Africa's primitive pre-colonial practices and culture explain the ongoing crisis across the continent.⁷⁰

The major problem with Bayart's analysis is that his perspective tends towards homogenizing pre-colonial Africa because explanations of the common political emergencies in contemporary Africa become tied to a pre-colonial African political culture. While others see Africa's unity today in terms of the consequences of colonialism or in terms of the impact of international forces, for Bayart it is in the "politics of the belly" that such unity is represented. Bayart's attempt to empower African agency tends to ignore the impact of colonialism in creating the structures and institutions which largely, if not entirely, shape the actions of Africans in the period of independence. If a unified Africa exists at all, it only does as a consequence of the colonial construction of an African identity and the unifying forces of colonial control and state creation producing a conceptualisation that Africans have a shared experience, as Ruth Mayer argues:

Africa is an artificial entity, invented and conceived by colonialism. There is no such thing as an underlying cultural heritage that would pertain to Egypt and Namibia, Kenya and the Congo. Thus, the very notion of Africa, or rather 'Africanity,' as I will call the artificial concoctions of Africa, attests to the fact that at least in one respect the gigantic project of colonialism did work: forcing most diverse regions, traditions, and cultures in Africa into one symbolic system, colonial rule brought about an imperialist framework of representation

⁷⁰ An salient illustration of the tendency to still see Africa through the optic of colonial denigration is in "Africa: The Hopeless Continent", *The Economist*, May 2000.

that is still effective today, even if its effects are not necessary what they used to be.⁷¹

Bayart's analysis fails to fully appreciate the most profound changes wrought by colonialism on Africa. In particular, colonialism engendered new structures of power, including discursive and material, that have played an important part in shaping Africa's post-colonial condition.

Any argument that colonialism and the impact of colonial rule had a profound impact on Africa and changed the historical trajectory of the continent does not reduce the importance of African agency in shaping colonial structures and practices. In fact, a studies of the colonial impact on Africa have repeatedly stressed this point.⁷² Exemplifying this view, Nicholas B. Dirks argues that colonialism cannot be understood as a single monolithic program of expansion and control but as diverse and always subject to the historical contingencies of collaboration and resistance that the colonisers faced.⁷³

⁷¹ Ruth Mayer, *Artificial Africa: Colonial Images in the Times of Globalisation*, London: University Press of New England, 2002, p. 1

⁷² Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, also Frederick Cooper, "Conflict and Connection: Rethinking African colonial history", pp. 157-190 in Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and Peter Gran, (eds.), *History After the Three Worlds: Post-Eurocentric Historiographies*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000; Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*, London: James Currey Limited, 1992; M. Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994; Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* describes the divergent methods employed by the colonial powers in the process of conquest which just highlights the fact that conquest and control took many forms in Africa. On a note broader, Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism: A New Critical Idiom*, London: Routledge, 1998, p. 154, has argued that the colonial experience (oppression or empowerment) could be different for different people even in the same location depending on gender, class, education, etc, further highlighting the complexity of colonialism and also that collaboration and resistance continuously changed to meet the challenges of the colonial state.

⁷³ Nicholas B. Dirks, "Introduction" in Nicholas B. Dirks, (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture*, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1997, p. 1-26.

The colonial powers did construct an ideological framework for colonialism. As V.Y Mudimbe⁷⁴ following from Edward Said's⁷⁵ analysis of the colonial enterprise in the Orient argues that, European colonialism in Africa was justified as a philanthropic enterprise which proceeded by applying a coherent ideology of difference between Europeans and the colonised, a process Mudimbe describes as 'the reformation of the *natives*' minds.'⁷⁶ Colonial racism in Africa was universal. From the Cape to Cairo, Europeans assumed the right to rule based on a belief that Africans were inferior because they were primitive, savage, idle and in more extreme cases, genetically different.⁷⁷ Mudimbe identifies two further characteristics of colonialism in Africa which are 'the domination of physical space' and 'the integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective' which he argues taken together:

These complementary projects constitute what might be called the colonizing structure, which completely embraces the physical, human, and spiritual aspects of the colonizing experience.⁷⁸

Colonialism radically transformed African states in ways that would leave a lasting impact on the continent. Robert O. Collins whose scholarly endeavours include extensive historical studies of Sudan and Chad views the colonial period as a decisive turning point. Despite some issues with his view on more recent events in Darfur,

⁷⁴ V. Y Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*, Indiana University Press, 1988.

⁷⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1979.

⁷⁶ V.Y Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Racism towards Africans and Afro-Americans has been well documented in numerous studies including Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964 is an older study but still one of the most compelling analyses of the way that British ideas of Africa changed in the period of abolition and technological advancement, another interesting work on this topic is by Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989 in relation to racism that Blacks faced in France and by the French, Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press, 1967, p. 10. For Fanon colonial racism is encapsulated in the European belief that 'There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men.'

⁷⁸ V.Y Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, p. 2.

which will be discussed later, Collins statement regarding the significance of the colonial impact on Sudan is elucidating:

Dominated by the British, the Condominium is the decisive epoch in modern Sudanese history, that era in which the introduction of Western ideas and institutions by British officials combined with the less conspicuous revival of Egyptian cultural influence to change for ever the traditional patterns of Sudanese government and society.⁷⁹

2.3 Colonial Domination in Africa

In a compelling article written in the new millennium Crawford Young argues that the time of the post-colonial African state has, for the most part, passed due to profound shifts in international and regional trends beginning in earnest with the end of the Cold War.⁸⁰ He argues that,

The lexical habit of post-colonial usage to label the African political world persists, but in many countries little remains of the hegemonic apparatus which African rulers inherited and initially sought to reinforce and expand as an instrument of rapid development.⁸¹

Whether recent departures from the colonial motifs are as conspicuous as Young contends, is debateable. Nevertheless, implicit in Young's argument is the perception that there was substantial continuity passed from the colonial to the post-colonial state which, he argues, means that,

⁷⁹ Robert O. Collins, "Introduction" in Robert O. Collins and Francis M. Deng, *The British in the Sudan, 1898-1956: The Sweetness and the Sorrow*, London: Macmillan, 1984, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Crawford Young, "The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa?" *African Affairs*, 2004, Vol. 103, p. 23-49.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 24.

Unless circumstances provide some sharp rupture, as in the case of countries winning independence after a prolonged armed struggle, the subliminal forces tending towards a reproduction of the state are formidable.⁸²

Going further than Young, Ramon Grosfoguel has challenged the notion of the existence of an independent Africa,

One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to decolonisation of the world. This led to the myth of a ‘postcolonial’ world. The heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450 years did not evaporate with the juridical-political decolonisation of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same ‘colonial power matrix.’ With juridical-political decolonisation, we moved from a period of ‘global colonialism’ to the current period of ‘global coloniality.’ Although ‘colonial administrations’ have been almost entirely eradicated and the majority of the periphery is politically organised into independent states, non-European people are still living under crude European/Euro-American exploitation and domination.⁸³

As both Young and Grosfoguel have argued, African independence failed to dismantle the colonial state and for this reason there is an imperative to examine the colonial conquest of Africa and the creation and consolidation of the colonial state as a starting point for understanding post-colonial politics and the crisis of the contemporary state in Africa . This is also a point Mahmood Mamdani makes when

⁸² Ibid, p. 29.

⁸³ R. Grosfoguel, ‘The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economy Paradigms’, *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, (2/3), 2007, p. 219.

he contends that '[K]ey to understanding the state in contemporary Africa is the historical fact it was forged in the course of colonial Africa.'⁸⁴

While it is commonly accepted that '...the modern state has alien roots, having been introduced from abroad as the coercive and legal instrument of European colonial rule...' ⁸⁵ it is important to note that there were pre-colonial state forms in Africa prior to colonialism.⁸⁶ George Ayittey considers that pre-colonial Africa was comprised of two broad forms of political organisation, acephalous societies and states with a centralized authority.⁸⁷ In the varieties of pre-colonial polities the common thread was to found, for Ayittey, in the accountability of the rulers to the ruled. Crawford Young provides a brief list of what he considers to have been the different pre-colonial states in Africa, including the '...the quasi-feudal monarchy of Ethiopia, the Mameluke states of the Nile Valley, monarchies of various descriptions, military-conquest states, mercantile polities, jihad theocracies...' ⁸⁸ European conquest incorporated each of these pre-existing political systems into a new panoply of colonial states. The colonial system dramatically altered the relationship between rulers and ruled across Africa, especially in the way the state exercised power over subjugated populations.

⁸⁴ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, London: James Currey Ltd., 1996, p. 62.

⁸⁵ Michael Bratton, "Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa", *World Politics*, Vol.41, No.3, 1989, p. 413.

⁸⁶ The importance of making this point has dual imperatives. Firstly, it is recognition that Africa was not a blank-slate or occupied by primitive peoples living in small and separated polities. Political structures in Africa differed across a broad spectrum and that the most advanced polities were not that dissimilar from those in Europe in terms of class structures, political accountability, forms of legitimation and hegemony, and juridically. The studies of the pre-colonial Keira Sultanate of Darfur by R.S O'Fahey are just one example of the literature describing the complexity of the integral precolonial African state.

⁸⁷ George B. Ayittey, *Indigenous African Institutions*, New York: Transnational Publishers, 1991. A comprehensive study of pre-colonial Africa is provided by Elizabeth Isichei in her *A History of African Societies to 1870*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 which covers the broad sweep of African history including the formation of kingdoms and states in West Africa and across the Sahel, for pre-colonial Islamic states see Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

⁸⁸ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, pp. 14-15.

The colonial conquest of Africa was a rapid process and one that required minimal expense or military mobilization. Jeffrey Herbst argues that '[T]he cost to Britain of conquering seventy million African subjects was about fifteen pence each, most of that not spent on armies but on railroads that followed the soldiers.'⁸⁹ Despite, the relative ease by which the European colonial powers divided Africa amongst themselves, violence and coercion were essential features of colonialism. Patrick Chabal has argued that the colonial state and colonialism more broadly, can only be effectively understood by examining the objectives of each colonial power and the resources at their disposal for ensuring that the colonial state could act as 'the legal and political superstructure...to control and manage the colonial territories acquired in Africa through conquest.'⁹⁰ Control is undoubtedly one of the dominant motifs of the colonial period.

Any argument that the colonial state in Africa shared a number of fundamentals is incomplete without recognition of the inherent divergences that led to the shaping of various colonial experiences across the continent. Metropolitan historical and material differences were certainly one factor in engendering a multifarious patchwork of colonial systems in Africa. Crawford Young explains that the sheer size and complexity of British Empire and a 'less centralized historical personality' resulted in 'less uniformity in the superstructure of domination in zones of British rule.'⁹¹ The French, Belgians and Germans, in contrast, instituted highly centralized apparatus of rule, at least in theory. In the French case at least, the vast territories that were administered by French officials and the exigencies of rule often meant that colonial officers acted just as independently from metropolitan political surveillance as their

⁸⁹ Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 74.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 74.

⁹¹ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p. 99.

British counterparts. Despite the differences between the European colonial powers, common patterns of colonialism in Africa can be discerned. And one of these common features was the existence of a vast discrepancy in numbers between the colonizers and the colonized, whereby the colonized overwhelmingly outnumbered the colonizers. This reality of colonialism in Africa was a major determinant of colonial policy.

British Colonialism in Africa was poorly resourced in terms of the manpower that was dedicated to the domination and administration of Africa. In 1939, before the onset of World War Two, there were 1,223 British administrators and 938 police to govern Britain's 43 million African subjects.⁹² Severe financial limitations were also placed on the colonial state until after the Second World War when colonial development plans came into force. Kwame Anthony Appiah argues that despite the diverse economic realities between the European empires and the different nature of the individual African economies, colonialism in Africa was based on a shared 'fundamental set of structuring assumptions: in each sphere the dominant economic concern was at the center of metropolitan attention, and all colonies were supposed to be self-financing until after the Second World War...'⁹³ The form the colonial state in Africa would take was a reflection of these two realities.

From the very beginning the colonial project in Africa was premised on an ideological framework that was far beyond the capabilities of the African colonial state. The ideology of colonialism was based on the belief that Europeans were remaking Africa into a modern and civilised part of the world, and yet most of the policies enacted by

⁹² Figures from Anthony Kirk-Greene, "The Thin White: The Size of the British Colonial Service in Africa", *African Affairs*, 79, 314, pp. 25-44 cited by Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, p. 78.

⁹³ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p.164.

the colonial governments across Africa were designed to minimise the human and financial cost of administration. “Development” was a costly undertaking that the African colonial state could not afford and evidence points to the likelihood that even if the colonial states had the financial resources available to transform African societies according to colonial prescriptions no such undertaking would have been attempted. A view existed among the colonizers that the evolution of an African industrial workforce and urban population would result in a similar level of upheaval and rebellion which European elites contended with in the nineteenth century and this view ensured that solidifying Africans in self-contained and manageable social units took precedence over progress. This fear was most manifest in debates about colonial education policy. Education was restricted throughout Africa to a few select Africans which was a reflection of a colonial policy that was based on a belief that education, would as Sir Ralph Moor stated in 1915, ‘...destroy(s) the independence of character and initiative of the natives of these territories ...’⁹⁴ Such arguments were convenient excuses for suppressing African progress and institutionalising policies designed to consolidate colonial domination without heavy cost or the constant application of force. Minimising resistance to colonial rule was a principal concern of the African colonial state.

African resistance to foreign rule shaped the character of the colonial state in Africa. Colonial expansion into Africa in the late part of the nineteenth century, for the most part, did not require the full mobilization of European military power.⁹⁵ Even so, as John Lonsdale has argued in the case of the British consolidation of colonial rule in

⁹⁴ Cited in Uyilawa Usuanlele, “Colonial State and Education in Benin Division, 1897-1959” located at <http://www.edo-nation.net/uyi3.htm>

⁹⁵ One exception to this was the conquest of Sudan which culminated with the Battle of Omdurman on 2 September 1898 ending a two and a half year campaign.

Kenya that to transform the local political and social environment from an ‘overlapping patchwork of hunting, cultivating and herding peoples’ into new tribes,

The British employed violence on a locally unprecedented scale, and with unprecedented singleness of mind.⁹⁶

Such violence was necessary.

The colonial state was foreign both in terms of rulers and the structure that was imposed, a fact, as Bayart has argued, which reflects that the colonial state did not develop ‘organically from and against civil society’⁹⁷ but was imposed from above by conquest. For colonialism to have succeeded in Africa it was necessary that force or rather the threat of force was ever-present. Neither colonial governments nor those of the metropolises were prepared to sustain lengthy military campaigns against “hostile natives” and the ever-present threat of rebellion created a difficult situation for colonial governments faced with populations that neither identified with their new rulers nor accepted the premise and restructuring of colonial rule. Colonialism in its initial and late phases was ‘dominance without hegemony.’⁹⁸ The period that covered the interwar years, roughly from 1918 until 1939 was when the African colonial state reached its apogee, but by World War Two the legitimacy of the colonial state was very much in decline. Thus, the material power of the African colonial state over African subjects was the foundation on which colonialism was erected and consolidated.

African agency in terms of resistance shaped the encounter with colonialism and the formation of colonial states.

⁹⁶ Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, p. 13.

⁹⁷ Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa*, pp. 73-74,

⁹⁸ Frederick Cooper, “Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History”, p. 167.

Recognition of the much greater power of the Europeans in the colonial encounter does not negate the importance of African agency in determining the shape the encounter took.⁹⁹

Various modes of African collaboration with colonialism have been well-documented by dependency theorists and Marxist scholarship, more recently subaltern studies and Afro-centric scholarly work has detailed the long history of determined African resistance to colonial rule.¹⁰⁰ African agency was a factor, at times a considerable factor, in influencing the structure of the colonial state's domination and oppression of the subject population. But in the end it was the structure of domination and control which characterised the colonial state in Africa.

2.4 The Foundations of Colonial Domination in Africa

With these constraints and demands in mind this section deals with the structure and system of rule erected by the colonial powers. Colonial mechanisms of control and structures of domination differed from colony to colony and within the colony differences are easy enough to discern. As an example, in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, a heterogeneous colony to say the least, the colonial state in Sudan was far from uniform; the southern and western regions were governed differently to the system that was applied in Khartoum and Omdurman.¹⁰¹ However, there are certain patterns

⁹⁹ Ibid, p166. Additionally, in reading Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, it is clear that indigenous interventions- collaboration or resistance- was a vital part of the shaping of the colonial state.

¹⁰⁰ Eric Allina Pisano, "Resistance and the Social History of Africa", *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2003, pp.187-198, makes an argument that a disaggregated concept of resistance and collaboration has emerged in contrast to imperial historiography that ignored Africans, except as an object of the "civilising mission", and nationalist histories which focused on the nationalist struggle against colonialism as a unified African response to colonialism. It was in the 1990s that a scholarship emerged that emphasised forms of "everyday" resistance.

¹⁰¹ The issue of colonial rule will be discussed later in chapter 5.

and policies that define the overall colonial system in Africa that can be said to form the architecture of colonial domination.

Modern African political boundaries are artificial constructs of the colonial era and as Naomi Chazan et al, have argued, represent the interests and capabilities of European powers who neglected any regard for the political patterns and structures that existed across the continent in their determination of colonial borders.¹⁰² The perception of the world, or from Arif Dirlik's perspective 'the spatial conceptualizations around which we have organized history- from nations to areas to continents and oceans to the Third World and beyond- are in a fundamental sense implicated in a Eurocentric modernity.'¹⁰³ In the case of Africa, Ieuan Griffiths claims that the consequence of the division of the world by Europeans, is that,

The inherited political geography of Africa is as great an impediment to independent development as her colonially based economies and political structures.¹⁰⁴

It is certainly true that only a small number of African states can lay claim to geographical boundaries that existed prior to the European carve-up of the continent.¹⁰⁵ While, it also undoubtedly true that the process of boundary delineation

¹⁰² Naomi Chazan, Peter Lewis, Robert A. Mortimer, Donald Rothchild and Stephen John Stedman, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 1999, p. 26.

¹⁰³ Arif Dirlik, "Is There History after Eurocentricism?" in Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and peter Gran, (eds.), *History After the Three Worlds: Post-Eurocentric Historiographies*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000, p. 26.

¹⁰⁴ Ieuan Griffiths, "The Scramble for Africa: Inherited Political Boundaries", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 152, No.2, 1986, p. 204.

¹⁰⁵ Tragically one of the states that does meet the test of pre-colonial existence is Rwanda. Here the colonial legacy of racial division plays such a pervasive part in transforming the relations between Tutsi and Hutu that the colonial and pre-colonial state barely resembled its predecessor. See Eric Lerhe, "The Role of Nationalism in the Rwandan Genocide" in Susan M. Thomson and J. Zoe Wilson, (sp. eds.), *International Insights: A Dalhousie Journal of International Affairs*, special issue, Rwanda and

within Africa, by the colonial powers was a product of “external logic”, one has to keep in mind that all states are human constructs and that human perceptions of geography, whether in Africa or elsewhere, is never a natural evolutionary process. Edward Said has extended Vico’s contention that men make their own history to the human perception of geography so that for Said, ‘...locales, regions, geographical sectors...are man-made’¹⁰⁶ and so why not states, and not just African states? The problematic of state-boundary formation in the African case is that the *men* who determined the location of the political perimeters within Africa were not Africans as Griffith remarks;

The political boundaries of modern Africa emerged in the 30 years after the Berlin Conference. They were drawn by Europeans, for Europeans, and apart from some localized detail, paid scant regard to Africa, let alone Africans.¹⁰⁷

Griffith continues by arguing that the result of the partition of Africa by European powers at Berlin, was the “dehumanisation” of African boundaries which divided numerous cultural areas between two or more colonial states such that ‘[E]very land boundary in Africa cuts through at least one.’¹⁰⁸ The creation of numerous colonies that contained many diverse cultural groups:

...not only divided existing political entities but, more significantly, compelled groups that frequently had no history of ongoing ties to each other.¹⁰⁹

the Great Lakes Region: Ten Years on from Genocide, 2005, pp. 49-74,
<http://centreforforeignpolicystudies.dal.ca/insights/RwandaAndTheGreatLakes.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Ieuan Griffiths, “The Scramble for Africa”, p. 204.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 205.

¹⁰⁹ Naomi Chazan, et al., *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, p. 27.

The ethnic and religious heterogeneity of the polities was one consequence of the colonial conquest of Africa.

The solution to this very real problem of control and domination was to be located in constructing indigenous identities amenable to European control. The application of a form of European racism that accompanied colonialism differed from colony to colony but in essence was based on the European conceptualisation of the hierarchy of civilizations and the belief that Europeans were superior to their colonial subjects, whether they were African, or from the Orient, or from Asia.¹¹⁰ The thin “white line” of domination in Africa was preserved by a powerful colonial ideology as much as it was by force, but force was a latent factor and ever-present in the structure of the colonial system. While the “invention of Africa”, as Mudimbe calls it, was a powerful structuring device, physical power was the principal feature of the colonial order, as Frantz Fanon writes:

The colonial world is a world cut in two. The dividing line, the frontiers are shown by barracks and police stations. In the colonies it is a policemen and the soldier who are the official, instituted go-betweens, the spokesmen of the settler and his rule of oppression...It is obvious here that the agents of government speak the language of pure force. The intermediary does not lighten the oppression, nor seek to hide the domination; he shows them up and puts them into practice with the clear conscience of an upholder of the peace;

¹¹⁰ One of the most compelling studies of the European conceptualization of self and other in the period of colonial expansion is given by Michael Adas, *Machines as Men*. Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: from western origins to global faith*, London: Zed Books, 2002, also provides an interesting account of the European view of the world by drawing on the continuities in European philosophy that have led to the assumption that the “western” developmental model is the only historical path that all societies must traverse.

yet he is the bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native.¹¹¹

Beyond the outright use of violence and coercion a process of consensus formation within the colony was undertaken by the colonial state. In the British colonies the idea of the redemption of Africa by the application of the three C's, Christianity, commerce and civilization, became a motivating force behind the European expansion into Africa, as well as a defining motif of the colonial mission. King Leopold's exhortations during the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 to European leaders that God and humanity demanded that the "Black race" be saved were to set the tone for the colonial expansion into Africa.¹¹²

Fanon's description of the profound inequality of the colonial state is supported by Mamdani who explains that the colonial state was bifurcated into separate spheres of direct rule and indirect rule governed by different sets of institutions and laws.¹¹³ Uoldelul Dirar, assessing this aspect of Mamdani's perspective on colonialism in Africa, argues that,

...the essence of colonialism has to be found in the practice of segregation, whether territorial or institutional; the most profound and permanent effects on colonial and post-colonial society were the result of institutional segregation. Indeed, the practice of developing separate juridical and institutional systems for colonial subjects was in many ways the cornerstone of colonial power, and

¹¹¹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, excerpt from Martin Bulmer and John Solomos, eds., *Racism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 117-118.

¹¹² Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, pp. 239-246.

¹¹³ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 16.

it is in this process that we can discern the roots of many systemic institutional contradictions of the post-colonial Africa state.¹¹⁴

Bruce Berman argues that the process of the incorporation of the colonized into the structure of colonial domination was achieved by creating the appearance of the social relations defined by the colonial state through the institution of indirect rule, as a natural element of the traditional African social order.¹¹⁵ Alan Cousins argues that the notion of tribalism was an embedded belief amongst British colonial officers and became an essential element of colonial policy in Africa.¹¹⁶ There was a widespread belief amongst British colonial authorities and ideologues that the Indian mutiny of 1857 resulted from efforts to transform Indians into Britons. If cultural change did not occur in India, where the British believed the natives had progressed further than the natives in Africa, then it was believed there was even less chance of a success amongst Africa's backward tribes. In this context, Cousins states that British colonial policy in Africa followed the policy of native rule which was instituted in India following the Mutiny. The British policy of native rule in Africa relied on tribal institutions, inventing tribes where they did not exist and reversing detribalization when it had occurred:

Detribalization was not a new problem to rulers in the colonies. Colonial officials had begun to reflect on what they saw as the dangers in the late nineteenth and twentieth century in West Africa, just as its equivalent had been seen as a real difficulty in India. In African terms, it was founded on the

¹¹⁴ Uoldeul Chelati Dirar, "Colonial and the Construction of National Identities: The Case of Eritrea," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol 1, Issue 2, 2007, p. 257.

¹¹⁵ Bruce Berman, "A Palimpsest of Contradictions": Ethnicity, Class and Politics in Africa", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No.1, 2004, p. 22.

¹¹⁶ Alan Cousins, "Governing Africa: The Imperial Mind in British Colonies, 1938-1947, in the Light of Indian Experience," *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, No. 7/8, 1999.

notion that Africans belonged to tribes, so that in some ways they did not act as individuals, and that cut adrift from the tribe they became a social problem, and a danger to law and order.¹¹⁷

Thus, the colonial invention of “tribes” was continually reinforced by efforts to contain people within the new social units as a method of control.¹¹⁸ African politico-social and legal systems were not fixed and stable as colonial anthropologists, colonial ethnographers, colonial administrators and colonial intellectuals depicted the situation, but rather African societies were transformed by the imposition of foreign forms of domination onto what had been a constantly shifting political and social landscape.

2.5 The Architecture of the Colonial State in Africa

Understanding the impact of indirect rule, or native administration, is an important part of coming to terms with the architecture of the colonial state in Africa. The system of indirect rule had been implemented in a number of the British possessions before adoption in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of Sudan. Unlike other British colonies British Sudan was co-governed with thousands of Egyptian administrative and military personnel serving under British administration, thereby easing one of the primary reasons for adopting indirect rule; lack of personnel. A.H.M Kirk-Greene concludes that the British colonial presence in Africa was a “thin white-line” until

¹¹⁷ Alan Cousins, “Governing Africa”, p. 155.

¹¹⁸ The concept of “tribe” itself has come under challenge as a construct of the colonial period and is an ideologically-laden term which is best disposed of in scholarly accounts. But in the African context the colonial state did “invent” tribes and the existence of social units called tribes cannot be disregarded if a constructivist view is taken on the issue. However, that said, the idea that “tribes” are a feature of static historical societies is contestable, as Eric Wolf argues by citing Morton Fried who argued that ‘the “tribe” is a secondary socio-political phenomenon, brought about by the intercession of more complex ordered societies, states in particular.’ Morton Fried 1975: 114, cited in Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the Peoples Without History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, p. 76.

after the Second World War.¹¹⁹ The colonial service was stretched from the Cape to Cairo as the British were vastly outnumbered by those they were destined to rule. The situation was not so different in Belgian or French colonial Africa. Figures given by Mamdani highlight the immense disparity between rulers and ruled in colonial Africa:

	European Officials	Native Population
British Nigeria	1,315	20,000,000
Belgian Congo	2,384	9,8400,000
French Equatorial Africa	887	3,200,000
French West Africa	3,660	15,000,000

From: Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p73.

A principal reason for the adoption of indirect rule in Africa was due to the restrictions placed on the various colonial governments caused by the aforementioned lack of European personnel. In most cases, indirect rule was a pragmatic response to financial and human shortages and supported by a constructed ideology of “primitive” Africa as tribal. Indirect rule served to facilitate colonial rule and entrench the perception of Africans as tribal and pre-colonial African political entities as inherently acephalous.

The system of indirect rule was unworkable without a compliant indigenous class acting as intermediaries and local rulers who held a stake in the colonial system. Berman explains that:

¹¹⁹ A.H.M Kirk-Greene, “The Thin White Line”.

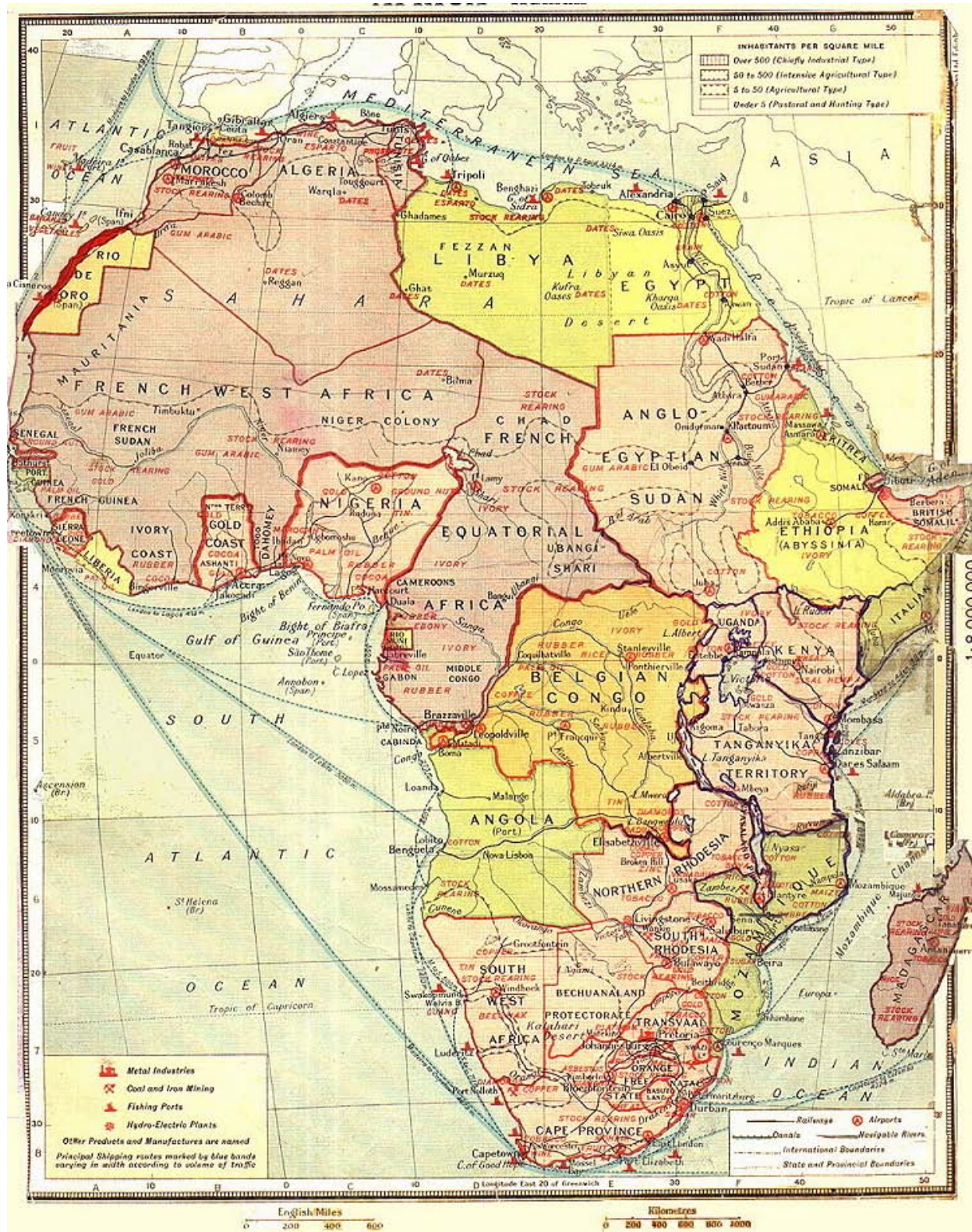
To maintain control and sustain the limited extraction of labor and commodities, colonial states relied on indirect rule through local African authorities, both indigenous and colonial creations, rewarded with decentralized channels of clientelistic access to state resources for chiefs and new elites, including a developing petty bourgeoisie...¹²⁰

Samir Amin also remarks on the forging of an alliance between “traditional” elites and the colonial governments, arguing that the colonial governments invented chiefs to rule over the indigenous population.¹²¹ Amin further adds that “ethnic groups” that the newly invested chiefs ruled over were inventions of the colonial system. There was a process whereby ethnic groups (tribal or racial groups) were concretized through the codification of customary rights, creation of separate judicial and taxation administration, the “invention” of separate histories, languages, genealogies and the allocation of separate land rights to different groups. In doing so, the “ethnic” fluidity and “multiple identities” that characterised pre-colonial Africa was challenged by the onset of a system that insisted on labelling and mapping the social landscape. Map 2.1 (see page 32) shows how the colonial government not only mapped the geography of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium but also the ethnic and “tribal” topography as well. It must be stressed that colonialism was unable to completely erase the complexity of the social landscape, for as much as colonial governments implemented indirect rule and social engineering to contain social groups within pre-determined boundaries, the intricate overlapping, flexibility and interdependence that had preceded colonial conquest continued into the post-colonial era. However, an “ethnic/tribal” map of Africa hardened into existence as a consequence of colonial interventions.

¹²⁰ Bruce Berman “A Palimpsest of Contradictions”, p. 24.

¹²¹ Samir Amin, *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*, London: Zed Books, 1990, p. 93.

Colonial Africa: 1918



Source: ©2005 - Brian Taylor CBIol FIBiol FRES

A common practice of all the colonial powers was to invest authority in “martial races” as Crawford Young describes those ethnic groups that became a vital part of the military and security apparatus of the colonial state.¹²² In the Sudan the condominium’s early coercive apparatus relied on the Egyptian partnership but as time progressed the British suspicions of Egyptian disloyalty increased as did suspicions that Egyptian soldiers and administrators were actively involved with the Sudanese in undermining British authority. Fearing a Sudanese rebellion around every corner, the British in Sudan turned to the native Sudanese to carry more of the military burden. In particular, the British viewed, or rather came to view the Beja (Kipling’s fuzzy-wuzzies) as a “martial race”. To legitimate the position of the Beja they were classified by British ethnography as Hamitic which gave them a racial pedigree worthy of their status in the colonial hierarchy.¹²³ In the Rwandan case, the Germans, and then later the Belgians, invented a Hamitic origin for the Tutsi as a way of justifying their above the Hutu’s and below Europeans in the colonial order. According to Daniel T. Ossabu-Kle, the Germans viewed the Tutsi as ‘...Caucasians in black skins, the Tutsi were considered the section of Rwandan society with whom Europeans could easily work.’¹²⁴

The reinvention of racial and ethnic origins of various indigenous groups by the colonial powers to appease their racial prejudices produced an indigenous racial hierarchy. The Sudanese case was further complicated by the supposed north-south divide which was commonly viewed by the British in racial terms as an Arab-African divide. While the British viewed Arabs as a threat to their control over the south and

¹²² Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p. 105.

¹²³ The 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica entry on the Beja states that they ‘...comprised a widespread family of tribes, usually classed as Hamitic.’ <http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Beja>

¹²⁴ Daniel T. Ossabu-Kle, *Compatible Cultural Democracy: The Key to Development in Africa*, Ontario: Broadview Press Ltd., p. 217.

as a result debarred northern Sudanese from the south for most of the colonial period the racial division was solidified in the minds of colonial officials. Just one example of the promotion of the idea of the Sudanese Arabs as racially superior is that of L.F Nalder who held the posts of governor of Mongalla Province from 1930- 1933 and Equatorial Province from 1933-1936. Nalder held the position that:

The culture of the north is one which is easily comprehensible to ourselves...Moreover the Arab mentality is not far removed from our own...His ideas of right and wrong are broadly similar to our own...¹²⁵

In stark contrast, Nalder depicted the people of the Southern Sudan in the following way:

There is the difference of material culture between the sophisticated Arab and the primitive savage, naked and unashamed, so primitive in some cases that in him we can visualize the early ancestors of mankind.¹²⁶

Even if these views were prevalent amongst colonial administrators and Europeans in Africa more broadly, the reality is that in most colonies the impact of such racial hierarchies is still difficult to quantify. Where the influence is more apparent is in those colonies such as Rwanda and Sudan where an institutionalisation of “martial” or racial differences occurred and it is in these cases that the colonial state was most effective in creating racial divisions between African populations.

Alan Cousins, in his study of British attitudes to decolonization, argues that colonial policy-makers identified the emergence of a small, but vocal, educated African elite in

¹²⁵ L.F Nalder, Cited in Deng D. Akol Ruay, *The Politics of Two Sudans: The South and the North 1821-1969*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1994, p. 37.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

West Africa in the 1930s.¹²⁷ Elsewhere in British and also in French colonial Africa, a similar class of Africans were beginning to voice concerns over the hypocrisy evident in the divergence between European rhetoric and European actions. But it was the affect of the Great Depression that really catalysed Africans to form movements to agitate for their rights against the colonial state. As the economic downturn hit, colonial states found themselves with less money mainly due to the dramatic fall in commodity prices in the early 1930s and in some cases colonial governments were forced to cut the number of state employees and lower the salaries of state employees. Higher unemployment and lower wages increased the militancy of African workers and led to the formation of labour movements and assisted in propelling the creation of nascent nationalist movements.¹²⁸ The colonial response to these events was to strengthen alliances with the native authorities and to invest greater resources in the promotion of local political development, which they argued, was the necessary first step towards eventual self-government.¹²⁹ Simultaneous efforts were made, in each of the British colonies, to incorporate a proportion of the educated elite into the administration. The purpose was mainly to forestall more radical movements for self-government but it also entrenched native rulers and strengthened the tribal system.¹³⁰

Along these lines, religion was a potent force both in opposition to colonialism and for legitimating colonial rule. Islamic kingdoms proved the most difficult to conquer. Also, resistance movements against colonial rule enveloped in Islamic adornment, such as the Mahdist revolt in Sudan and the revolt led by Muhammad Hassan against

¹²⁷ Alan Cousins, "Governing Africa: The Imperial Mind in British Colonies, 1938-1947, in the Light of Indian Experience," *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, No. 7/8, 1999, pp. 153-154. In the Sudan, a similar native elite had emerged and by 1936 was challenging the colonial state's right to rule.

¹²⁸ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, pp1. 5-16.

¹²⁹ Alan Cousins, "Governing Africa", p. 153.

¹³⁰ Ibid, pp. 152-154.

the British in Somalia were examples of the power of Islam to mobilise sustained military opposition to foreign rule. During the conquest of Africa, the scourge of Islam was a common theme utilised by the British for justifying the extension of their power across the continent. One such example of the way that Islam was represented by the conquerors is found in the views expressed by Winston Churchill in *The River War*:

How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy. The effects are apparent in many countries. Improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and in insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live... No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step...¹³¹

Churchill's invectives against Islam were certainly written within the epistemic framework of the general hostile and discriminatory perception Europeans had constructed toward Islam in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹³² However, Churchill was also writing at a time of European expansion and conflict with Islamic societies in Africa. Holger Weiss in an interesting study of British representations of

¹³¹ Winston S. Churchill, *The River War*, first edition, Vol. II, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899, pp. 248-250.

¹³² Edward Said's *Orientalism* laid out the framework for exploring the Orientalist discourse as a part of the colonial enterprise. However, there is a sense that in this work Said is unable to demonstrate the historicity of European views on Islam. While his work was seminal for an understanding the embedded-ness and resilience of the Orientalist discourse a deeper historical study of how Europe's contact with the East shaped the Oriental discourse can be found in: Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004 and Thierry Hentsch, translated by Fred A. Reed, *Imagining the Middle East*, Montreal, Quebec: Black Rose Books, 1992.

Islam in Ghana over a thirty year period beginning in 1900 argues that pragmatism determined colonial attitudes towards Islam.¹³³ In this context then, Churchill's view can be read as a part of specific disposition to view Muslims as the enemy. With the conquest of Muslim societies in Africa all but complete by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, colonialism entered the period of consolidation of control and with this change in circumstances a shift in attitude amongst British colonial officials towards Islam becomes evident. In no way was the shift dramatic enough to overcome the embedded notion of the superiority of Christianity as a religion. The shift was not uniform; neither was it universal, but as colonialism moved from conquest to pacification and colonial state building the role of Islam in a number of the colonies became a pressing issue that required addressing beyond vilification and suppression. Crawford Young explains that a similar transformation of French perceptions towards Islam in Africa is also noticeable in the post-conquest phase. Young describes how the French and the British in Africa realised that there were benefits in coopting Islamic leaders and *ulama* into the colonial order many who saw an equal opportunity to advance their interests under European patronage.¹³⁴

Indicative of the shift in posture towards Islamic movements, was the modification of British attitudes to the Mahdi's successor. The British moved from a position of outright hostility towards Mahdism to an acceptance (and promotion) of Sayyid Abdel-Rahman al-Mahdi as a political, economic and cultural leader amongst the Sudanese. It was easier for Europeans in Africa to accommodate Islam within the colonial state than the pagan and animist religions practiced by non-Muslim Africans

¹³³ Holger Weiss, "Variations in the Colonial Representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, ca. 1900-1930," W O P A G - Working Papers on Ghana: Historical and Contemporary Studies 2, January 2004, <http://www.helsinki.fi/project/wopag/wopag2.pdf>

¹³⁴ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, pp. 110-112.

due to the perception that Islam, being a monotheistic religion, was a force of historical change and a font for civilization amongst primitive peoples.

The studies by Weiss and Young illustrate that colonial attitudes to Islam were shaped by the exigencies of rule. Notwithstanding the entrenched prejudice against Islam held by most European colonial officials and British, French and Belgian efforts to stem the expansion of Islam into southern Sudan and central Africa most colonial states preferred to elevate compliant religious leaders and promote a centralised religious orthodoxy over pluralistic and heterodox movements as a form of consensus-building. However, the character of Islam in most parts of Africa presented a problem for the colonial authorities. Islam's expansion into Africa as a gradual process of adoption and absorption accounted for 'a plethora of local variations...' which resulted in the 'syncretism of Islam and African practices. There was no single cultural expression of Islamic civilization in sub-Saharan Africa.'¹³⁵ In Africa, Islam tended towards diffusion and diversity and most often local practices were dominated by *sufi* orders and devotion was extended to individual *faki* holy men.¹³⁶

Often colonial strategies aimed at centralizing religious authority were unsuccessful and the state was forced to accept *sufi* orders into the ruling system. In the case of the Sudan, the British colonial government soon realised that Mahdism could be subversive or legitimating. An accord forged between the Mahdist movement and the colonial state facilitated support for British rule and integrated the Mahdist movement into the new political economy of colonial extraction as a principal title-holder in the

¹³⁵ Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, p. 428.

¹³⁶ Muhammad Mahmoud, "Sufism and Islamism in the Sudan" in David Westerlund and Eva Evers Rosander, eds., *African Islam and Islam in Africa: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, London: C. Hurst and Co., 1997, David Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, in particular see chapters 3 and 4, pp. 25-73.

Gezira Cotton Scheme. In Sudan, as elsewhere in Muslim Africa, Islam could be part of the ruling order or a means for inciting resistance against foreign control.

2.6 Colonialism and the Contradictions between Capitalism and Control

Colonial fiscal self-sufficiency, as noted earlier, was a basic axiom of British and French colonial policy in Africa. The Sudan differed from this general paradigm due to the ability of the British to call on Egyptian financial and human resources to underwrite the conquest the Sudan and the consolidation of the colonial state. The support provided by the Egyptian treasury was possible due to the fictitious notion that the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was a joint trusteeship over the Sudan, as noted in numerous studies of British colonialism in Sudan.¹³⁷ P.M Holt and M.W Daly have argued that this placed the colonial administrators in Sudan in a privileged position, relative to most other colonial governments, in that they could minimise the tax burden on the population and reduce the potential of popular resentment against the new regime.¹³⁸ However, the immense size of the territory that came under British control, and the diversity in terms of both the geography and in the ethnic make-up of the Sudan made the colonial venture a very expensive exercise. In addition, the financial subsidies provided by the Egyptian treasury were a year-by-year proposition and the Sudanese officials understood that such financial assistance was a temporary measure. Thus, there was a clear understanding, in both Khartoum and Cairo that the Sudanese population would have to at some stage be forced to pay for the upkeep of the colonial state. The development of the Gezira Cotton Scheme and other forms of

¹³⁷ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p. 125 on this point also see M. W Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1898-1934*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 194-201.

¹³⁸ P.M Holt and M.W Daly, *A History of the Sudan: from the coming of Islam to the present day*, London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1988, p. 121.

surplus extraction from the Sudanese peasantry were also comparable with practices in other colonies. Economic and human resource shortages determined the structure of the colonial state in Sudan in much the same way as elsewhere in Africa. It is for these reasons that the economy of colonial Sudan, despite what seems like a divergence from the general pattern, can still be explained within a discussion of the economics of colonialism in Africa.

The reality of African trade was far more complex than what had been commonly depicted by nineteenth century European representations of Africa. Whether it was Livingstone or Belgium's King Leopold II, Europeans tended to portray Africa as an isolated continent in need of commerce and legitimate trade. Historians were well aware, then and now, that Africa's trade was both geographically and historically extensive. Trade goods had for centuries crossed the Sahara from West to North Africa and across to the Levant, and from the Levant those goods were transported to European and Asian markets.¹³⁹ Goods returned to African pre-colonial states via the same routes. Arab, Persian and Indian traders were also deeply involved in accessing East African goods and markets in the centuries prior to the Portuguese arrival in the fifteenth century. In one of the best studies of its kind, Eric Wolf argues that the diversity and connectedness of the pre-colonial non-European world was erased by colonial historiography and that, in fact,

Africa south of the Sahara was not the isolated, backward area of European imagination, but an integral part of a web of relations that connected forest

¹³⁹ There is a copious literature which explores the historical depth and the geographical extent of trade from Africa across the Sahara. Ralph Austen, *African Economic History*, London: Zed Press, 1987 is a comprehensive guide to the extensive trade links that existed between African pre-colonial states through the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Numerous studies of African history have emphasised the myriad of trade routes that traversed the Sahara and extended from the East Coast into the African hinterland.

cultivators and miners with savanna and desert traders and with the merchants and rulers of the North African settled belt.¹⁴⁰

By the late nineteenth century, global trading patterns had been reorganised by the major colonial powers. In particular, Victorian Britain with its vast imperial possessions, industrial output and unrivalled sea power played a large part in shaping the international economic order of the late nineteenth century. African trade relations with the East came under increasing pressure from the late eighteenth century as India, China, and Oman were unable to withstand British expansion into the Indian Ocean. Likewise, British and French trade treaties with the Ottoman Sultan and the Egyptian Khedive during the nineteenth century placed more and more of the trade of North Africa and the Levant in the hands of European merchants. West African trade activity centred on the trans-Atlantic slave trade until the British Navy drastically reduced the shipment of slaves in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Regardless of whether A.G. Hopkins¹⁴¹ or his critics¹⁴² are correct in their conclusions regarding the end of the slave trade for West Africa, there is little disagreement that West African economies had been integrated into the European dominated international trading system by the nineteenth century.

¹⁴⁰ Eric. R Wolf, *Europe and the Peoples Without History*, p. 40.

¹⁴¹ A.G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, London: Longman, 1973 argues that the end of the slave trade led to a crisis in the main slave-exporting states in West Africa. This crisis weakened them and made European conquest less arduous.

¹⁴² Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A history of slavery in Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, presents a case that with the end of the slave trade African states rapidly adapted and moved into the production and export of palm oil and other cash-crops in demand by European merchants. The shift from the slave trade to legitimate trade occurred relatively seamlessly according to Martin Lynn, "The West African palm oil trade in the nineteenth century and the 'crisis of adaptation'", in Robin Law, (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 57-78.

The impact of colonialism on African economic development has been one of the most vigorously debated topics in political and economic studies. There exists a continuum of views with Walter Rodney, Samir Amin and Bill Warren occupying one end with their belief that colonialism forced Africa to become a provider of cheap raw materials and exploited labour for European industry; thus placing Africa in a dependent and subservient position in the world economy. More importantly, they argue, the colonial state acted as an agent of metropole capitalism. At the other end of the continuum are D.K Fieldhouse¹⁴³ and co-authors Peter Duigan and L.H Gann¹⁴⁴ who have presented colonialism as a promoter of African development and largely responsible for bequeathing the first generation independence governments with a positive economic environment as a solid foundation on which to build post-colonial African states. For Fieldhouse, and Duigan and Gann, the colonial state was independent from class interests and acted as an agent of development and progress. Berman and Lonsdale have argued the African colonial states were neither agents of metropole capitalism nor benign agents of African progress.¹⁴⁵ While undoubtedly, the African colonial state was tied to metropole interests, including the interests of metropole capital, Berman and Lonsdale point out that,

There are thus definite limits on the degree to which the state can act as the direct agent of capitalist accumulation before its authority and the wider social order are threatened by the struggle of dominated classes.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ D. K Fieldhouse, *The West and the Third World: trade, colonialism, dependence and development*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.

¹⁴⁴ Peter Duigan and L.H Gann, "Economic Achievements of the Colonizers: An Assessment," in Peter Duigan and L.H Gann, eds., *Colonialism in Africa: 1870-1969*, Volume 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, pp. 673-696.

¹⁴⁵ Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, pp. 101-103.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 103.

Nonetheless, capitalism was a driving force behind the restructuring of labour and land rights during the colonial period even if the colonial state was not an agent of metropole capital. The epistemic framework of colonial administrators was deeply embedded by notions of capitalism. The senior colonial administrators and the colonial “man on the spot” had been nurtured to think of capitalism as the natural form that civilized societies should take. And since the colonial mission was formulated on the notion of “civilizing” the natives the spread of capitalism was viewed as a natural corollary of colonialism. Victoria Bernal, in her analysis of the Gezira Scheme in Sudan, has argued that this project, the largest agricultural project in the world at the time of its launch, should not only be viewed in terms of the economic implications but as a political and cultural edifice and that, ‘[T]he case of the Gezira Scheme suggests that development projects are not solely nor even primarily economic in nature, but disciplinary institutions that establish authority, encode moralities, and order social relations...’¹⁴⁷ Bernal adds further that:

Recognizing the agricultural project as a disciplinary institution reveals the role of the Gezira Scheme in inscribing colonial social relations, most particularly relations between rulers and ruled. In this sense, the Gezira Scheme formed part of the larger colonial effort to establish a political order and constitute relations of authority.¹⁴⁸

Different methods of taxation introduced by the colonial state also had a double impact. The major financial issue for colonial administrators was that of acquiring sufficient revenue to ensure the reproduction of the colonial state. As noted earlier,

¹⁴⁷ Victoria Bernal, “Colonial Moral Economy and the Discipline of Development: The Gezira Scheme and “Modern” Sudan,” *Cultural Anthropology* Vol 12, No.4, 1997, pp. 449.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 448.

the colonial enterprise was self-financing with metropolitan governments, on the whole, unwilling, or unable, to finance colonialism in Africa and in most cases:

So long as the peasant economy produced enough revenue to support the colonial state, there was insufficient incentive to risk public order by catering to the interests of capital, which ultimately had little leverage over colonial officialdom.¹⁴⁹

Only a few states provided sufficient revenues at the time of conquest for the immediate expansion of the colonial state. The Sudan was one of these states. As mentioned, this was not due to the availability of any economic riches but as a result of the ability of British officials to appropriate Egyptian financial resources for use in the Sudan. But just as with almost every other African case, the Anglo-Egyptian administration immediately went to work to ensure that the Sudan would become self-reliant as soon as it could. The economic options available to the first generation of colonial authorities were limited. European capital was uninterested in investing in Africa and very few colonies produced export crops or other goods that could be taxed for revenues.¹⁵⁰ The only option was to tax the peasantry and in doing so force African labour into the monetized economy as a way of stimulating the expansion of more financially lucrative activities such as cash-crop production, mining (when this was an option), lumbering and the production of other raw materials for European industrial and consumer markets. In the Sudanese case, Jay O'Brien provides a succinct summation of the policies that were enacted by the colonial state to ensure the balance between control/order and the financial requirements for the reproduction and expansion of the colonial state as:

¹⁴⁹ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p. 119.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 135-137.

The policies implemented to stimulate the appropriate type of labor supply are familiar from other parts of the continent in the colonial era: taxation in cash, undermining of craft production (particularly textiles), and aggressive marketing of a few key consumption goods of broad appeal (tea, coffee, sugar, manufactured cloth). These and other policies engendered cash needs which could not be met within existing productive systems without basic alterations, yet did not necessitate full integration into labor markets for their fulfilment.¹⁵¹

The economic imperative aside, the hut or poll tax which was enforced throughout the continent was a way of forcing African labour to accept the Europeanised structure of domination. As an illustration of this point, Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale describe the gradual extension of the British conquest of Kenya as a process whereby the African population were forced into submission.¹⁵² However, for Berman and Lonsdale the process of subjugation was only complete when Africans were given, ‘...the means to put the hut tax...’ which they argue was ‘...at once the sacrament of submission, an outward and visible sign that the [African population] had definitely accepted Government control...’¹⁵³ Economic necessity and ideology converged to impel Africans to not only fund their own domination but also to accept that their labour was a commodity controlled by the colonial state.

The compulsion of work had long been a central tenet of the “civilizing mission” and was employed at an earlier era as a justification for slavery. Even as late as the 1850s, that great British libertarian J.S Mill would argue that slavery was a more preferable

¹⁵¹ Jay O’Brien, “Toward a Reconstitution of Ethnicity: Capitalist Expansion and Cultural Dynamics in Sudan,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 88, No.4, 1986, p. 900.

¹⁵² Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, pp85-87 and pp. 110-115.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 87.

condition for the “natives” than their accustomed state of nature because it provided previously indolent peoples with the impetus to work and through labour enter the ranks of those that were developing races.¹⁵⁴ Even if one takes a more sympathetic view of Mill’s attitude to the relations between Europeans and non-Europeans it is apparent that he condones colonialism and accepts the notion of the civilizing mission and European paternalism. Without European tutelage, Mill clearly believed there was no way that primitive people would progress. Mill was not alone in this matter as it was widely accepted amongst Europeans that labour, as understood from a European viewpoint, was an intrinsic activity by which Africans could be redeemed. The only contention regarding this point revolved around different ideas about the most effective method to influence the native to work. Advocates for slavery had always argued that compulsion was the only logic Africans understood. Abolitionists favoured other means.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, by the time that Africa found itself in European hands, the belief that it was a duty within the paternal spirit of colonialism to force the natives to work was indisputable. Berman and Lonsdale cite Barnett who convincingly articulates the colonial logic pertaining to labour:

There are three assumptions in this strand of thought: first, native labour is by its nature recalcitrant, and therefore requires authoritarian treatment; second,

¹⁵⁴ In J.S Mill, *Considerations of Representative Government*, Bibliobazaar, 2007 and in *The Principles of Political Economy*, Mill argues for the use of slavery only in extreme cases whereby the most primitive people require harsh treatment to uplift them from their state of nature. J.S Mill’s views on race, slavery and colonialism are the subject of much debate. Goldberg for example argues that while Mill opposed Carlyle’s overt racism he still believed in coercive paternalism and colonialism, see David Theo Goldberg, “Liberalism’s Limits: Carlyle and Mill on the “Negro Question” in Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott (eds.), *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002, Chapter 10, pp. 195-204, also for an alternative view see Mark Tunick, “Tolerant Imperialism: John Stuart Mill’s Defence of British Rule in India” *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 68, 2006, pp. 586-611.

¹⁵⁵ Philip Curtin provides a comprehensively researched and persuasively argued study of the discourses between abolitionists and advocates of slavery with many references to the work ethic as an essential feature of African salvation, see Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions, 1780-1850*, Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press 1973.

native labour lacks initiative, and therefore requires very detailed directives and instructions; and third, native labour can, within certain limits, be improved, and the ‘civilizing’ function of authoritarian methods in some way legitimizes those methods.¹⁵⁶

Despite the oppressiveness of labour conditions enforced by the colonial state the introduction of wage labour created a problem which the African colonial state was unable to reconcile; capitalist wage relations as a force for change was in conflict with the colonial state’s imperative for social stability and social order embodied in the system of indirect rule.

Indirect rule was a system designed to stabilise African societies and prevent political and economic change which colonial authorities believed would lead to social disorder. The introduction of a monetized economy and the expansion of capitalism produced the conditions which undermined the “tribal” system as it was conceived by the colonizers. Migratory workers, increased urbanization and the emergence of an African bourgeoisie further complicated the social structure of African colonies and effectively ruined the illusion of a neat “tribal” or ethnic system of social control invented by the colonial authorities. The introduction of capitalism and the control of labour by the African colonial state resulted in the diverse processes of ethnic formation as argued by Jay O’Brien in his study of labour and ethnicity in colonial Sudan.¹⁵⁷ O’Brien, in a follow up article, suggested that his findings had wider application in illustrating the universal processes of ethnic formation which he argued could be characterised as a modern phenomenon ‘constituted by the same world-

¹⁵⁶ Barnett cited in Berman and Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, p. 106.

¹⁵⁷ Jay O’Brien, “The Formation of the Agricultural Labour Force in Sudan,” *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol.10 No.26, 1983, pp. 15-34.

historical process that has produced modern capitalism, wage labour and class structures.’¹⁵⁸ O’Brien’s conclusions are reflected in other studies of racism by, W. E. B Du Bois¹⁵⁹, Immanuel Wallerstein and Etienne Balibar¹⁶⁰ and of ethnic identities by Edwin Wilmsen.¹⁶¹

The African colonial state was caught between the imperative of raising revenues and accommodating metropole capital on the one hand, and in ensuring the coherence of the political structures to which it was ideologically wed. As a result, numerous contradictions existed which make defining the African colonial state especially problematic because, as Berman and Lonsdale explain,

...the character and functioning of the colonial state was defined by the specific contradictory social forces over which it presided, and these were derived in turn from the complex articulation of capitalism and the indigenous modes of production in African societies.¹⁶²

The contradictions located in the rationale and exigencies of the African colonial state partly resulted from the fact that the colonial state, an essentially alien political order,

¹⁵⁸ Jay O’Brien “Toward a Reconstitution of Ethnicity”, p. 903.

¹⁵⁹ W.E.B Du Bois in his earliest work was connecting capitalism and the role of racism as a form of labour control. His PhD titled *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870* (1896) placed the abolitionist question in the context of changing economic conditions. In his later work Du Bois wrote of the connection between capitalism, colonialism and racism. The race question in the US, as far as Du Bois was concerned, was integrally linked to class and the control of labour, but his later writings on colonialism argued that European colonial expansion (and the racism that accompanied it) was a result of the expansion of capitalism and the evolution of different social relations in Europe between the classes. The end of the feudal system demanded an alternative world view to legitimate class exploitation and a means by which European states could reduce domestic social unrest, see *The Oxford W.E.B. Du Bois reader*, Eric J. Sundquist (ed.), New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

¹⁶⁰ Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, London: Verso, 1995,

¹⁶¹ Edwin N. Wilmsen, “Introduction: Premises of Power in Ethnic Politics” in Edwin N. Wilmsen, Patrick McAllister, (eds.), *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 7-12.

¹⁶² Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, p. 103.

was imposed on African societies by force. This tension between capitalism and social order led to the division of colonial Africa into concentrated pockets where capitalism was the springboard for the development of modern state institutions and infrastructure and the extension of capitalist relations amongst the African population, and large areas of neglected areas where the population were governed by tribal authorities and where the colonial state was almost completely non-existent.

The integration of Africa into the capitalist world system resulted in profound change to the social systems and structures of African societies. Colonialism was also responsible for altering the socio-economic relations across Africa. However, as O'Brien, and Berman and Lonsdale and others have shown, it was an uneven and fragmentary impact which only became fully apparent in the aftermath of colonialism.

2.7 Decolonizing Africa and the Legacies of the Colonial State

The colonial state was largely autonomous from both external and internal accountability. The most unaccountable of all the parts of the colonial system was probably, the so-called “man on the spot” who was responsible for the governance of immense regions of rural Africa. Almost equally unaccountable were the regional and sub-regional administrators who faced few restrictions on their actions. Overall, the African colonial state was able to direct its fortunes with little, if any oversight. Externally, the international system was dominated in the pre-World War Two period by the colonial powers and placed very few demands on colonial government. The African colonial state could also count on largely cooperative home governments whose interests in the inter-war years were principally focused on national and European politics. With external pressures to conform to the “civilizing mission” largely non-existent the colonial state was also able to ignore indigenous agitation for

reform because as Crawford Young explains, ‘...the completeness of its domination freed the state from responsiveness to its subjects to a remarkable degree...’¹⁶³

The cracks in the colonial edifice began to appear before World War Two. In the 1930s, the international system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to erode. The strong grip that the Europeans had on the reigns of the international system started to slip away in the inter-war years as the emergence of alternative world powers, the US and Soviet Union, while extraneous to the main current of international events in this period, began to advocate for colonial liberation.¹⁶⁴ Post-colonial states, other than the white settler commonwealth states of South Africa, Canada and Australia, emerged when Egypt and Iraq gained their independence. So, while the move towards African independence was as, Crawford Young argues, barely noticeable in the period between the world wars, anti-colonial nationalism had begun to take shape and would rapidly gain impetus during World War Two.¹⁶⁵ Pan-African inter-Atlantic collaboration also assisted in shaping African nationalist movements in the inter-war years.¹⁶⁶

In the post War-era, the colonial state entered a new period in which the African colonial state faced challenges from within and without. With the end of World War Two, the critical gaze of the new international order as embodied by the United Nations and pressure from the African and metropolitan masses alike forced the

¹⁶³ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p. 159.

¹⁶⁴ Raymond F. Betts, *Decolonization*, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 8-19.

¹⁶⁵ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Historical Perspective*, p.163.

¹⁶⁶ Robert Young, *Postcolonialism*, pp. 217-293 for a comprehensive study of the relationship between Afro-American and Caribbean advocates for African liberation and the African liberatory struggles across the continent. Five Pan-African meetings were held between 1900 and 1945 bringing together the leaders of the African diaspora and the emergent African nationalist elite. In 1945 many of the African delegates at the Fifth pan-African meeting held in Manchester would become the first generation of independence leaders.

colonial state to act in accordance with the “civilizing” mission it had long promised to deliver. World War Two irrevocably changed the international perception towards colonialism. During the war the illusion of European superiority was destroyed by Japanese victories over British and French forces in East Asia provided evidence that the era of the military invincibility of the colonial powers had passed. The horrific atrocities committed by the Nazis provided more than sufficient evidence that Europeans were as savage, if not more so, as the people they ruled. Notions of a European mission to “civilise” proved impossible to sustain in light of these events.

Formal colonial control of Africa vanished as rapidly as it had appeared, for the most part, within a century of the European “scramble” of the 1880s.¹⁶⁷ The “scramble” by European colonizers to exit Africa was as haphazard and as hasty as the colonial expansion had proved to be, with very little preparation for independence extended to Africans before the flags of the colonial rulers were lowered and replaced with those of the newly independent states of Africa. The short and haphazard transition to independence was the result of the immense speed by which events overtook colonial rulers and politicians in the metropolises. At the onset of World War Two, there was nothing in the idiom of colonialism in Africa to suggest that the colonial powers saw an end to their control of the continent anytime in the near future. Colonial and metropolitan governments continued to estimate the time of African independence in centuries rather than years.

Alan Cousins makes the point that as far as the British went,

¹⁶⁷ In Sudan, the period of colonial rule was even shorter and Darfur’s shorter again. In fact, Darfur’s experience of colonial rule was one of the briefest anywhere on the continent lasting from 1917 until 1956.

...most people of influence in the Colonial Office, in the government more widely, and in the colonies assumed the continuance of colonial rule for a very long time: and a number of policy makers talked of permanence until quite late in the day.¹⁶⁸

This is evidenced by the view put forward in 1947 by a reflective Lord Hailey who stated that despite the increasing international opposition to colonialism and the “tidal-wave” that brought independence to India, Burma, and the Dutch East Indies, ‘...the conditions in British East Africa are not likely to produce anything so dramatic in the near future...’¹⁶⁹ The African deluge, of course, was to come to pass in a decade of these comments being made.

In the Sudanese case, movement towards self-government seems to have occurred as a part of the wider Arab nationalist project which had made considerable gains by the end of World War Two. Despite the pan-Arab rhetoric, Sudanese decolonization resembled the process in the sub-Saharan African context due to the delays and the contradictions evident in the policies of the colonial state and the metropole towards Sudanese independence. Just as the structure of the Sudanese colonial state bore a resemblance to others assembled elsewhere on the continent the demise of the colonial state in Sudan underwent a similar process of power transferral to nationalist leaders “groomed” by colonial administrators to continue the legacy of the African colonial state. Peter Woodward argues that the transition in Sudan from colonial rule to independence ‘...showed the legacy of imperialism as well as the portents for the future.’¹⁷⁰ The transferral of power in Sudan barely disturbed the structures of

¹⁶⁸ Alan Cousins, “Governing Africa”, p. 141.

¹⁶⁹ Lord Hailey, “Native Administration in Africa,” *International Affairs*, Vol. 23, No.3, 1947, p. 340.

¹⁷⁰ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 87.

colonial rule. In Sudan and in the vast majority of cases of African independence, as Naomi Chazan explains, '[T]he formal agencies transferred to African hands were thus alien in derivation, functionally conceived, bureaucratically designed, authoritarian in nature and primarily concerned with issues of domination rather than legitimacy.'¹⁷¹

The devolution of power from the colonial administrations to the first generation of African leaders was greeted with immense joy by Africans who believed that decolonization would lead to the fulfilment of the promise of late colonialism. The leaders of the newly independent African states held a mandate to deliver on the twin promises of political freedom and economic development. However, the structure of the African colonial state was not designed for such a purpose.

2.8 Conclusion: The African Colonial State in Retrospect

The question that was raised at the beginning of this chapter related to the different positions articulated regarding the impact of colonialism on Africa. Bayart claims that the *long duree* of African history largely overcame the force of colonial change. In contrast, Mamdani's perspective hinges on the immense impact of colonialism on Africa. Mamdani's basic proposition is that the colonial period was a departure point in the history of Africa was taken as an axiom on which this chapter was based. Returning to the question of the degree of change in Africa elicited by colonialism provides an opportunity to make some concluding remarks on the African colonial state.

¹⁷¹ Naomi Chazan, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, p. 41.

One criticism of Mamdani's *Citizen and Subject*, which seems to originate mainly from historians, is that the focus on "decentralized despotism" or indirect rule, is not an innovation in African studies. This is a criticism Bill Freund highlights and then subsequently dismisses because Mamdani's theoretical focus is to engage the problems of the present from a historical perspective, something that historians 'rarely, apply their wisdom' to accomplish.¹⁷² A more substantive criticism of Mamdani's thesis argues that his emphasis on colonial transformation is overstated in his effort to tie colonial changes to the post-colonial authoritarianism evident across the African continent. Mamdani is not necessarily denying an African agency by suggesting that colonial rule forged a particular structural foundation for African elites and subalterns alike to contend with in the post-colonial era. Arguing, as Mamdani does that colonial rule was responsible for constructing African ethnic groups, inventing African juridical traditionalism, enforcing forms of local and national authoritarianism, and consolidating the power of the state through local elites, is not a form of structural determinism. In particular, Mamdani illustrates the existence of the bifurcated colonial state of which the Sudanese state is a very clear case in point. What Mamdani's analysis provides is an understanding of the historical structures that the inheritors of post-colonial African states faced on assuming power. Mamdani asserts that,

...no nationalist government was content to reproduce the colonial legacy uncritically. Each sought to reform the bifurcated state...But in doing so each

¹⁷² Bill Freund, "Democracy and Colonial Heritage in Africa: Revisiting Mamdani's *Citizen and Subject*," *Left History*, Vol. 7. No.1, pp. 101-102.

reproduced a part of that legacy, thereby creating its own variety of despotism.¹⁷³

Rather than speak of colonial legacies as the direct causes of the post-colonial crisis that is evident in contemporary Africa it is more fruitful to focus on the structural template that the African colonial state bequeathed to the first generation of independence leaders. In doing so, a tendency to view all of Africa's problems through the optic of colonialism is avoided. Despite, the significance of colonialism, the colonial period in itself only tells us a small part about Africa's recent politics. Colonialism resulted in certain fault lines appearing, contradictions between state control of labour and economic expansion, tensions between traditional elites and modernising elites, further tensions between the state and civil society and a paradoxical situation whereby Africa was increasingly integrated and peripheralised within the boundaries of the post World War Two international system. It was in the relationships engendered by the international system that each of these factors came to life as a result of the way that Africa's independence leaders manoeuvred their newly independent countries with the resources available to them through the challenges posed by the development paradigm, intense international rivalries, economic boom and bust and later through the debt crisis, the imposition and adoption of neo-liberalism, and the end of the Cold War. The story of the process of decay and disintegration of the post-colonial African state will be presented not as the inevitable consequence of colonialism but as a result of the convergence of Africa's structural inheritance from colonialism and the opportunities and challenges of international politics in the second half of the twentieth century. As a way of indicating how the next chapter places colonialism within the context of more recent politics, this chapter

¹⁷³ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 8.

ends with Karl Marx's often quoted equation of the relationship between structure and agency:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.¹⁷⁴

In the next chapter the crisis of the African post-colonial state will be explained as a consequence of the convergence of the challenges of the post World War Two international system and the contradictions of the African colonial state.

¹⁷⁴ Eugene Kamenka, ed., *The Portable Karl Marx*, New York: Penguin Books, from "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon", p. 288.

Chapter Three -

The Crisis and Collapse of the African Post-Colonial State

3.1 Introduction

The conflict in Darfur is set within the context, and the confines, of the collapse of the Sudanese state. The failure of the Sudanese state resembles many of the features evident in the precipitous decline of the African state and the crisis of African politics that has become so commonplace in more recent times. Such has been the extent of the crisis that even the most pessimistic commentators could not have predicted the degree of the collapse of African states, nor the decline of economic performance experienced by the majority of Africa from the 1980s onwards. Sudan's crisis was particularly acute, especially in the western province where in the 1980s the state had abrogated almost all responsibility for essential social services, security, provision of disaster relief, and economic development. In 1990, Darfur was readily described as Sudan's "wild west" due to the lawlessness and general disarray perceived to have overcome the region.¹⁷⁵ But in no way has the situation in Sudan been atypical in Africa, as this chapter will proceed to explain. The African crisis provides an important context for understanding the resurgence of identity conflict and civil disorder in Africa, of which the conflict in Darfur is a case.

The last decade of colonialism witnessed a change from the earlier mode of "indirect" colonialism to a nascent developmental model, which was adopted in an effort to revitalize a failing colonial project.¹⁷⁶ The push for decolonization was too powerful

¹⁷⁵ *Africa Confidential*, "Sudan: The Wild West", p. 6.

¹⁷⁶ Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge, University Press, 1996.

to be forestalled by the belated effort to transform the relationship between the colonial state and the African populace. The common view regarding colonial reform was that it was 'too little, too late' and despite the best efforts of the colonial powers to prevent decolonization in Africa, a number of African states were celebrating their independence by the late 1950s. Euphoria greeted the nationalist leaders as they took over the reigns of power from colonial governments in those heady days of the 1950s and 1960s. However, the hope and expectation of the independence period soured as African states failed to live up to the promise of independence and hope transformed into despair as crisis beset the continent in the dark days of the 1980s. Even the short-lived period of optimism and hope for an African renewal that accompanied South African independence and the wave of democratization in the early 1990s rapidly dissipated amidst the genocide in Rwanda, and the spiralling violence that enveloped Sierra Leone and Liberia. In the 1990s, neo-liberal policies that promised to alleviate Africa's huge debt burdens and provide the basis for an economic recovery were widely believed to have exacerbated political, social and even the economic problems they were designed to resolve. At the turn of the millennium the African crisis of the 1980s was broadly deemed to have become a disaster. The immensity of the African crisis is neatly summarized by Pierre Englebert who argues that,

...the crisis in post-colonial Africa is not just at the levels of economy, state-formation, politics of transitions to democratic rule and the penury of structural adjustment and liberalization etc; but above all, it is a deepening crisis of identities, citizenship and the rights that accompanies it. Several Africa states are confronted with the challenges of structural weakness, failure and in some instances total collapse, because their very foundations were not

rooted on internal legitimacy, but rather from externally driven processes of colonial domination and post-colonial elite prebendalism and predation.¹⁷⁷

As Englebert contends, the African crisis goes far beyond the economic, institutional and social dimensions to the very core of what defines identities in post-colonial Africa. The post-colonial African states were direct descendants of the colonial states they followed and for this reason the roots of the crisis in Africa today are located in the structure and relations constituted by the colonial state. There is a direct relationship between the colonial legacies outlined in the previous chapter and the disintegration of state politics in Africa in the fifty years following the triumph of independence. But there is more to the story than just the colonial history of Africa. There is also a post-colonial history of state failure and crisis in Africa that went far beyond what even the most pessimistic commentators in the 1950s could have anticipated.

3.2 Transferral and Transition: African Anti-Colonial Nationalism and Independence

The end of colonial period was anticipated, across much of Africa, to be the necessary moment for transformation of the continent. Colonialism was an oppressive system that denied African people the rights enshrined in the western humanist tradition. It was this contradiction between western philosophy and western behaviour in the European dominated non-western parts of the world that led to the downfall of colonialism. Colonialism was premised as much on the illusion of western superiority embodied in the civilizing mission as it was secured by military strength. The colonial system struggled to

¹⁷⁷ Dauda Abubakar, "Rethinking State Failure: Identity, Citizenship and the Crisis of the African State," *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Annual Convention*, Chicago, 2008, pp. 14-15.
http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/7/8/9/8/pages178982/p178982-1.php

renew itself once the superiority of the west was shown to be fictitious. Michael Adas argues that the doctrine of western superiority faced its first real challenge after World War One as the colonized openly questioned whether those responsible for the carnage at Ypres, the Somme, or on the horrific battlefields of the Eastern Front were as civilized as colonial doctrine had intimated.¹⁷⁸ The events of the Second World War finally shattered the illusion of western superiority for ever, as the colonized peoples of Asia and Africa emboldened by the Japanese victories over the French and British and horrified by the barbarity of the Nazi's renewed their struggles for liberation from western colonial domination.¹⁷⁹

A number of theorists have argued that the ideology that provoked the horrific events that overtook Europe in the 1930s and 1940s were grounded in the same philosophy of racialism which impelled Europe's colonial venture.¹⁸⁰ Such an understanding of history was not lost on Africans as they challenged European claims to civilizational superiority as being a "divine right" to rule. The shift that occurred in the ideology of domination began, as noted above, in the aftermath of the Great War. The claim to superior cultural values was unveiled to be as much of a myth as the notions that the Great War would be over before Christmas. But it took a much darker moment in world history to lay bare the inherent contradictions of the doctrine of the civilizing mission. Lying dead in the ruins of the second European catastrophe in thirty years was the ideology of the civilising mission and the claims of European superiority. The moment of colonialism was drawing to an end.

¹⁷⁸ Michael Adas, "Contested Hegemony: the Great War and the Afro-Asian assault on the civilizing mission ideology" in Prasenjit Duara (ed.), *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 79.

¹⁷⁹ Frank Furedi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*, London: I.B Taurus and Co., 1994, p. 4.

¹⁸⁰ Mahmood Mamdani, "Making Sense of Political Violence in Postcolonial Africa," *Identity, Culture and Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2002, pp. 1-24, Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin Books, 1998.

With the end of World War Two came an organized and forceful African challenge to European superiority, accompanied by the forceful denunciations of imperialism. In this period, radical anti-colonial movements phrased their opposition to European rule using the idioms supplied by the growing communist influences in the colonies. This was not a uniquely African phenomenon by any means, as the rhetoric of the anti-imperialists from Asian and the Middle Eastern nationalists were imbued with Marxist-Leninist ideals in the 1930s and 1940s. In the immediate post World War Two period they would be joined by African calls for independence, which were heard from Dar es Salaam to Dakar, from Kinshasa to Khartoum.¹⁸¹ The extensive studies of the general state of agitation and anti-colonial sentiment in the African colonies make it difficult to disagree with Frank Furedi when he argues that:

The radical moment, the unparalleled radicalization of Third World societies, can be seen to express the fusion of mass grievances with nationalist politics. But it was also more than that, for this was a unique period in the development of Third World societies. The maturation of nationalist aspiration, the emergence of a highly articulate social critique of colonialism and class radicalization interacted to fashion a new and distinct political climate.¹⁸²

Throughout Africa in the 1930s and 1940s trade unions, labour organizations, squatters and tenants associations, and student groups mobilized to secure improved conditions from colonial governments. The communist element increasingly perceptible to colonial governments eventually proved the catalyst for a less

¹⁸¹ Frank Furedi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*, pp. 36-37.

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 50.

combative colonial response to nationalist movements, at least in cases where settler interests were not involved.¹⁸³

The post World War two wave of anti-colonialism in Africa differed from earlier reactions to European conquest and foreign domination. According to an early theorist of African nationalism, a nationalist movement is 'any organization or group that explicitly asserts the rights, claims and aspirations of a given African society (from the level of the language-group to that of "pan-Africa") in opposition to European authority, whatever its institutional form and objectives.'¹⁸⁴ From this point of view all protest and rebellion in the colonies could be deemed anti-colonial. In the fervour of anti-colonial nationalism many of the earlier waves of protest and rebellion were reclassified along the lines of the above definition as national movements.¹⁸⁵ One example of this occurring is found in examining the reinterpretation of the Mahdiyya in Sudan.¹⁸⁶ African nationalism became an optic in which Africa's future and past became viewed. But in many ways, it is still misleading to see pre-World War Two movements against colonial rule as being nationalist.

Anti-colonial struggles and nascent forms of pan-African and African nationalist movements did exist prior to the Second World War, but without materializing into

¹⁸³ William Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, "Empire Preserv'd: How the Americans put anti-communism before anti-imperialism," in Prasenjit Duara, (ed.), *Decolonization: Perspectives from Then and Now*, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 155, authors argue that as a result of US influence British decolonization became focused on anti-communism, in cases where communism was a serious threat, British decolonization was profoundly shaped by the anti-communist struggle. Frank Furedi makes a similar point.

¹⁸⁴ Hodgkin 1956, p. 23, quoted in M. Crawford Young, "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa: A Retrospective", *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, Vol. 26, Cahier 103, 1986, p. 425.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 431, In terms of identifying nationalism in Africa, Crawford Young argues 'Such epochal movements and leaders as the Mahdiyya in Sudan, Mohammed Abdallah Hasan in Somalia, Maji-Maji in Tanzania, Abd el-Kader in Algeria all assumed a new significance...' that is a significance as harbingers of later anti-colonial nationalism.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 433.

the nationalist movements that would overturn the colonial system as David Welsh explains:

‘...no single African party that gained power on independence was established before 1945- with, ironically, the one important exception of South Africa’s African National Congress, formed in 1912.’¹⁸⁷

The most notable difference between the movements that were formed after the Second World War from earlier organisations, was the emergence of an African elite that was western educated and armed with the philosophical tools to oppose colonialism by appealing to the very same political and human rights that had been enshrined in western constitutions, and which from 1946 became universalized in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter. The world had changed in the wake of World War Two, and also new African leaders began to take advantage of these changes.

The form and philosophy of African nationalism in the post Second World War period came as a shock to colonial governments because Europeans largely still held on to a view that African were too primitive to have formed national identities.¹⁸⁸ British colonial officials had formed the view that the anti-colonial agitation of the post-War period was, in Basil Davidson’s description, nothing more than ‘wretched subversion, a matter for the police.’¹⁸⁹ Widespread denials of the existence of any such thing as African nationalism and an insistence that the police would resolve the problem were unable to prevent African nationalist movements from swelling in size

¹⁸⁷ David Welsh, “Ethnicity in sub-Saharan Africa,” *International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1996, p. 483.

¹⁸⁸ Frank Furedi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*.

¹⁸⁹ Basil Davidson, *The Black Man’s Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, New York: Three Rivers Press, 1992.

and intensifying their calls for independence. By the first years of the 1950s there was little that colonial powers could do to prevent the inevitable end of the colonial era. The only option open to colonial governments was to begin manipulating nationalist leaders to ensure a “smooth” transition from colonialism and independence in a way that would not endanger the economic and geo-strategic interests built up during a half century of colonialism, when political power fell to the Africans.

In particular, a fear of any radical change that might occur if independent African states fell to communist takeover was a decisive issue for Britain, France and Belgium as they reluctantly passed power into the hands of Africans. In both British and French Africa, the colonizers manipulated labour politics to ensure that communist and other “radical” elements were sidelined while “moderates” were cultivated to take power.¹⁹⁰ Colonial authorities understood that the most efficacious way of manipulating the move to independence was if Africans could be persuaded to restrict the radical elements themselves. The British were able to create such a situation in Ghana where ‘...by 1953 the trade union question in the Gold Coast had become a ‘political struggle between Mr. Nkrumah and the Communists,’ and Mr. Nkrumah was winning.’¹⁹¹

Frederick Cooper demonstrates very clearly in his analysis of the labour movement in the period of late colonialism that the supposed unity of African nationalists against foreign control was very fragile, if not already torn asunder prior to independence.¹⁹² By examining the labour movement in French West Africa in the 1950s, Cooper illustrates the degree of disunity which had emerged between different African

¹⁹⁰ Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 414-419 and p. 433.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 434.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, pp. 417-421.

interest groups. In the case of Guinea, there were visible tensions between the labour leaders who had been integrated into the Africanized colonial administrations and those that remained a part of the anti-colonial labour movement. Following his decision to join the government, Sékou Touré expected that the rest of the labour movement would remain loyal to him and accept the direction he imposed on the nationalist movement even as he began to adopt policies that reflected the interests of the colonial state and the small indigenous bourgeoisie.¹⁹³ Touré made his position towards the demands of the labour movement clear in February 1958 when he argued that strike action against an African government was inimical to African interests and that ‘...the trade union movement is obligated to reconvert itself...’ to be a part of the new African state.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, Kwame Nkrumah lectured mine-workers that the task of the unions in the new independent Ghana was to ‘...inculcate in our working people the love of labour and increased productivity.’¹⁹⁵ Under Touré and Nkrumah, for example, labour movements came under increasing pressure to put workers demands aside in the interest of the wider nationalist (and later national) interest. And while labour acquiesced during the heady days leading into independence the tensions evident in this period would become all too apparent once the euphoria of independence came to an end. Touré upon taking government immediately repressed active unions. In Senegal a similar repression of trade unions followed independence. In Sudan, it only took two years of independence for trade unions to be completely outlawed by the military regime of General Abboud. In these cases, there was continuity between colonial policies towards labour movements and those practised by the post-colonial African governments.

¹⁹³ Ibid, p. 417.

¹⁹⁴ Sékou Toure quoted in Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, p418.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 435.

Apologists of late colonialism and post-hoc defenders of British and French imperialism have described the events that led to African independence in terms which emphasise the submission of metropole interests to those of the emerging independent states. They further argue that the end of colonialism came after a period of preparation for independence and that the colonial states cooperated in the process of decolonization. In most cases the converse was true. The British reluctantly accepted the *fait accompli* of independence but only after manipulating and pressuring nationalist movements towards “acceptable” decolonization. In the process, divisions and disputes within the anti-colonialist movements were exploited to dilute demands for reform and ensure the security of British interests. The result, as one scholar of decolonization, has argued was, ‘...an invitation to civil conflict, if not civil war. This is what the recasting of anti-colonial nationalism was all about.’¹⁹⁶ As already noted, the internal disputes within the African labour movement was one arena of nationalist politics which the colonial governments manoeuvred and manipulated Africans for greatest advantage, but by no means was this the only one. In Sudan, the British worked towards securing advantages for sections of the Sudanese elite, especially for the leaders of the two major Islamic *tariqas*, with the aim of ensuring the separation of Sudan from Egypt once independence occurred.¹⁹⁷

What becomes clear from the preceding discussion is that nationalist struggles faced levels of intervention and resistance from the colonial regimes when they ventured into articulating independence strategies that were considered radical, whether communist in nature or not. Nationalist movements faced different internal and

¹⁹⁶ Frank Furedi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*, p. 263.

¹⁹⁷ Commonly held that Sudanese independence was the result of a bargain between Britain and the anti-Egyptian elements in Sudan, see Gabriel R. Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley*, Northeastern University Press, Illinois, 1992, for the British, Egyptian and Sudanese perspectives on this issue.

external pressures in their struggle for independence. Regardless of how they responded, the power of colonial governments and the influence of Cold War geopolitics left them only two alternatives. The first was to be guided by colonial interests. The second alternative was to seek a complete break from the colonial era. Some states were forced down the more extreme path, most notably Algeria. But the vast majority followed a more conservative path accommodating colonial interests and accepting the colonial state with its western heritage as the basis on which to build post-colonial futures.¹⁹⁸

The adaptability of the leaders of African nationalist movements to accept changes to accommodate colonial government pressure is an important component of understanding the transfer of power in Africa and the formation of Africa's post-colonial politics. The transfer of power also bore many of the hallmarks of a systematic transference of ideas and institutions established by colonialism to independence governments with little perceptible change. Arik Dirlik gives a compelling reason for the clear continuities that shaped the post-colonial state:

In spite of the revolt against capitalism, national liberation movements for the most part remained wedded to the developmentalism of Euro-American modernity. They also remained within the spatial webs of Eurocentricism in taking for granted the spatial arrangements of modernity, most prominently the idea of a Third World itself. The nation-form was taken for granted, with the consequence that the nation was rendered into the location for culture,

¹⁹⁸ Arik Dirlik, "Is there History after Eurocentricism: Globalism, postcolonialism and the disavowal of history?" p. 37.

ignoring the idea that a national culture could be realized only through the colonization of diverse local cultures.¹⁹⁹

Peter P. Ekeh explains that the African bourgeoisie were reliant on colonialism and the colonial state. Without their own traditional legitimacy this emergent class of western educated Africans,

...accepts the principles implicit in colonialism but rejects the foreign personnel that ruled Africa. It claimed to be competent enough to rule, but it has no traditional legitimacy. In order to *replace* the colonizers and rule its own people it has invented a number of interest-begotten theories to justify that rule...²⁰⁰

Ekeh's criticism of the "moral poverty" of African politics is based on his belief that the African independence movements were fashioned in the image of the colonial bourgeois administration. The failure of African elites to struggle against the political relations crafted by colonialism led to an appropriation of the state, so that for Ekeh,

The 'fight' for independence was thus a struggle for power between the two competing bourgeois classes involved in the colonization of Africa...what was involved was not the issue of the difference of ideas but rather than issue of *which* bourgeois class should rule Africa.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1975, p. 100.

²⁰¹ Ibid, p102 (italics in original).

And in the words of Christopher Clapham this failure resulted in African states that were ‘essentially artificial’ and ‘external creations, derived from an imposed European colonialism.’²⁰² Thus,

The contemporary state in sub-Saharan Africa is not African. It descends from arbitrary colonial administrative units designed as instruments of domination, oppression and exploitation. No doubt after some 40 years of independence these states have been transformed, adopted, adapted, endogenised. Yet, their origin remains exogenous: European, not African, and set up against African societies rather than having evolved out of the relationship of groups and individuals in societies.²⁰³

So that like its predecessor, the post-colonial state was externally determined and the contradictions and conflicts inherent in the colonial state became the foundations on which post-colonial African politics were based.²⁰⁴

3.3 Nation-State-Building in Post-colonial Africa: Overcoming the Legacy of the Construction of the Colonial State

Ricardo Rene Laremont contends that the artificiality of the territorial boundaries of African states remains one of the most urgent legacies of the colonial era.²⁰⁵ This problem of political boundaries is also an issue at the forefront of Iuean Griffith’s explanation for the crisis of post-colonial African politics.²⁰⁶ Griffiths and Laremont agree that there are significant problems associated with the artificiality of the

²⁰² Christopher Clapham, “The Longue Duree of the African State,” p. 433.

²⁰³ Pierre Englebert, “The Contemporary African State”, p. 767.

²⁰⁴ Adebayo O. Olukoshi and Liisa Laasko (eds.), *Challenges to the Nation-State in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996, p. 33.

²⁰⁵ Ricardo René Larémont, “Borders, States and Nationalism,” in Ricardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism and the African State*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, p. 26.

²⁰⁶ Iuean LL. Griffiths, *The African Inheritance*, London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 84-98.

political boundaries that cut across the African continent. For both these scholars of the African situation, the incongruence of the political boundaries of modern Africa remains at the centre of the crisis that faces post-colonial African politics. Additionally, they recognise that many African states inherited fragmented and ethnicized societies which were only drawn together, as already noted, for a brief and tenuous unity in the struggle against the colonial system. The post-independence collapse of the unity of the African nationalist movements proved how illusory, or maybe more accurately, how fragile the nation-building project of the anti-colonial movements had been in the decade prior to the defeat of colonialism.²⁰⁷

The boundaries of the vast majority of the contemporary African states are artificial and that the political entities designed by colonialism drew together people who, as E.A. Walker suggests, ‘...speak different languages, eat different foods, often pursue different occupations to which they are committed by law or custom...Societies of this kind are not communities.’²⁰⁸ But this same assessment could have been made of the embryonic, and even of the mature European states of France, Spain, Italy or Germany. The seminal study by Eugene Weber of French nationalism demonstrated that the peasants of rural France only became French in the late nineteenth century. Weber argues that even after a century of a sustained centrally projected nationalist program most French peasants retained their provincial and sub-national identities.²⁰⁹ The idea that European nation-states were superimposed onto culturally and ethnically homogenous societies is as historically inaccurate as the notion that African nation-

²⁰⁷ Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House*, p.162 states that, ‘Once the moment of cohesion against the British was over...the symbolic register of national unity was faced with the reality of our differences.’

²⁰⁸ E.A. Walker, quoted in Georges Balandier, *The Sociology of Black Africa: Social Dynamics in Central Africa*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970, pp. 32-33.

²⁰⁹ Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.

states have actually come into existence. Numerous studies influenced by the ground-breaking work of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*²¹⁰ and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition*²¹¹ have explored the question of the how national identities have been constructed in the modern era, and shaped by historical contexts. What is clear from the constructivist position on nationalism, following from Eugene Weber, Anderson, and Hobsbawm and Ranger, is the realization that the national identities taken for granted today only came into existence after a sustained process of consolidating state control, which included the invention of a national history and the gradual and often violent conversion of multiple ethnic and cultural groups into a part of the dominant nation.

The fracturing of African states along ethnic or religious lines since independence has been a consequence of the failure of nation-building rather than the result of ethnic heterogeneity, per se. The breakdown of ethnically homogenous Somalia is the most salient reminder that ethnic homogeneity is not sufficient prerequisite to prevent political conflicts from materializing. In the case of Africa, most states, especially the largest states of Sudan, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo entered into the project of nation-building hampered by extremely weak state institutions and the dearth of financial and technical resources.²¹²

²¹⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London: Verso, 2006.

²¹¹ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, pp. 3-14, explores the emergence of nationalism in Europe in the context of nineteenth century European imperialism persuasively arguing that Western European nationalism was intrinsically shaped by the sense of superiority associated with the conquest, subjugation and domination of the coloured people of the world,

²¹² Ricardo Rene Laremont, "Borders, States and Nationalism" on page 14 argues that European state-builders were able to utilize centralized and effective 'financial system to underwrite operation of state institutions' that African states were unable to replicate. In the case of the Congo, the assassination of Patrice Lumumba only three months after Congo celebrated its independence was a further reason for the instability and violence that has been a characteristic of Congolese politics since.

The African nation-building project faced a number of other impediments which were largely absent from the historical development of the Western European nation-state, especially the legacy of colonial “divide and rule” policies. In their assessment of the legacy of colonialism on nationalism in Africa, Ali Mazrui and Michael Tidy have come to the conclusion that,

...British approaches to colonial rule, by being culturally relative and ethnically specific, helped to perpetuate and in some cases, create the kind of ethnic consciousness which could seriously militate against nation-building.²¹³

The colonial policy of demarcating tribes and allocating identities to specific social groups as a way of expediting efficient administration not only constructed and consolidated ethnic identities in a manner that exacerbated solidified inter-group boundaries in a historically novel manner but also led to the creation of a layer of sub-national rulers whose authority lay in colonially constructed and consolidated ethnic differences.²¹⁴ The tribal leaders of the colonial era added another complex legacy that the nationalist project had to contend with. The African nationalist movements were led by an emerging class of Western educated Africans who held aspirations to lead unified nations into the era of independence. Being educated in western perceptions of progress meant that they viewed ethnic differences and tribal loyalties as anachronistic and as ‘an unwanted intrusion...into the drive for modernity.’²¹⁵ Upon independence there was a struggle within a number of the newly formed

²¹³ Ali A. Mazrui and Michael Tidy, *Nationalism and New States in Africa*, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1984, p. 376.

²¹⁴ The layer of local African potentates on which the colonial state was reliant was a much thicker layer than often implied, for example Bruce Berman cites a huge number of African collaborators involved in the colonial administration of French West Africa where, ‘...French West Africa, for example, the *commandants de cercles* relied on no less than 47,000 village chiefs and 2,206 chefs de canton.’ See Bruce Berman, “Ethnicity, Patronage and the Politics of Uncivil Nationalism,” *African Affairs*, Vol.97, No. 388, 1998, p. 316.

²¹⁵ Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State*, p. 13.

African states for authority between the western educated urbanized nationalist leader's vision of a highly centralized, modern and secular state and the conservative "tribal" leaders installed by the colonial governments. Conflicting visions of the structure of the post-colonial African state weakened the nationalist program as "traditional" tribal elites resisted the centralizing thrust of the independent African states; a process Teddy Brett argues was heightened by the practices of colonial governments prior to independence as they worked to undermine anti-colonial movements by exploiting the loyalty of African chiefs:

African agents...chiefs, headmen, clerks and so on...were then expected to maintain the authority of the colonial system in the reserves and were assumed by officialdom to represent the interests of the African population as whole. Their position was necessarily to bring them into opposition with the emerging nationalist forces, which were challenging the colonial structure that gave them their privileges.²¹⁶

In the period immediately following independence numerous African governments gave priority to the issue of eradicating the colonially constructed tribal structures. The move to reform the colonial tribal system was more than just an exercise of consolidating power in the hands of central governments, even if this was a key consideration of the urban elite in government through most of Africa. Mamdani argues that one of the principal reforms undertaken by the independent African states was to replace the dual system of law that had existed in most of the colonial states. A single legal code was designed, Mamdani argues, to erase the division between "citizen" and "subject" and to build a sense of national unity and support for the post-

²¹⁶ Teddy Brett, "Colonialism and Capitalism" in Chris Allen and Gavin Williams (eds.) *Sociology of "Developing Societies": Sub-Saharan Africa*, London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982, p. 7.

colonial state-building project.²¹⁷ Therefore, the importance of removing the key areas of authority of tribal leaders, principally their control of customary law and the allocation of land, was that it was the crucial first step in dismantling the dichotomy of traditional and modern Africa which had developed as a result of colonial policies.

In practice, the ambitions of the early independence leaders to construct a unified, non-discriminatory legal system were both laudatory and necessary for the task of nation-building. The lack of success can be said to result from two factors. First, the resistance of the traditional elites to the centralization of power was successful. Secondly, the state was unable to construct the institutions and infrastructure to provide rural access to the state instituted civic system.²¹⁸ The second factor helped the tribal elite in resisting the efforts to modernize rural areas. Tribal resistance to the centralizing pressure from newly formed African governments was not only a challenge to the authority of African governments but undermined the very nation-building project that nationalist elites had promised to deliver. Berman argues that the underdeveloped state apparatus bequeathed by the colonial state combined with the entrenched ethnicization of African societies gave independent governments little alternative but to rely on tribal elites to maintain stability and order, in a similar way that the colonial state had previously done.²¹⁹ As democratic governments across Africa failed in their efforts to undermine the power and authority of tribal elites the task of dismantling tribalism fell to the authoritarian regimes and single-party states that had come to power as agents of development in the later part of the 1960s and in

²¹⁷ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 129.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 136-137.

²¹⁹ Bruce Berman, "Ethnicity, Patronage and Politics of Uncivil Nationalism", p. 334.

the 1970s.²²⁰ Few single-party and military governments in Africa had any greater success than the first generation of nationalist leaders in bringing an end to the tribal system.

In Sudan, the Native Administration model was amended by the British in 1951 in response to opposition to the tribal system from Sudan's emerging nationalist movements. But it would take almost a decade of independence before the first serious effort to remodel Native Administration was undertaken. In 1964 *shaykhs* and tribal chiefs were stripped of most of their legal powers. Then in the 1970, the new government of Ja'afar Nimeiri undertook to completely dismantle the tribal system as the first step in a program of modernizing Sudan.²²¹ Nimeiri's position towards 'tradition' was initially very uncompromising. Nimeiri not only enacted a series of reforms aimed at expunging tribalism in Sudan but went on the offensive against the traditional sectarian parties. Following the military defeat of the Ansar, Nimeiri stripped the leaders of the Mahdist movement of assets in a bid to destroy the power base of one of the pillars of conservatism in Sudanese society.²²² Despite, the concerted effort, M.A. Mohamed Salih argues that Nimeiri failed to abolish tribalism or reduce the power of tribal elites.²²³ The failure to overcome tribal elites and structures resulted from the weakness of post-colonial African states and the failure of governments to provide adequate resources for local administration and non-tribal

²²⁰ Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, "Introduction", in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 1-45, and Colin Leys, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, pp. 64-66.

²²¹ Catherine Miller, "Power, Land and Ethnicity in the Kassala-Gedaref States: an Introduction," *Le Caire, Cedej*, 2005 at <http://www.mmsch.univ-aix.fr/iremam/HTML/PUBLI/CHERCH/CM-IntroductionSoudan.pdf>.

²²² Gabriel Warburg, "Mahdism and Islamism in Sudan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1995, pp. 220-222.

²²³ Mohamed M.A. Salih, "Tribal Militias, SPLA/SPLM and the Sudanese State: "New Wine in Old Bottles," *Management of the Crisis in the Sudan*, Proceedings of the Bergen Forum, 1989, <http://www.fou.uib.no/fd/1996/f/712001/index.htm>.

based judicial bodies. Tribal structures survived because the alternatives were weak and ineffective. Therefore, for one reason or another, usually linked to the inability of post-colonial states to erect an effective alternative to the colonial tribal structures, the nation-building projects of Africa's modernizing elites were unable to overcome the centrifugal character of the colonial system of tribal rule.

3.4 Underdevelopment and the African Post-colonial State.

As noted earlier, African independence brought with it the promise of rapid progress in all the areas of social and economic policy. The modernization project required an educated and healthy population who could manage and advance industrial production. Industries required access to electricity, modern communications and transport. The program for the modernization of the African post-colonial state was an ambitious affair. Nkrumah's exhortation that Africans must 'Seek ye the political kingdom and everything will be added unto you' articulated succinctly enough the promise that political independence was the crucial first step on the path toward giving African people the much desired economic development, and the concomitant benefits, associated with living in modernized states.

The expectations of African people were raised by the significant expansion of the colonial state in the later colonial period. The danger of commencing a program of social and economic development that was unsustainable was enunciated by the Governor of Eastern Nigeria province in the 1950s when he stated that:

Inevitably, the people are going to be disillusioned, but it is better they should be disillusioned as a result of the failure of their people than they should be disillusioned as a result of our actions.²²⁴

While undoubtedly this statement attempts to absolve the colonial state for far too much of the blame, it does reveal an understanding that the post-colonial African state would immediately face the challenge of meeting high public expectations. The expansion of social services undertaken in the last decade of colonialism, mainly by British and French colonial governments, set a standard of progress that the independence states were widely expected to exceed. Late colonialism differed from earlier periods, as Frederick Cooper explains:

The colonialism that began to come to an end in the 1950s was not the colonialism of the interwar years, which had made a virtue of its own inability to transform African society. Perhaps that form of colonialism could have staggered on for decades longer than the one that ended. What came apart with remarkable rapidity in the decade after World War II was colonialism at its most reformist, its most interventionist, its most arrogantly assertive.²²⁵

The intensification of colonial intervention, as Cooper described it, led to an increase in the cost of running most of the colonies. While in some cases the revenues from cash-crops and other commodities provided some impetus for colonial development, most of the extra funding originated in London after the enactment of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act (1940) and in Paris with the equivalent French legislation; the *Fonds d'Investissement pour le Developpement Economique et Social*

²²⁴ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 76.

²²⁵ Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The labour question in French and British Africa*, p. 451.

or FIDES (1946). In practice it did take the end of World War Two before the colonial governments were finally freed from the inflexible principle of fully self-financing colonies. The expansion of the bureaucratic machinery and the increased numbers of state employers on the state's payroll reflected the ambitious aims of the rehabilitated philosophy of colonialism.

Education was another area of social policy where the emergent post-colonial states were faced with a considerable challenge. Colonial education after 1945 was one area where there was a very perceptible change from the pre-World War Two policies. In the colonial period much had been written, and said, by colonial administrators and commentators on the way that education "spoiled" the natives.²²⁶ After World War Two the new policy witnessed the establishment of colleges and universities across the continent. In British colonial Africa, university colleges were founded or upgraded in Nigeria (Ibadan, 1947), Ghana (Legon, 1948), Sudan (Khartoum 1949), and Uganda (Makerere 1949). Additionally, in Kenya the Royal Technical College was established in Nairobi in 1951, the University College of Salisbury was opened in 1953 which was expanded in 1955 to become the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Meanwhile, Fourah Bay College was upgraded to the University College of Sierra Leone. Most of these new or upgraded university colleges served as regional universities and were affiliated with and awarded degrees by the University of

²²⁶ Michael Oliver West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 16 cites evidence presented to the Southern African Natives Affairs Commission held in 1903-1905 where it was stated that 'The majority of educated Natives I have met usually turned out to be idle and in a great measure dishonest...I don't think the state should support Native education beyond what is required to make him a good workman...' and it should be stressed that in no way was this view unusual amongst British colonial personnel including the British involved in Sudan.

London.²²⁷ After the war the French and Belgians also established a number of institutions of higher education, most notably in Tunis, Dakar and Élisabethville.²²⁸

Education, in particular, is an important component of “inventing” the nation, as Fred Halliday remarks:

It is states which not only reproduce the idea and identity of the nation, through education, official culture, military service, law, a good dose of coercion and much else besides, but which also in large measure *define* it- that is, define identity, territory and citizenship. States therefore, write the history textbooks, establish the national symbols, define the proper way of writing the language...These textbooks make the history and fight the battles that make up the national history itself...²²⁹

Changes to education policy represented just one area of expansion undertaken by the colonial state. State intervention in the 1950s included an increase in the provision of veterinarian services to pastoral groups, extending irrigation to farmers, the enlargement of railways, expansion of port facilities, land management programs, and water-boring, amongst other services. There was a marked increase in the numbers of colonial administrators to facilitate the expansion of the colonial state at a cost that the short post-war economic boom in commodity prices allowed most colonial states to cover. The increased revenues collected by colonial states for raw materials and agricultural products provided the financial means of expanding the colonial bureaucracies. Africa’s colonial civil services dramatically swelled as African and

²²⁷ Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, “A Historical Accounting of African Universities: Beyond Afropessimism,” *The Zeleza Post*, June 16, 2006, <http://zeleza.com/blog/index.php?p=38>

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and Ideology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 206-207 (Italics in the original).

Europeans were employed to speed the implementation of the post war development policies.²³⁰

However, there was very little diversification of the economies of African colonies. So when the new African governments came to power they were reliant on the continuing high commodity prices received during the post-war economic boom if they were to meet the costs of the ‘...increasingly ponderous administrative structure that the 1950s colonial development had put in place and, more important, to meet the heightened expectations of people who now hoped that the state might really be theirs.’²³¹ As Richard Cornwell suggests, African governments were faced with a daunting assignment as they took office:

The new African states, on the other hand, emerged into a wholly new environment. They were asked to establish full-scale social welfare states with complicated mechanisms, at the same time as undertaking a complex drive for social and economic development, and this in a world of population explosion, widening technological and economic gaps, superpower competition and global tension and conflict. And if the resulting problems of social discontinuity, cultural strain and the pragmatic problems of development had

²³⁰ David Sconyers, “Servant or Saboteur? The Sudan political service during the crucial decade: 1946–1956,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1988, pp. 42-51 explores the Sudanese case. Also see Frederick Cooper, “Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept” in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 64-92.

²³¹ Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, pp. 4-5.

not been sufficient to unhinge the strongest constitutional formula, there was still the additional business of national integration awaiting them.²³²

The difficulty of the task facing Africa's new governments was imposing enough during periods when the international prices of raw materials and agricultural products remained stable. However, the reality facing African states was that there was a;

...heavy and continuing dependence on primary products- particularly in the face of European and U.S oligopolies that control processing and marketing worldwide...With over 80 per cent of Africa's exports consisting of primary products and raw materials (including petroleum), African states are particularly susceptible to commodity price fluctuations.²³³

Certainly, it can be ascertained from a review of the literature of African development and underdevelopment that there has existed a strong attachment amongst scholars from one of the broad paradigms of international relations that the end of colonialism, as a mode of formal control, did not necessarily spell the end of imperialism.²³⁴ African dependency and underdevelopment formed out of colonialism continues to

²³² Richard Cornwell, "The Collapse of the African State" in Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason (eds.) *Peace, Profit, Plunder: The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1999, p. 65.

²³³ William G. Martin, "The World Economy and the African State, in Ricardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism and the African State*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005 p. 282.

²³⁴ Anthony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Survey*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980 provides a comprehensive overview of the Marxist and neo-Marxist positions, including dependency theory and World-Systems theory. The literature on neo-imperialism is vast stretching from Samir Amin, Walter Rodney, Colin Leys, William Easterly, Timothy Shaw, Michael Barratt-Brown to name a small selection of Africanist scholars that place Africa's contemporary economic situation in the context of the structure of the externally dominated international political economy. The position is summarized succinctly by Chris Dixon and Michael J. Heffernan, "Introduction" in Chris Dixon and Michael J. Heffernan (eds.), *Colonialism and Development in the Contemporary World*, London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1991, p. 3 '...the granting of formal independence has rarely been accompanied by a dismantling of the deeper structures of imperialism that perpetuate the social and economic divisions within and between nations'.

plague the continent's economic situation remains a popular position, especially in the period from the 1980s onwards as African politicians were compelled by the Bretton Woods institutions to restructure African economies to accommodate the interests of global capital.²³⁵ As the situation deteriorated beyond worst expectations in the “lost decade” of the 1980s, analysts recalled that the overall performance of African states in the first decade of independence was, on the whole, promising.

However, for a number of analysts the post-war economic boom only concealed the fragility of economies reliant on primary commodity exports and the deeply intrusive state controls over the economy.²³⁶ In some states, notably Sudan, Nigeria and the Lusophone states, the spectre of war impacted on the economic performance and redirected important economic and human resources to destructive rather than productive activities. Elsewhere, the economic boom provided states with the resources to expand public services and to extend extensive networks of clients and patronage.²³⁷

Bruce Berman argues that the patronage system was both a legacy of colonialism and partly a response by nationalist elites to the threat posed by ethnic heterogeneity and regionalism that existed in most African states. African nationalist elites, Berman further argues, were,

²³⁵ Chris Dixon and Michael J. Heffernan, “Introduction”, p. 17. Also, see Michael Barrett-Brown, *Africa's Choices: After thirty years of the World Bank*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996, especially chapter, 4.

²³⁶ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, p. 156 and p. 190, Nicholas van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001 pp. 113-151, Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp112-127.

²³⁷ Bruce Berman, “Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism”, p334.

...obsessed with the problem of 'national integration' and achieving it through the use of state power...the task became 'one of transforming a multi-ethnic society into a national society through the instrumentality of the state.'²³⁸

African government's followed the recommendations implicit in the modernization and Marxist prescriptions for Third World development by targetting reforms for strengthening the state and the state's centralizing power over the cultural and economic spheres of society. In the first decade after independence, most African states had some of the economic resources necessary to placate different social groupings in society, whether ethnic, economic, or religious. However, as these resources faded the stability that came with it eroded, and Berman describes the common result was,

The hastily carpentered institutions of liberal democracy and independence constructions quickly faded and disappeared in the face of growing authoritarianism of both civilian and military regimes.²³⁹

Thus, post-colonial efforts to build states and construct nations often resulted in authoritarianism and patrimonialism, which placed in historical context, were responses to the immense challenges faced by weak and poorly resourced independent African states.

Sudan's unfortunate experience with democracy was a major catalyst for military takeovers in 1958 and again in 1969, and more recently in 1989. Unlike most African countries that had experienced economic growth in the buoyant 1960s, Sudan had

²³⁸ Ibid, p. 333.

²³⁹ Ibid.

suffered economic stagnation and the patience of the wider Sudanese population was being tested by the failures of the successive democratic governments to deliver on the promises made by nationalist leaders before and after independence. In 1969, responding to the problems of the country, the Sudan Free Officers Movement overthrew parliament. Aiding the leaders of the coup was the widely held notion of the time that strong government was necessary for fashioning an effective and functioning state as well as building national cohesion. During the 1970s, the endeavours of the Nimeiri government to expand the economic base and output, as well as the ambitious state-building project, created an embryonic national ideal that would be undone in the 1980s as debt and economic crisis overtook Sudan and the African continent more widely. In the Sudanese case, it is arguable that state and nation building have risen and fallen concomitantly.

3.5 The Demise of the African State: Debt, Structural Adjustment and the End of the State-Building Project

African economies were, on the whole, in a dire situation at the beginning of the 1980s. The years from 1975 to 1980 constitute, as Giovanni Arrighi has said, the period when there was a ‘major turning point in sub-Saharan fortunes in the global political economy...’²⁴⁰ In 1975, according to Arrighi, the GDP per capita of sub-Saharan Africa stood at 17.6 per cent of global per capita income, yet a decade later it had dropped to just above ten per cent.²⁴¹ With crisis looming and African economies struggling to meet the debt obligations, especially as international interest rates climbed to ten per cent per annum in 1980²⁴², the urgency to act was apparent. The

²⁴⁰ Giovanni Arrighi, “The African Crisis”, p. 1.

²⁴¹ Ibid, p1.

²⁴² William R. Cline, “Perspectives on the External Debt Situation: International Debt from Crisis to Recovery?” *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 75, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Ninety-

Lagos Plan of Action (1980) and the World Bank's Berg report (1980) were two influential policy documents for treating the economic difficulties of Africa. Disagreement over the causes of the malaise infecting African states can be summed up in the arguments put forward by the competing policy documents produced to deal with the economic crisis.

The Lagos Plan of Action which was adopted by the Organisation of African States in 1980 outlined remedies to tackle the declining terms of trade that African commodity producers faced. The basis of the Lagos Plan was located in the principles set out in the New International Economic Order adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1974 which encouraged First World economies to take responsibility for the economic and social costs of colonialism and foreign domination, and placed a duty on all states to adjust the prices of exports relative to their imports.²⁴³ That nothing came of the NIEO or the Lagos Plan should not be surprising as,

Whatever the deep contradictions, shortcomings and naïveté's of the Lagos Plan, it was more realistic, less ideological and even more soundly scientific (notwithstanding the inadequacies of its methodology) than the virtually skimmed work of the World Bank. But the powers that be in the world exchequer are such that the Lagos Plan, far from being a point of departure, was soon buried, while the World Bank's language became the leitmotiv of official policies.²⁴⁴

Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association, May, 1985, p. 185, explains that this was a significant increase from normal rates and that in 1981-1982 international interest rates climbed even further to 16 per cent.

²⁴³ Timothy M. Shaw, "Reformism, Revisionism, and Radicalism in African Political Economy during the 1990s", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 1991, p. 196.

²⁴⁴ Samir Amin, *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*, p60.

The World Bank Plan for Africa adopted tenets which were emerging in the Reaganite and Thatcherite orthodoxy dubbed neo-liberalism and based on macro-economic structural adjustment policies demarcated by what is now commonly referred to as the “Washington Consensus”.²⁴⁵ In particular, the Bank recommended privatisation and further attention to the development of the agricultural sector as a way of reducing foreign debt and restoring a level of equilibrium in the terms of trade that had deteriorated so dramatically in the 1970s. The rolling back of the state was another of the Bank’s principal policy prescriptions for reviving African economies, and the most revealing in terms of impact on African people and the stability of Africa’s tenuous national entities. The plan was adopted despite widespread dissatisfaction from African leaders and the governors of African banks. In Timothy Shaw’s view, Africans were also angered about the Plan’s “new paternalism”, expressed in this statement by an African economist:

We are . . . concerned about the general tone of the report which tends to suggest that the region's problems are entirely of its own making and that unless outsiders are allowed to come in with aid and new policies, the crisis would get out of hand and the result would be catastrophic.²⁴⁶

In the early 1990s, over a decade after the Berg Report had been released and neo-liberalism adopted, Adebayo Olukoshi could argue that there was a complete disregard for the external factors contributing to the African crisis because of the

²⁴⁵ On the origin of the term and basic tenets of the Washington Consensus see John Williamson, “A Short History of the Washington Consensus,” Paper commissioned by Fundación CIDOB Conference *From the Washington Consensus towards a new Global Governance*, Barcelona, September 24–25, 2004.

²⁴⁶ Timothy M. Shaw, “Debates about Africa's Future: The Brandt, World Bank and Lagos Plan Blueprints,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1983, p. 342.

reliance by the Bank and orthodox economics on the internal causes.²⁴⁷ The unwillingness of the Bank to entertain that its policies were misconceived and misguided added to the exasperation of African leaders, and as Nicholas van de Walle suggests, resulted in African governments resisting the policies by selectively implementing some of the structural adjustment policies, and in effect only agreeing ‘to reform programs to gain access to external cash for crisis management’ even though African leaders ‘remain unconvinced by the intellectual logic behind these programs.’²⁴⁸ Nonetheless, regardless of African leaders misgivings and resistance World Bank and IMF policies were implemented and the impact on Africa’s people has been devastating, especially in terms of political stability, where ‘economic reform amounted to political suicide.’²⁴⁹ The wider political implications of the African economic crisis will be discussed in the next section.

The African economic condition had begun to deteriorate in the late 1970s, as noted above. There is little doubt that the managerial inefficiencies of Africa’s “gate-keeper” states contributed to the continent’s economic crisis. However, it was the economic crisis of the 1970s, or the collapse of the post World War Two development model as Manuel Castells suggests²⁵⁰, which provides the context in which the “gatekeeper state” was no longer able to operate as effectively in economic terms.²⁵¹ But it is worthwhile to remember that the First World also did not escape the effects of the economic crisis of the 1970s. However, the First World had stronger political

²⁴⁷ See, William G. Martin, “The World Economy and the African State,” p. 279.

²⁴⁸ Nicholas van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1990*, p. 57

²⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 24.

²⁵⁰ Manuel Castells, *The End of Millennium*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Limited, 1996, pp. 112-113.

²⁵¹ Giovanni Arrighi, “The African Crisis,” p14, provides a reminder that regardless of the external factors, including the negative interference from the World Bank and the IMF, that contributed to the disabliging, even hostile, international economic environment of the 1970s, African elites must share the blame for ‘their failure...to make the collapse of the 1980s less severe, and alleviate the disastrous social consequences.’

institutions, greater economic clout and significantly more resources at its disposal for which it used to weather the storm of the 1970s. In contrast the African dependency on First World capital and demand became most apparent in the 1970s when that capital and demand shrunk. In this situation, the inefficiencies of the patrimonial system, systematic corruption, and technological backwardness became serious issues requiring as much attention as the disadvantageous terms of trade and reliance on foreign capital.

Foreign direct investment fell dramatically in the late 1970s, so that by 1985 African economies received a fraction of the investment available a decade earlier, and by 1990 FDI into Africa had all but ceased to exist.²⁵² The dramatic drop in commodity prices has already been mentioned. These two factors were fundamentally responsible for the dire economic situation that African states faced by the late 1970s. Nonetheless, it was the impact of the structural adjustment programs which not only exacerbated the problems, but transformed crisis into disaster. African societies bore the major brunt of the policies as poverty escalated as a direct result of the contraction of the state 'through the privatization of services, the selling of parastatal enterprises, the removal of restrictions on foreign exchange capital flows.'²⁵³

Writing in 1996, Manuel Castells provides a succinct summary of the impact of the structural adjustment decade on African labour which included the doubling of urban unemployment, the stagnation or decline in the salaried sector, so that,

²⁵² Thomas M. Callaghy, "Africa and the World Political Economy: Still Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place" in John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothschild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics: Post Cold War Challenges*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995, pp. 42-43.

²⁵³ William M. Martin, "The World Economy and the African State," p. 291.

Most labor in African cities is now in the categories of “irregular,” “marginal self-employment,” and “non-protected salaried worker”, all leading to lower incomes, lack of protection, and a high incidence of poverty.”²⁵⁴

African workers suffered from the privatisation of state industries (and services) and austerity policies designed to defeat the debt scourge. Despite, the pain caused by the structural adjustment prescriptions of the World Bank and IMF there was no reduction in the debt levels emasculating African economies. Debt multiplied throughout the structural adjustment decade, so that by 1992 Africa’s debt burden had reached \$US 183.4 billion, which constituted 109 per cent of Africa’s total GDP and 350 per cent of exports.²⁵⁵ Debt servicing alone demanded 30 per cent of Africa’s exports earnings.²⁵⁶ Rather than correcting the problem, the deregulation of capital markets, another of the pillars of the SAPs, facilitated massive capital flight. Callaghy points out that by the end of 1990 capital flight as a percentage of GDP was 14.9 per cent for South Asia and 27.8 per cent for Central Asia, while for Africa it was 80.3 per cent!²⁵⁷

Since the 1980s, there have been numerous studies and a plethora of statistics that confirm the stagnation, and even regression, of most African economies has occurred. Few observers would disagree with the assessment that Africa’s economic performance throughout the 1980s and 1990s was spectacularly bad. Almost as universal has been the evidence that the Structural Adjustment Policy framework proved as counter-productive to African economic recovery as critics had

²⁵⁴ Manuel Castells, *The End of Millennium*, p. 116.

²⁵⁵ Thomas M. Callaghy, “Africa and the World Political Economy,” pp. 45-46.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 46.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 44.

predicted.²⁵⁸ The human statistics are little better with poverty, disease, illiteracy, malnutrition and infant mortality improving in a handful of Africa's better performing economies, while the figures on health, education and life expectancy have either stagnated or deteriorated in some parts of the continent.²⁵⁹ The HIV/AIDS pandemic is itself a manifestation of the incapacity, or limitations, of African states to deal with the health crisis. While Thabo Mbeki's unfortunate statement on the relationship between poverty and AIDS was misinformed it did spark a debate regarding the relationship between the weakness of African states and the failure of African governments to adequately deal with the health crisis.²⁶⁰ The dearth of trained health professionals has also been a factor in the ineffectual fight to stem the spread of the disease. Thousands of Africa's doctors and nurses, along with other educated professionals, emigrate to the richer oil-producing Arab states or Europe and North America. The impact of this trend has been to drain Africa of the human resources necessary for effectively building state-capacity.²⁶¹ This drain of professionals from Africa not only weakens the fight against disease, but also exacerbates illiteracy, reduces administrative efficiency, and contributes to an intellectual vacuum from

²⁵⁸ Adebayo Adedeji, "An Alternative for Africa," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1994, pp.119-132, also, George B.N Ayittey, "Why Structural Adjustment Failed in Africa" in John Baffoe-Bonnie and Mohammed Khayum (eds.), *Contemporary Economic Issues in Developing Countries*, Westport, Ct: Praeger Publishing Group, 2003, pp. 167-186.

²⁵⁹ The United Nations Development reports released annually clearly show how dire the situation continues to be in the states that rank at the bottom of the list, including the 20 worst performing states which are all in Africa. See UNDP Report, 2007/2008, "Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world," accessed at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>

²⁶⁰ Pieter Fourie and Martin Schonteich, "Africa's New Security Threat." *African Security Review*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 2000, pp. 29-57, also see P. Brian Bartels, "HIV/AIDS, State Capacity, and Security in Africa," presented at the Workshop of Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University Mini Conference, 2-5 May, 2003.

²⁶¹ William G. Martin, "The World Economy and the African State," p. 289, also Aderanti Adepoju, "Leading Issues in International Migration in sub-Saharan Africa" in Catherine Cross, et al., (eds.), *Views on Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa: proceedings of an African Migration Alliance workshop*, Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006, p28, also Delanyo Dovlo, "The Brain Drain and Retention of Health Professionals in Africa: A case study prepared for a regional training conference on improving tertiary education in sub-Saharan Africa: things that work! Accra, September 23-25, 2003.

which Africa will be unable to recover without the return of its best trained and its brightest minds.

The overall impact of the economic crisis has been that Africa has slipped from its status as a marginal actor in global economic terms in the 1960s and 1970s to occupy a position of complete irrelevance. Sub-Saharan Africa now contributes less than two per cent of global trade and less than one per cent of global GDP.²⁶² The end of the Cold War exacerbated Africa's marginalisation with the US extricating itself from relationships with tyrants, military regimes, anti-government rebels, and apartheid South Africa leading to the cessation of conflicts and the wave of democratization that spread across the continent. However, the new world order promised by George Bush, Snr, amid the triumphalism which accompanied the end of the Cold War, and the democratisation that it promoted, was just as unable to deliver the transformation that would remedy the economic malaise suffered across Africa as the prescriptions of the World Bank and the IMF. The end of the Cold War brought to an end the limited latitude that US allies could expect in debt repayment and in resisting some aspects of the liberalization paradigm.²⁶³ Rather than the end of history, as Francis Fukayama predicted, Africa found itself engulfed in a new history where there seemed to be the resurgence of antediluvian tribal violence. That the identities engaged in the conflicts in Rwanda, and more recently in Darfur, for example, were responses to the collapse of the state and the legacies of colonialism were more often than not overlooked by the press and other mainstream commentators as an image of Africa as the "Hopeless Continent" came to be embedded in international opinion. The popular perception of

²⁶² John S. Saul and Colin Leys, "Sub-Saharan Africa in Global Capitalism," *Monthly Review*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 1999.

²⁶³ John W. Harbeson, "Africa in World Politics: Amid Renewal, Deepening Crisis" in John Harbeson and Donald Rothchild, *Africa in World Politics: Post-cold war challenges*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995, p. 14.

African conflicts that circulated in the 1990s was one based on the notion that the violence being witnessed in Rwanda, Southern Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia was the result of resurgent primordial identities. As the next section will explain, the ethnic and religious conflicts that seemed to engulf Africa since the end of the Cold War can only be understood in the collapse of Africa's states in the 1980s and 1990s. The link between the economic crisis, just explored, and experienced by the majority of African states in the last quarter of the twentieth century and the fragmentation of African societies is neatly summarized by William G. Martin, who explains that:

Where states became unable to provide employment, basic security, and economic and social services, alternative social networks and groups emerged. Few have proven more powerful than the re-emergence of ethnic and tribal identities forged during the colonial period, and suppressed during the postindependence period by states that achieved the deracialization but not the detribalization of society, to use Mamdani's formulation.²⁶⁴

3.6 State Crisis in Retrospect: The "Politics of the Belly" or "Colonial Legacies"

By the 1990s the African state had come to be known by various names associated with its predatory character. The crisis of African politics intensified as the names used to describe the failure of African politics multiplied. Labelled as either "cronyist," "collapsed," "greedy," "venal," "hollow," "lecherous," "prebatal" or a "vampire state", many African states had ceased to meet the accepted western

²⁶⁴ William G. Martin, "The World Economy and the African State," p. 301.

definition of what constituted a legitimate sovereign body.²⁶⁵ While there is an acceptance of the extent of the crisis in Africa, a number of different viewpoints can be identified for explaining the cause of this crisis. For Bayart, the contours of contemporary African states can be traced back through a history predating colonialism to the notion of the “politics of the belly”, and even if colonialism and post-colonialism distorted and exaggerated matters, Bayart argues, that the tendency to view politics as a form of consumption was an African cultural trait.²⁶⁶ Others such as Bruce Berman, Peter Ekeh, Mahmood Mamdani and Crawford Young, to name a few of the authors cited, view the colonial period as instrumental in creating the structures and systems apparent in post-colonial African states as well as the attitudes of the African elite towards power. Frederick Cooper, for example, argues that the “gatekeeper” state and the propensity of African leader’s to view control of the state as their patrimony are direct legacies of the colonial period.

The principal problem, at least in terms of the perspective taken in this thesis, is one of recognizing the economic crisis of the 1970s as the context in which to place the transformation of African states from the post independence patrimonial state into the predatory state of the 1980s and 1990s. In particular, recognizing that the extraneous and outward oriented African state evolved, not from the cultural attributes inherited from pre-colonial Africa, but as a conjuncture of forces including colonialism, the global economic crisis of the 1970s, the dismantling of the developmental state model on which post-colonial African states were, at least initially, conceived, and the venality of African elites. The venality of Africa’s elite is undoubtedly a significant

²⁶⁵ Robert I. Rotberg, “The Failure and Collapse of the Nation-State: Breakdown, Prevention, Repair” in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 1.

²⁶⁶ Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa*, p. 10.

reality that scholars must recognize. However, of more importance is locating the systems and structural weaknesses which allow prebendal and predatory politics to sabotage the state and nation building projects on which African states were initially established.

Viewing the *long duree* of African politics, in the way Bayart does, liberates scholarship from the prejudices of Eurocentricism and the teleology inherent in western political science. Also, it returns agency to the African actor. These are an important part of the project of liberating representations of Africa from the Hegelian idea of an Africa without history. However, there are also apparent dangers in taking such a perspective. The concept of the “politics of the belly” tends to exoticize Africa and leads back to an earlier dominant colonial motif that Africa’s primordialism is an explanatory framework for understanding African behaviour.²⁶⁷ Such a viewpoint was also evident in the way that the relationship between precolonialism/colonialism/post-colonialism was portrayed by the *Economist* in the article “Hopeless Africa” and continues as a dominant motif in many of the popular representations of the genocide in Rwanda and more recently in the representations of the violence occurring in Darfur. Such a viewpoint only feeds back into the World Bank and IMF paradigm that Africa’s economic crisis is located in African exceptionalism rather than through the lens of colonial legacies, the global economic crisis of the 1970s, or the fragmentation of African polities resulting from the neo-liberal restructuring of the political economy of African states. Viewed from the more Afro-pessimistic perspectives, the colonial period is cast as an externally imposed interlude of order between the violent pre-colonial past and an equally violent post-

²⁶⁷ Christopher Clapham, “The *Longue Duree* of the Africa State,” p. 439 argues that Bayart has ‘willfully ignored’ the significance of the colonial impact ‘in his straining for continuity’ between the pre-colonial and post-colonial.

colonial now. There is a strong case to be made that culturalist explanations provide absolution to the former colonial powers for their harmful and exploitative intervention into Africa. Most of all, focusing on culture absolves those that govern and benefit from the contemporary neo-liberal economic paradigm for impoverishing Africa and dismantling the very same political and social institutions on which western political legitimacy and stability rests. Thus, locating the cause of African ethnic conflicts in more recent changes to the relationship between weak and anomic states and society, is not only more accurate, but significantly increases the potential for locating resolutions to Africa's multiple crises without resorting to calls for external interventions and externally based solutions.

3.7 The Impact of Economic Crisis on African Politics: The resurgence of identity conflicts

Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Daloz have made the argument that the African state has become de-institutionalized. They argue that state institutions in many African countries are little more than hollowed out shells with little capacity for economic or social development.²⁶⁸ Chabal and Daloz argue in many cases the military and security apparatus combined with some level of state control in and around capital cities are the only remaining effective capabilities of contemporary African states. Leif Manger argues that the ability of African governments to mobilize adequate resources when a threat to the control over state power materializes is a reminder that even the weakest state has 'the ability...to engage its army, its bureaucracy, and its

²⁶⁸ Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as political instrument*, Oxford: James Currey, 1999, pp. 3-17.

capital to penetrate the communities over which it claims control.’²⁶⁹ Thus, while states are weak and collapsing, states remain powerful mechanisms, if not of consensus building, at least, in terms of their capacity for coercion and violence.

Also, Chabal and Daloz trace the contemporary institutional vacuum back to the formation of the African state and the subsequent indigenization of the colonial structures since independence. The economic crisis which has been experienced across Africa since the 1980s receives far less attention that it deserves, which can be taken as a reflection that Chabal and Daloz perceive the African crisis as principally a result of an incongruity that has occurred due to the Africanization of non-African colonial institutions. A similar view is taken by Catherine Boone who implies that the patronage system has resulted in the erosion of the efficacy of state institutions in Africa. She argues that:

The private appropriation of state resources and the use of state funds to strengthen personalistic power networks ... lay at the very heart of the processes through which postcolonial regimes were consolidated and by which they sought to govern. Over time, however, the same process has weakened the state as an instrument for organising, exercising and reproducing state power.²⁷⁰

The perspectives of Chabal and Daloz, and Catherine Boone, contend that the African patronage system has been responsible for the collapse of the state. The decline of the

²⁶⁹ Leif Manger, “Reflections on War and State and the Sudan” in Bruce Kapferer, (ed.), *State, Sovereignty, War: Civil Violence in Emerging Global Realities*, New York: Berghhan Books, 2004, pp. 77-78.

²⁷⁰ Catherine Boone, “States and Ruling Classes in Post-Colonial Africa: The Enduring Contradictions of Power”, in Joel Migdal, Kohli Athul and Vivienne Shue, (eds.), *State Power and Social Forces*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 131-132.

economic resources available to the African state and the subsequent erosion of the capabilities of the state are seen as resulting from the African appetite for patronage politics.

In contrast to the position explored above, there is a contending view which views the resurgence of primordialism and ethnic politics as a result of the collapse of the state and the state's capacity to effectively govern. Dauda Abubakar adopts this position arguing that the inability of the state to fulfil primary responsibilities over certain key areas of economic and social policy, 'such as security of life and property as well as the provision of social goods and services' has led to a situation where 'the citizenry increasingly resort to the primordial realm for solace from the increasing penury that characterize their daily livelihood.'²⁷¹ Martin Doornbos takes a similar position on the resurgence of ethnic identities vis-à-vis state organized national identities in Africa when he argues that:

...given generally weakened state structures and the consequent need to accommodate and recognise vocal constituent units, stronger ethnic groupings, language communities and nationalities may emerge as possible constituencies within the changing political framework.'²⁷²

Mohammed Salih and John Markakis collected a series of essays in *Ethnicity and the State* which they maintain are tied together by a view that ethnicity is a 'manifestly political matter' which can be understood in terms of politicisation by and against the state.'²⁷³ Salih and Markakis make a strong case for viewing ethnic revivalism in the

²⁷¹ Dauda Abubakar, "Rethinking State Failure, p. 9,

²⁷² Martin Doornbos, "Linking the Future to the Past: Ethnicity and Pluralism", p. 60.

²⁷³ M.A. Mohamed Salih and John Markakis (eds.), *Ethnicity and the State in Eastern Africa*, Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1998, p. 7.

post-Cold War period as a response to changing political dynamics and is based on the notion that the decline of the state-building project has resulted in the demise of state-institutions which are necessary for national integration.

Writing in the late 1980s, Michael Bratton argues that '[W]e are currently witnessing in Africa a self-perpetuating cycle of change, in which weak states engender anemic economies whose poor performance in turn further undermines the capacity of the state apparatus.'²⁷⁴ The weakness of the African state has been responsible, Bratton argues, for associational life in Africa to be delinked from the state and increasing competition between sub-national and trans-national movements, on the one hand, and the state, on the other hand, for the allegiance of the African populace. Bratton's perspective is mirrored in the position taken by Crawford Young on the transformation of the political terrain across Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. He argues,

The dramatic erosion of stateness itself defined in many cases- in the Weberian sense of the routine capacity to exercise ultimate authority within the territorial domain of sovereignty- opened space for a multitude of actors: informal traders, smugglers, warlords, arms traffickers, youth militia, local associations ('civil society'), women's organizations, religious groups, refugees.²⁷⁵

The erosion of the state's capacities in regards to the provision of social goods has led to a crisis of state legitimacy across the African continent. For John L. Comaroff, as with others cited above, the human insecurity caused by the abrogation of state

²⁷⁴ Michael Bratton, "Beyond the State, p. 409.

²⁷⁵ Crawford Young, "The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa?" p. 25.

control over vast areas of terrain miles from the African government's centres of power has been responsible for the upsurge of non-state agitation such as that which recently erupted in Darfur. Comaroff argues that non-state based identities are most likely to be formed when people observe the,

...indifference of the state to their predicament...Nor is it hard to understand why, when faced with such indifference, subordinate groups should stress their cultural distinctiveness in agitating against disempowerment.²⁷⁶

Human insecurity in Darfur was a major cause of the upsurge in ethnic violence in the region in the 1980s and rebellion against the state in 2003.

3.8 Conclusion: The African Crisis as a Basis for Explaining the Conflict in Darfur

As argued, it was in the contours of colonialism and the post-colonial predicament that the actions of African states and reactions by non-state actors should be contextualized. In this vein, ethnic identities are more accurately viewed not through the optic of the *Long Duree*, regardless of whether they be "Arab" or "Fur", and 'not the atavistic remnants of an earlier age...but fairly recent creations shaped by social change.'²⁷⁷ Identities in Darfur have been shaped and reshaped by powerful historical forces since the seventeenth century and should never be viewed as static.

The most recent chapter in this unfolding drama has been in the rise and fall of the Sudanese state, and Darfur's incorporation in Sudan, in the second half of the

²⁷⁶ John L. Comaroff, "Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution", p. 174 (italics in original).

²⁷⁷ John Marakakis, 1996, p300 quoted in S. Hameso, *Ethnicity in Africa: Towards a Positive Approach*, Lincoln, NE: iUniversity Press, 2007, p. 13.

twentieth century. In the initial years after independence, there was a state building project in northern Sudan combined with a much stronger effort to construct an Arab-Islamic national identity.²⁷⁸ That the benefits of the project were unequally distributed between the various Sudanese regions does not preclude the existence of the expansion of state institutions and the concomitant national integration undertaken by the Sudanese state. However, by the early 1980s, Nimeiri's regime under increasing economic restrictions abandoned state-building. As the difficulties faced by the Sudanese state reached critical proportions, Nimeiri's regime fell in 1985, and by this stage, Sudan's government had all but abdicated responsibility for the protection of Darfur from the cumulative scourges of war, drought and famine, and banditry. The absence of an effective state apparatus in Darfur had created the conditions for anarchy, so that by the late 1980s, Darfur was known to Sudanese as the country's "wild west". With the imprint of the north-south war, militarization, severe economic crisis and political inertia, successive Sudanese governments failed to improve the situation in Darfur. The Islamist project of al-Bashir and al-Turabi in the 1990s brought about some stability as the northern Sudanese, at least initially, believed that Islamism might resurrect the state-building project where other modernization projects, such as Nimeirism had failed.²⁷⁹ When the Islamist project, in the 1990s, failed to meet expectations of social and economic revival, the latest Sudanese nationalist project led to a deeper fragmentation of politics across the Sudan and provoked alienation to the state which ultimately led to the formation of two openly anti-government movements in Darfur.

²⁷⁸ Sharif Harir, "Recycling the Past in Sudan" in S. Harir, and T. Tvedt (eds.), *Sudan: Shortcut to Decay*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainsitutet, 1994, pp. 10-68.

²⁷⁹ Abdel Salam Sidahmed, *Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996, pp. 215-223 outlines the methods the NIF utilized to extend influence and increase its popularity in Sudan in the 1980s so that when it came to power after the coup of 1989 it was able to claim a level of legitimacy and popularity beyond the urban elite it had attracted in the elections of 1986.

In terms of such state failure, Dauda Abubakar writing principally about conflicts in Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire, suggests that these conflicts are representative of a wider crisis of the African post-colonial state but are relevant to an understanding of the crisis in Darfur:

...deepening crisis of identities, citizenship and the rights that accompanies it. Several African states are confronted with the challenges of structural weakness, failure and in some instances total collapse, because their very foundations were not rooted on internal legitimacy, but rather from the externally driven processes of colonial domination and post-colonial elite prebendalism and predation.²⁸⁰

By utilizing this perspective, and the wider understanding of African colonial and post-colonial politics, the following chapters will explain the conflict in Darfur within the broader context of the history of the rise and fall of the Sudanese state and the unfolding of the crisis of the Sudanese post-colonial state.

²⁸⁰ Dauda Abubakar, "Rethinking State Failure", p. 15

Chapter Four -

***The Rise and Demise of the Keira Sultanate and the Formation of Sudan*²⁸¹**

4.1 Introduction²⁸²

Introducing Darfur to the reader is a difficult task. One problem, among many, is the question of when does a history of Darfur relevant to this study begin. People have inhabited Darfur for at least two thousand years with Islamic influences apparent in the archaeological evidence from about 1000 years ago.²⁸³ Timothy Insoll identifies two dynasties that ruled Darfur in the middle ages.²⁸⁴ The Daju were the first of these dynasties to rule over Darfur from the tenth to the twelfth centuries. They were followed by the Tunjur whose rule over Darfur seemed to end sometime in the late sixteenth or seventeenth century. The Tunjur were then followed by a Fur dynasty that emerged from the mountainous Jebel Marra region of central Darfur and who established the Keira Sultanate sometime around the mid-seventeenth century. For three hundred years the Keira expanded, consolidated and developed control over much of what today is modern Darfur. This pre-colonial history is rich and

²⁸¹ Noah R. Bassil, "The Rise and Demise of the Keira Sultanate of Darfur", *Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 11, 2006, pp. 347-364, forms the basis for this chapter.

²⁸² The work of R.S O'Fahey is the major source of information for this chapter and some of the other authors that are cited base their analyses on the seminal work of O'Fahey. This chapter attempts to draw out some key ideas and arguments on which to consider the question of Darfur and the structure of the society that was constructed by the colonial conquest of the region. Rather, than seeing this chapter as derivative, I would argue that the history of the region of Darfur is re-examined in a way that contributes to an analysis of recent events from the perspective of state-building, integration, and an understanding of the changes that occurred to Darfur in the context of colonialism. O'Fahey has published a recent update R.S. O'Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate: A History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, to his earlier histories of Darfur. As this chapter was written some two years before the appearance of the new title (not an entirely new study) I will only cite the new text where O'Fahey has introduced new material or amended his earlier perspective.

²⁸³ Timothy Insoll, *The Archaeology of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp.127-128.

²⁸⁴ Ibid. also see Ibrahim Musa Mohammed, *The Archaeology of Central Darfur (Sudan) in the First Millennium A.D.*, Cambridge: Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology, 1986.

illuminating but the question arises of at what point is the past relevant for understanding contemporary events.

While the colonial period provides a dividing line between Sudan as defined by its contemporary borders and power structure and the pre-colonial *bilad al-Sudan* which was comprised of a number of independent polities including acephalous societies, confederations of ethnic groups, kingdoms and centralized states such as the Keira Sultanate of Darfur. But, even if the colonial period defined the contours of the modern Sudan, there is much to be learned from exploring the political, economic and cultural attributes of the pre-colonial state. Peter Ekeh suggests one important reason for why this is the case:

Modern African politics are in a large measure a product of the colonial experience. Pre-colonial political structures were important in determining the response of various traditional political structures to colonial intervention.²⁸⁵

The answer to the question of the relevance of the pre-colonial past to contemporary events is always somewhat arbitrary. However, the history of the Keira period is a useful starting point for a number of reasons. Firstly, the era of the Keira Sultanate corresponds with the Islamization of Darfur, and with the concomitant but not as widespread Arabization. Secondly, during the reign of the Keira Sultans, the human geography that largely still characterises the region evolved. Thirdly, it was during the second half of the Keira era that Darfur was drawn into the politics of the eastern Sahel. Prior to the eighteenth century, Darfur was aligned and oriented to the western Sahel with few links or interests eastwards.

²⁸⁵ Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa", p. 93.

Along with when there is also the question of where. Darfur is easy enough to find on the map as the region is the size of France. Darfur shares borders, not only with three other Sudanese provinces, Kordofan, Bahr a-Ghazal, and Northern State, but also with three neighbouring countries. Darfur shares a long border with Chad to the west, Libya to the north and the Central African Republic to the south. Yet, the map only tells a part of the story and the missing information is vital for understanding who the people of Darfur are and why there is conflict in the region today. Darfur sits at the crossroads of Africa and has done so for centuries. Contemporary borders allude to a self-contained and separate region but the opposite has been historically true. Darfur is also part a region where ecological and climatic diversity has been responsible for shaping social systems, and social relations. Environmental resources and climatic pressures ignore borders. So, it has been with Darfur and that is why the question of the geography of Darfur is so important for understanding the complex politics of the region.

In addition, a number of common misperceptions of Darfur can also be addressed by examining the history of the region prior to the colonial conquest. Firstly, Darfur was not a place where anarchy reigned. Rather, the Sultanate ruled Darfur with many of the institutions and tools common to other absolute monarchies. Secondly, Darfur was not isolated from the outside world but increasingly integrated into the *dar al-Islam* and connected to other African Islamic states and societies in Africa, from Bornu-Kanem to the west, Tunis and Tripoli to the north, and Egypt to the East (north-east). Darfur was connected to surrounding Islamic states through constant trade, which also led to the exchange of ideas, and a long history of migration making any notion that

Darfur was cut-off from the world unsustainable. Examining the rich history of Darfur's relations with neighbouring states is an important basis for dealing with a common misperception that the Darfur region has withstood change for centuries. Depictions of recent events in Darfur tend to presume that Darfur has had no history except an endless cycle of violence between unchanging nomads and stagnant subsistence farming communities. Yet, there is a history of expansion, state-building, and Islamization which propelled the region into the politics of the Egyptian and British empires in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Finally, an examination of how Darfur came to be a part of the Sudan is an important component in forming an understanding of colonialism in Darfur and the basis on which the colonial Sudan developed.

4.2 The Darfur of the Keira Sultanate

The Keira Sultanate controlled most of what is the present-day Sudanese province of Darfur from the middle of the seventeenth century until the British conquest of the Sultanate in 1917. The kingdom of Darfur was an independent and highly successful polity that centred on the Keira Sultans who held power in Darfur after emerging from an area surrounding the Jebel Marra Mountains in modern western Sudan. It was one of three Islamic kingdoms that existed, side by side, in a Sudanic belt that extended from the Red Sea in the east to the deep interior of the African continent. To the east of Darfur, the Funj Sultanate ruled over areas of the eastern and northern Sudan from its capital at Sinnar on the Blue Nile. Bordering Darfur to the west was the Sultanate of Wadai in what is today eastern Chad.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁶ The Wadai Sultanate to the west of Darfur in modern day Chad is little known and fewer works in English are available. One interesting first hand account of Wadai by the eighteenth century German explorer Gustav Nachtigal, *Sahara and Sudan: IV, Wadal and Darfur*, translated from the original German with a new introduction and notes by Allan G. B. Fisher and Humphrey J. Fisher., London: C. Hurst and Co., 1971. An account of the petty Sultanates that straddled the boundaries of Wadai and

As for the precise date and event that led to the foundation of the Keira Sultanate, there is disagreement and uncertainty. After assessing the records of Fur chroniclers and travellers that visited the Sultanate, R.S. O’Fahey, whose work forms the most comprehensive historical record of the Keira Sultanate, has argued with ‘some confidence’ that the establishment of the Keira Sultanate dates from about the 1650s.²⁸⁷ The first Keira Sultan Sulayman Solungdongo (Fur: meaning the Arab or of reddish complexion) rose to prominence by marrying into the Fur royal family.²⁸⁸ The Sultanate remained the most powerful political institution in Darfur until the British ambushed and killed ‘Ali Dinar in 1916. The only disjuncture from Keira rule in Darfur from the seventeenth century onwards was a brief twenty-five year period from 1874 until 1898, when the region was governed by appointees of the Egyptian Khedive and then by the Mahdist state. Even during this period of foreign occupation, six “shadow sultans” clandestinely continued the tradition of Keira rule.²⁸⁹

Darfur is comprised of three distinct environmental regions in which different, and complementary, patterns of subsistence are practiced. In the north, there is a large area of semi-desert, which is occupied by groups, which had predominately engaged in

Darfur in the period of the Mahdist rebellion and the ensuing expansion of British and French power into the Sudanic belt has been provided by Lidwien Kaptjeins and Jay Spaulding in *After the Millennium: Diplomatic Correspondence from Wadai and Darfur on the Eve of Colonial Conquest: 1885-1916*, East Lansing: Michigan State University African Studies Center, 1988. The first section of the book provides a much needed introduction of the history of the region. In regards to studies dedicated to the Funj Sultanate at Sinnar on the Nile the first half of R.S. O’Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, London: Methuen, 1974 is an informative historical study and P.M Holt and M.W Daly, *A History of the Sudan* as the title suggests addresses the history of Sudan over a period that includes the rise of the Funj Sultanate and its subsequent decline and fall.

²⁸⁷ R. S O’Fahey, *State and Society in Dar Fur*, London: C. Hurst and Co. Publishers, 1980, p.8.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p.114, further to this point the authors state that, ‘The theme of the ‘Wise Stranger’ is widespread in the Sudanic belt; he comes to a remote and barbarous land, introduces new customs , often associated with eating, and marries the chief’s daughter and their descendants rule but in a different style and under another dynastic name.’

²⁸⁹ M.W Daly, *Darfur’s Sorrow*, p. 48, actually referred to this period as the era of “shadow sultans”.

camel pastoralism²⁹⁰ and are primarily nomadic, these groups and are known locally as *jamal* (Arabic for camel). Gradually if one moves south the land becomes suitable for agricultural farming and in this central zone rainfall exceeds six hundred millimetres per annum and is a region where the sedentary rain-fed cultivators are located. Further south again is a wetter zone, where rainfall can reach nine hundred millimetres per annum and where the cattle nomads, known as the Baggara (Arabic: cattle-nomads), are numerous and have existed in semi-autonomy from the authority of the rulers in Darfur for many centuries. Sharif Harir describes the dominant forms of production in each of the climatic zones as follows:

The central parts are dominated by farming communities, which produce the staple crop dukhun, i.e. bulrush millet, the southern parts by nomadic and semi-nomadic Baggara cattle herders, and the northern parts by camel herders. However, these systems are not mutually exclusive and, in fact, most of the production systems can be characterized as agro-pastoralists.²⁹¹

That the Darfur region is characterised by a series of intersecting and overlapping lines of ethnic group interaction and economic production is a recurrent theme in the literature on Darfur, as O'Fahey and Spaulding describe:

These geographically-defined patterns of subsistence do not correspond to any simple ethnic or linguistic boundaries, thus both Arabic and non-Arabic speaking peoples are to be found in all three zones, although Arabic speakers tend to dominate numerically in the camel and cattle nomad zones. Nor are the zones rigidly divided; the Fur (sedentary)/ Bani Halba (cattle nomad) frontier

²⁹⁰ As a result of economic opportunities there has been a gradual change to sheep herding by *jamal* communities in Darfur.

²⁹¹ Sharif Harir, "'Arab Belt' versus 'African Belt,'" p. 152.

along the Wadi Azum in western Darfur is stable, although there is considerable movement of Fur across the frontier for economic reasons.²⁹²

Also, the literature on Darfur places an emphasis on the complexity of the ethnic and linguistic topography of human society in Darfur. Ethnicity, language, patterns of subsistence, and kinship fail to fit into neatly defined categories. Unlike the tendency of colonial ethnography to privilege maps of Africa that neatly sub-divided regions into separate “tribes”, later anthropology of the social groups that inhabit Darfur has clearly illustrated how complex and rich is the ethnic map of Darfur.²⁹³ An understanding of the overlapping and incongruous boundaries of ethnic groups, modes of production and kinship ties is suggestive of a tendency for group interdependence and symbiosis in the region in the period under which Darfur was ruled by the Keira Sultanate.

The translation of Darfur from the Arabic as the “homeland of the Fur” obscures the ethnic complexity of the region. The criss-crossing of Darfur of trade and pilgrimage routes combined with a constantly shifting human map led to Darfur being the home of many ethnic groups. One example of the changing nature of identities in Darfur is related by O’Fahey and Spaulding, who argue that in Darfur ‘...by the eighteenth century most of the traders in the Dar Fur/Kordofan region and as far west as Wadai

²⁹² R.S O’Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p. 6.

²⁹³ Gunnar Haaland, “Nomadization as an Economic Career among Sedentaries in the Sudan Savanna Belt” in I. Cunlison and W. James (eds.), *Essays in Sudan Ethnography*. London: C Hurst & Company, 1972, pp.149-172. Gunnar Haaland’s work on fluidity of ethnic identities amongst the Fur and the Baggara is a perfect example of the shift in perceptions of ethnicity in Darfur since the end of the colonial period. L Holy on the Berti, in *Neighbours and Kinsmen. A Study of the Berti People of Darfur*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974 and Talal Asad on the Kababish of Kordofan (also Darfur) in *The Kabbabish Arabs: Power, Authority, Consent in a Nomadic Tribe*, London: C. Hurst and Co., 1970, are other examples of the anthropological work emphasising the historicity of identities. Leif Manger is another scholar whose work on Darfur and Sudan emphasises the complexity of ethnic identities. Karen Willemse, *One Foot in Heaven* whose study is more recent again, also represents identities in Darfur as very complex and historically contingent.

were Arabized Nubian Muslims from the Nile, mainly Ja'aliyin and Danaqla...'²⁹⁴ The Fur as an ethnic group occupied a central position in the formation and expansion of the state in Darfur but as the state expanded so did the Fur identity:

The sultanate grew outwards and away from the Fur homelands, Jabal Marra, and its environs to the west and southwest. As the Fur core was encompassed by new conquests, so that the distinction between Fur and non-Fur blurred as the demands of the sultans fell upon all impartially.²⁹⁵

The themes of assimilation of outsiders and integration of social groups are especially important for understanding the character of the Darfur of the Keira Sultanate.

4.3 The Keira Sultanate: Occupying the “Crossroads” of Africa

The region of Darfur is located at the crossroads between East and West Africa and for this reason can be seen as a “melting pot” of diverse ethnicities and cultures. Darfur has been the stage on which travellers across the Sahel have interacted for centuries. The result of this travel and trade across Darfur from people originating in areas west of Darfur and from the consistent “Arab” movements from east and north, has been the formation of hybrid cultures across the region. For this reason, Darfur has been described as:

...not only the watershed between the Nile and Chad river systems, it marks in the widest sense a cultural frontier; the peoples of the west of the mountains have tended to look to the western and central Sudanic belt while to the east influences from the east predominate.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ R.S O’Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p.115.

²⁹⁵ R.S. O’Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate: A History*, p.163.

²⁹⁶ R.S O’Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, pp. 5-6.

While Darfur has traditionally been influenced by western African societies it has also over time become increasingly drawn to affairs to the east. Due to its location, Darfur has been, and remains, an important “watershed” between East and West Africa and between sub-Saharan African and the Maghreb. James Morton describes Darfur as a frontier in the sense just explained, but also in terms of it being:

...a frontier between the ‘desert and the sown’; between the world of the nomad, who moves over a landscape with his animals and does not change it, and the world of the cultivator, whose activities inevitably lead to a permanent change in the shape of the land.’²⁹⁷

Also, the northern boundary of Darfur extends into the Sahara which while an imposing barrier was still regularly traversed by merchants and Muslim holy men who brought Darfur into contact with the Maghreb. To Darfur’s south, the Keira Sultanate proffered goods for trade by sending raiding parties to the regions inhabited by non-Muslim communities. Darfur’s complexities as a cultural and economic watershed are important for building an understanding of the social and political formations that evolved over time to accommodate diversity and change.

In earlier times, Muslims from West Africa travelling to Mecca for the sacred pilgrimage passed through the vast area of the Keira Sultanate on their way east and for those that successfully traversed the Sahel and the Levant to Arabia and back, they would pass through Darfur during their return journey.²⁹⁸ According to the map of the

²⁹⁷ James Morton, *The Poverty of Nations: The Aid Dilemma and the Heart of Africa*, London: I.B Taurus Publishers, 1996, p. 6.

²⁹⁸ J.S Birks, “The Mecca Pilgrimage by West African Pastoral Nomads”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1977, p. 47, in this article Birks traces the historical and modern passage of west Africans into Sudan estimating that as many as 15,000 West Africans would pass through the central Sahel on their way to Mecca each year.

overland route, provided by J.S. Birks, West African pilgrims travelled through western Darfur, in particular through the south-west and across the traditional lands of the Rezeigat (see Map 4.1) and that, “[T]his overland route has an important political, social, and economic impact on the societies through which the pilgrims pass.”²⁹⁹ Travellers and merchants from the east and the north were also regular visitors to Darfur and the history of the Keira Sultanate is replete with examples of Muslims crossing the lands of the Keira Sultanate and settling in the region under the auspices of the Sultan, which led to the gradual Islamisation of the region.³⁰⁰

One such example of this phenomena of assimilation and accommodation is given by O’Fahey who writes of a traveller from east of Darfur by the name of Sulayman, (not the Sulayman mentioned earlier responsible for the establishment of the Keira), born Ahmad Jaffal. This Sulayman was a Kinani “Arab” from the Blue Nile, who it was reported so pleased the Sultan Muhammad Tayrab (1752/3-1785/1786) with his treatment of horses that the Sultan granted him large tracts of land in Birged country in central Darfur. This is just one example of the willingness of the Sultanate to integrate “strangers” into the ruling elite. In the reign of Muhammad Tayrab’s successor, ‘Abd al-Rahman (1786-1800/1801), Ahmad Jaffal was said to rule as a *shartay* or chief over most of the Birged in the region now called Dar Kajjar.³⁰¹

Another example of this feature of assimilation of travellers into the Keira social and political structures, again taken from O’Fahey, this time looks to the west where a holy family of ‘political prominence were descended from a Fulani from Bagirmi, ‘Ali b. Yusuf al Futuwi.’³⁰² This characteristic was not isolated to the Sultanate

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 47

³⁰⁰ R.S O’Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p. 164-167.

³⁰¹ Ibid, p. 136.

³⁰² Ibid p.167.

proper, but was common practice in the Sahelian region. The acceptance and accommodation of travellers across the Sahel served an important purpose for the Sultanate. As the organisational structure of the Keira Sultanate expanded, the Sultanate benefited politically and economically from incorporating outsiders that were literate, educated in Islamic law and who were dependent on the Sultan for their place in Darfuri society. This feature of the Keira Sultanate to integrate literate travellers into the administrative structure of the state was characteristic of a wider tendency throughout Darfur to accommodate “outsiders”.

The Baggara of southern Darfur and Kordofan demonstrate an equivalent willingness to integrate and assimilate non-Baggara into their social structure. Ian Cunnison, whose influential anthropological study remains the most comprehensive work on the political, economic and social systems of the Baggara, explains this tendency towards incorporating “strangers” into the group. Cunnison describes the employment of Dinka herdsmen to tend to care for the cattle of wealthy Baggara as an example of a temporary relationship between the Baggara and outsiders.³⁰³ In addition, Cunnison also provides evidence that total integration of outsiders was possible through intermarriage which ensured the acceptance and unreserved inclusion of Dinka, Nuba, Fur and other non-Baggara into Baggara society. Slaves also could become members of Baggara society, as Cunnison explains:

At any time a slave could be freed by being declared freed by his owner. A slave was his owners “son”; a freed slave (atig) became a “brother”...Once

³⁰³ Ian Cunnison, *The Baggara Arabs*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 67.

liberated, a male slave and his offspring were Arabs and full members of the surra and tribe.³⁰⁴

The most important point to note is that regardless of the ethnic origins of the freed slave, the Baggara not only incorporated the new member into the social system but also totally assimilated the former slave into the culture “awarding” them with the ethnicity of the group as a right of inclusion.

Frequent intermarriages combined with the assimilation of “slaves” are examples of the fluidity of ethnic identities in the region. These examples emphasise that the tendency towards assimilation was common trait of Darfur during the Keira period. The assimilation of travellers, and migrants from the east and west assisted in the consolidation of the Keira’s rule in the region and the expansion of Islam into Darfur.

4.4 Islam and the Keira Sultanate: Assimilation and Integration through Islamisation in Darfur

Islam is a vitally important feature for understanding Darfuri society and the place of Darfur in the wider regional context.³⁰⁵ O’Fahey emphasizes that the relationship between politics and religion in Darfur is one of religious subordination to the state, except for ‘times of stress or political upheaval’ when the religious leadership are able to exercise greatest authority.³⁰⁶ Islam has played an important role in the history of Darfur as a corollary of state-building and in defining identity in the region

³⁰⁴Ibid, p. 67.

³⁰⁵ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: The case of the Sudan*, London: Routledge, 1978, p. ix, contends, in the preface, that ‘an overwhelming impact of Islam on Sudanese culture and politics’ is evident. Warburg sums up the centrality of the Islamic and Islamizing forces in shaping Sudanese politics and society.

³⁰⁶ R.S. O’Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 126.

There is a comprehensive literature attesting to the formation of Islamic societies in Africa out of the continual interaction between introduced Islamic practices and beliefs and the indigenous rituals and traditions that pre-dated Islam.³⁰⁷ The Darfuri history of Islam and Islamisation is no exception to this rule; in fact, it is an archetype of this historical process.³⁰⁸

It is widely accepted that Islam spread gradually and peacefully into the region, as I.R Lapidus summarises in his excellent study of Islam:

Whereas Islamic societies in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent were established by conquest and ordered by states, Islam in Africa was diffused by the migration of Muslim merchants, teachers and settlers.³⁰⁹

Darfur's experience in terms of the spread of Islam shared numerous similarities with the pattern across much of West Africa and down the East African Coast as Muslim traders, diplomats and preachers moved amongst Africa's rulers spreading the ideas and rituals of Islam. In Darfur, Islam was initially adopted by the royal family; again it was not an uncommon occurrence for Islam to be established amongst the rulers before diffusion through the rest of society. In time, the ruling elite of Darfur found that there were clear advantages in practising the same religion as the Keira royalty

³⁰⁷ Ali Mazrui has written extensively on the issue of Islam in Africa, including Ali Mazrui, "Black Africa and the Arabs," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 4, 1975, pp. 725-742 and also "Religion and Political Culture in Africa," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. LIII, No.4, 1985, pp. 817-839. Also for an empirically comprehensive study of the way that Islam spread into Africa and the way that it has lent itself to adaption in the African context see, I. M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

³⁰⁸ R.S. O'Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, pp. 212-225 for an explanation of the adoption and adaption of Islam by the Keira Sultanate.

³⁰⁹ I. M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, p. 400.

and embraced Islam as well. But it was not until the nineteenth century that Islam developed into the religion of Darfur's rulers and ruled alike.³¹⁰

Dating the arrival of Islam to the Darfur region is difficult. The colonial British historian Arthur E. Robinson believed that the first Arab tribes arrived in Darfur as far back as 641 A.D.³¹¹ Ali Mazrui claims that the traditions that exist amongst groups in the region suggest a migration from Arabia into eastern Africa shortly after the death of the prophet Mohammed.³¹² The likelihood of Arab migrants travelling eastward across the Sudan from the seventh and eighth centuries is compelling. Reverse travel towards Arabia across Darfur occurred at least by the thirteenth century as Islamic states took root in West Africa. There is even a probability that Muslim pilgrims from West Africa, leaving to undertake the Hajj to Mecca, crossed Darfur in an even earlier period.³¹³ As a result of the early migration of Arabs from the east and the pilgrimage trail that passed either through or near Darfur from the west, the peoples of Darfur were more than likely exposed to Muslims and to Islamic ideas in a period preceding the establishment of the Keira Sultanate in the seventeenth century. O'Fahey's argument that the Keira Sultanate was a revival of earlier Islamic states in Darfur, most notably the Tunjur and the Daju,³¹⁴ points to an Islamic influence in Darfur from the early Middle Ages at least, if not sometime earlier. The uncertainty regarding the date of the entry is further confused by the slow pace at which Islam spread in Darfur. By the beginning of the eighteenth century Islam had hardly penetrated beyond the royal family and the itinerant holy men who had been absorbed by the Sultanate. The

³¹⁰ R.S O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p. 125, R.S. O'Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 231.

³¹¹ Arthur E. Robinson, "The Arab Dynasty of Dar For (Darfur)," *African Affairs*, Vol. XXVIII, No. CIX, 1928, pp. 55-67

³¹² Ali A. Mazrui, "Religion and Political Culture in Africa," p. 822.

³¹⁴ R. S. O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p. 108.

relatively delayed expansion of Islam into this region is surprising, considering the fact that Darfur existed at the crossroads between Islamic West Africa and the Arab east. Rather less surprising was the speed of the expansion and the vigour of the appropriation of Islam in Darfur with the expansion of the Keira Sultanate in the eighteenth century.

The process of Islamisation in Darfur was accelerated by deliberate state policy and achieved by assimilating itinerant holy men into the government apparatus; often with the dual authority over religious affairs and government matters in the areas in which they were assigned.³¹⁵ As a result, the Keira Sultanate was transformed by both the influence of Islam and Islam's accompanying Arabic language and culture. Despite a deliberate government policy to encourage Islamic practices in Darfur, O'Fahey remarks that:

The Islamization of the peoples of Darfur was a very uneven process...From nominal conversion, via the insinuation of Islamic practices or interpretations into traditional beliefs, to an acceptance of Islamic/Arabic culture represents an almost infinite gradation...³¹⁶

This uneven expansion of Islam, and complementary Arabic language and culture into Darfur can be explained in terms of a common pattern of Islamisation in Africa; the indigenization or "Africanization" of Islam. Indigenous beliefs and customs, the historical context, so to say, in which Muslim preachers and teachers found themselves, had a profound affect on the Islamic culture that eventuated. Darfur was no different in this regard with Islam during the age of the Sultanate remaining

³¹⁵ R.S. O'Fahey, *State and Society in Darfur*, pp. 55-62.

³¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 122.

profoundly influenced by pre-Islamic indigenous beliefs and customs.³¹⁷ Even so, the transformative influence of the Islamic push into Darfur cannot be underestimated. As noted, O’Fahey in particular has argued, that at the beginning of the eighteenth century Islamic culture hardly impinged on the life of the majority of the subjects of the Keira Sultanate. The expansion of the Keira Sultanate in the eighteenth and nineteenth century led to the development of a centralized state bureaucracy, a legal code, an ideology of state, and a basis on which diplomatic relations could be undertaken with neighbours. Islam and Arabic, through the literacy, learning and linkages beyond Darfur brought by Muslim migrants, provided the basis on which the Keira state was able to develop the institutions and norms on which a successful Islamic state was established. By the nineteenth century, even if Islamic practices in rural areas remained rudimentary, Darfur was a part of the *Dar al-Islam* and through trade, formal diplomatic exchanges with other Islamic states, and the participation in the universal practices of Islam such as the *Hajj* and sending of Darfuri students to the Al-Azhar University, the Keira Sultans maintained Darfur’s connection to the wider world of Islam.

One of the most significant processes which resulted from the growth of Islam was the cultural assimilation that an acceptance of a common religious identity encouraged. Islam played a role in Darfur, and elsewhere, in creating conditions for interdependence and cooperation between groups. Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim probably overstates the unity resulting from the spread of Islam when he argues that Islam had

³¹⁷ R.S. O’Fahey, “Religion and Trade in the Kayra Sultanate of Dar Fur” in Yusuf Fadl Hasan (ed.), *Sudan in Africa*, Khartoum: Institute of African and Asian Studies, 1985, pp. 91-92.

erased differences between the diverse social groups of the Northern Sudan.³¹⁸

Nevertheless, his main point still has much merit:

Islam, the chief motive force behind Arabisation, also, cut across tribal frontiers and with strong emphasis on the brotherhood of all Muslims, irrespective of racial or linguistic differences cemented the Arabised sections of the population...uniting them with those sections of the populations –who accepted Islam but were not likewise Arabised...³¹⁹

Islam provided the tools for the development of a shared cultural legitimacy necessary for any central power to consolidate its rule over a region of great diversity, and in a part of the world where, prior to the expansion of the Keira Sultanate, authority was largely decentralized.

4.5 The Expansion of the Keira Sultanate

Just as the extension of Islam was influenced by the geographical location of Darfur, the economic and political growth and success of the kingdom can be partly attributed to its privileged position at the crossroads of the trade in the central part of the continent. It was the extensive external trade links and other contacts that the Sultanate cultivated that accounted for the economic, military and bureaucratic capacity to support the political expansion of the Sultanate and its consolidation of control over a vast region of the central Sudanic belt.

³¹⁸ Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim, “Arabism, Africanism and Self—Identification in the Sudan” in Dunstan M. Wai, *The Southern Sudan: The problem of national integration*, London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1973, p. 34.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

A.B Theobald writing in the 1960s argued that it was actually the isolation of Darfur that contributed to its success and ability to maintain a long history of independence. According to Theobald's account, Darfur was inaccessible from the north due to desert and in the south the existence of the tsetse fly created an impenetrable barrier to man and beast. In the east, a natural defensive line formed by extensive sand hills (*qoz*) prevented the frequent traversing of this terrain by foreigners.³²⁰ Historical evidence, as already noted, suggests that the contrary was the case. Theobald fails to account for the expansion of transcontinental trade that linked the east to the west and to North Africa, as well as the trade that brought central African goods, especially slaves and ostrich feathers, to the Mediterranean in the late middle ages.³²¹

The centrality of trade to the success of the Sultanate influenced the composition and politics of the government and its administration in a number of ways.³²² First, slave-raiding necessitated the establishment and maintenance of a large and well-equipped military. Not only was the act of slave-raiding based on the use of the military force but the region inhabited by the Baggara was located between the Sultanate and the areas from where slaves and other trade goods were forcibly procured. Only a large military force was capable of ensuring the booty from the raids did not fall into the hands of Baggara raiders on the return journey. And it was only the Sultan who possessed the means to maintain such a large force and undertake an endeavour as expensive as raiding for slaves. which '...is a very special sort of economic enterprise. Slaving is essentially stealing, but it is a social act-requiring military

³²⁰ A.B. Theobald, *Ali Dinar; Last Sultan of Darfur, 1896-1916*, London: Longmans, Green, 1965, p. 1.

³²¹ R.S. O'Fahey, "Religion and Trade in the Kayra Sultanate of Dar Fur", p. 92.

³²² P.M. Holt, "Egypt, the Funj and Darfur" in Richard Gray (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Africa: From c. 1600 to c. 1790*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 22.

organization to work on a significant scale.’³²³ The result was that the slave trade was centrally coordinated and controlled by the state.

Secondly, with the Sultanate’s interests so heavily invested in trade, especially the slave trade, it was necessary to protect the long north-east trade routes to Egypt on which the caravans of goods traversed. In particular, the famous *darb al-arba’in* (the forty-day road) from Darfur to Egypt passed through regions beyond the control of the Keira Sultanate. To assure valuable goods were not lost the Sultan endeavoured the further extension and consolidation of the boundaries of the kingdom into the semi-arid and arid north. With the expansion of the army, the Keira were able to conquer the surrounding regions and secure the northern and eastern borders, bringing disparate groups inhabiting the northern frontiers of the Sultanate under direct political control. The result was the creation of variegated “ethnic” kingdom that stretched from west of the Jebel Marra Mountains, north to the southerly limits of the Sahara and eventually also to encompass Kordofan in the east.³²⁴

The southern regions were always an area which was outside the direct control of the Sultanate. It seems that the south remained unconquered despite the best efforts of successive Keira Sultans to subordinate the Baggara to the power and authority of the state. With conquest difficult and often beyond the means of the power of the Sultanate, an alternative relationship based on interaction and exchange evolved between the Fur and Baggara along either side of the southern boundary of the Keira

³²³ Frederick Cooper, “Africa and the World Economy”, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 24, No.2/3, 1981, p. 24.

³²⁴ R.S. O’Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 37 and p. 79, are two occasions when O’Fahey stresses the development of the multi-ethnic nature of the Keira Sultanate. R.S. O’Fahey, *Arabic Literature of Africa: The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c.1900*, Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill 1997, p. 1 stresses that multi-ethnicity was a feature of all three Sudanic Sultanates of the pre-colonial era, in Darfur, Wadai and Funj.

domains. At times, relations were formalized through intermarriage between members of the Keira royal family and members of the Baggara ruling families.³²⁵ In addition, the cooperation between the Keira and the Baggara extended to include the raiding for slaves, from which both the Keira and Baggara profited.³²⁶

Thirdly, the geographical expansion of the Sultanate beyond the Jebel Marra demanded the relocation of the Sultan's capital from deep within Fur territory to an area bordering the lands of the Zaghawa, Beni Helba and other groups whose contribution was central to the success of the Sultanate. According to Sharif Harir, the Keira recognised the multi-ethnic identity of the Sultanate and endeavoured to assimilate other ethnic groups into the state:

As the Sultanate gradually extended itself from the Jebel Marra massif, the vehicle for which had been a combination of affinal ties in which women crossed ethnic borders in marriages and thus cemented relations with the rulers and predatory expansion by military force, the Fur sultans brought into their orbit, as tributaries as well as incorporated territories, other ethnic groups.³²⁷

The Keira had for a long time neglected the eastern frontier as it focused on relations with its western neighbour. The concentration on affairs to the west of the kingdom altered gradually as trade to the east expanded, especially the lucrative trade with Egyptian merchants. Prior to the eighteenth century contact with the east was minimal. The establishment of a secure northern frontier was a prelude to future expansion to the east. In addition, agreement in the west with Wadai on a fixed

³²⁵ Sharif Harir, "'Arab Belt' versus 'African Belt'", p. 152. Harir here comments on the way that the Fur cemented relationships with neighbours by marrying Fur princesses to rulers from other groups, both conquered groups and those the Fur were unable to subjugate, such as the Baggara.

³²⁶ R.S. O'Fahey, "Religion and Trade in the Kayra Sultanate of Dar Fur", p. 92.

³²⁷ Sharif Harir, "'Arab' Belt versus 'African' Belt," p.152.

boundary and the delineation of borders marked by stone cairns and walls constituting a demilitarised zone between the two kingdoms providing the Keira with the security to focus its attention eastward when the moment arose.³²⁸ In the eighteenth century, Darfur began to trade extensively with the Egyptians. The growing levels of trade with the east was a crucial change that was to affect the Keira Sultanate and would influence the region in a profound and irreversible way. Regardless of the Keira's decision to extend the boundaries of the Sultanate eastward or not, it was likely that the expansionism of Egypt under Muhammad 'Ali Pasha in the nineteenth century would inevitably have forced Darfur into close contact with the Eastern Sudan.

In the late eighteenth century under the rule of the Keira Sultan Muhammad Tayrab the kingdom reached its apogee with the conquest of Kordofan in 1784/85.³²⁹ The Sultan Muhammad Tayrab was at the head of the invading army which was comprised of the elite heavy cavalry, lightly armoured horsemen drawn from the Baggara, lightly armed contingent of slaves, and detachments from other groups that owed allegiance or tribute to the Sultan. The composition of the army symbolized the multi-ethnic character of the Sultanate which was able to draw troops from the diverse communities across the Sultan's domain. Darfur's armies defeated the Sultan Hāshim, the Musabba'āt ruler of Kordofan, and occupied the region which became a part of the kingdom of the Keira Sultanate until 1821. Muhammad Tayrab then set his sights on invading the territories of the Funj. The invasion was abandoned with the death of the elderly Sultan at Omdurman, or possibly at Shendi, as each of the aspirants for the

³²⁸ R.S. O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p. 134.

³²⁹ Rex S. O'Fahey and Jay L. Spaulding, "Hāshim and the Musabba'āt," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1972, pp. 316-333 explores the history of the Musabba'āt Sultanate that ruled Kordofan in the period prior to the Keira conquest. R.S. O'Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 55 argues that Sultan Muhammad Tayrab viewed the invasion as a way of securing succession to the throne for his son.

throne hastened back to rally support for the struggle for Sultan's throne.³³⁰ 'Abd al-Rahman emerged from the struggle, and ascended to the throne of the most powerful kingdom in the eastern Sudan.

4.6 Trade and Power: The Pre-Colonial Economy of Darfur

In the two centuries of Keira expansion across Darfur, the wealth of the Sultanate was guaranteed by a monopoly over long distance trade. In the 1790s, the English traveller W. G Browne was the first European to publish an account of the Keira Sultanate. Browne's account revealed that merchants from territories as far a field as Egypt, Tunis, Tripoli, Dongola, Nubia and Kordofan regularly visited Darfur.³³¹ The most famous and the most lucrative trade route that originated in Darfur was the aptly named *darb al-arba'in* (the forty day road) which was a forty-day trip from Darfur to the markets of Egypt. The most treasured of the 'items' that the Sultanate traded with its northern neighbours were the slaves captured by the Sultan's raiding parties and transported northwards by the merchants in the employ of the Sultan. The importance of trade from Darfur for Egypt should not be underestimated, for by 'the mid-19th century the sultanate supplied Egypt with 25% of its imports...' ³³²

The reputation that Darfur had acquired in Egypt for providing slaves prompted Napoleon to send a request to the Keira Sultan 'Abd al-Rahman for '... 2,000 black

³³⁰ R.S. O'Fahey *The Darfur Sultanate*, pp. 55-62 where the author describes the role played by the powerful royal slave Kurra in the ascension of 'Abd al-Rahman as Sultan after the death of Muhammad Tayrab in which the intrigues of the succession are explained.

³³¹ William G. Browne, *Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria from the year 1792 to 1798*, London: Elibron Classics, 2005, pp.180-293 covers the time that Browne was in Darfur.

³³² R.S. O'Fahey and Jerome Tubiana, "Darfur: Historical and Contemporary Aspects," p. 9, <http://www.smi.uib.no/darfur/A%20DARFUR%20WHOS%20WHO3.pdf>

slaves over sixteen years old, strong and vigorous.’³³³ Napoleon had occupied Alexandria and Cairo in 1798 and felt that he could supplement his army with a contingent of Black African auxiliaries in what was perceived to be the eastern tradition. Napoleon’s position in Egypt became untenable before the request for slaves could have been fulfilled but once the French were expelled from Egypt the trade between Egypt and Darfur was revived.

Black slaves were always prized possessions in Egypt, but in the nineteenth century they became even more valuable as the Egyptian Khedive Muhammad ‘Ali (1769-1849) embarked on a modernization program. Muhammad ‘Ali’s program included an increase in the size of the military, and the establishment of numerous labour intensive agricultural and industrial projects, which created a greater demand for slave labour.³³⁴ Other than slaves, items, such as ivory, tamarind, rhinoceros horn and ostrich feathers, were also prized in foreign markets. In return, the Sultanate imported spices, soap, fine cloth, jewellery and military equipment.³³⁵ And, while Egypt was an important passageway for consumer goods and arms, Egypt was also the ‘highway for the transmission of books, students and scholars travelling in both ways.’³³⁶ Regardless of the demand in Egypt and other North African kingdoms for luxury goods such as ostrich feathers and ivory, it was only the Sultanate’s capacity to

³³³ Captain Vertray, *Journal d'un officier de Varmee d'Egypte: Victoires, conquetes, desastres, revers et guerres civile des Frangais de 1792*, Paris: 1883, quoted in J. Christopher Herold, *Bonaparte in Egypt*, London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962, p. 212.

³³⁴ Robert O. Collins and Robert L. Tignor, *Egypt and the Sudan*, London: Prentice Hall, 1967, pp. 53-59.

³³⁵ Keith Johnston, *Africa*, London: Edward Saxfoed, 1884, p.191 accessed at http://www.archive.org/stream/africakeith00john/africakeith00john_djvu.txt, refers to Nachtigal’s earlier travels through Darfur and states, ‘For many centuries an annual caravan used to come hence to Egypt, bringing ivory and gimis, ostrich feathers and slaves, which were disposed of there to advantage ; and the merchants returned with manufactured goods, powder and shot, and weapons, to their native country. The chief export of Darfur, however, was slaves, the most of them the property of the Emir, who was the greatest tradesman of his dominions.’

³³⁶ R.S. O’Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 69.

deliver a large number of slaves that made Darfur an important component of African trade for Egypt in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The early years of the nineteenth century was a period of strength for Darfur as strong trade relations with Egypt, control over Kordofan and a weakened Funj state in the east provided the conditions for the pre-eminence of the Keira Sultanate in the eastern Sahel. The level of trade between Darfur and its northern neighbours are difficult to estimate but Browne believed that the Sultan's caravans carried over £100,000 in goods to Egypt.³³⁷ The wealth attained from trade allowed the Sultanate to equip and sustain a large standing army comprised of heavily armoured horseman, known as *fursan* (Arabic for knights) and lightly armed slaves.³³⁸ Also, the control of long distance-trade provided the resources for the Sultan to maintain a large civil administration under his authority. Due to the control that the state was able to maintain over long-distance trade an independent merchant class was virtually non-existent in Darfur until late into the nineteenth century. It was the wealth and power that accrued from dominating trade that allowed the Sultans to decrease their dependence on the estate-holders and centralize power over the state.

Another of the fundamentals on which the stability and success of the Sultanate was based was the control over the land tenure system, known locally as *hakura*.³³⁹ The basic elements of the *hakura* system resemble, in some notable ways, the feudal system of Europe with land title designated by the Keira Sultans to members of the

³³⁷ P.M Holt, "Egypt, the Funj and Darfur", 1975, p. 15.

³³⁸ R.S. O'Fahey, *State and Society in Darfur*, p. 95.

³³⁹ G.M. La Rue, "Land and Social Stratification in the Darfur Region of the Sudan: The Hakura System" in Clive Dewey, (ed.), *The State and the Market: Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Third World*, London: Sangam Books, 1988, pp. 24-44, presents a comprehensive review of the Hakura system drawn from a PhD on the same topic.

royal family, aristocracy, and military and religious leaders in return for military service when required, the collection of taxes and the administration and regulation of the peasantry. R. S. O’Fahey has cautioned against viewing *Hakura* as corresponding to feudalism even as some of the features were similar, preferring to see it as a system which evolved to meet the particular needs of the Sultanate’s expansion and dominion of diverse communities across the Darfur region. However, O’Fahey’s caution is most emphatic when addressing the question of authority over land and land allocation. His strongest warning is in regards to the question of proprietorial rights over land which he states,

...were never freehold or in anyway absolute in any Anglo-American legal sense. All such grants were given and could be taken away at the behest of the sultan; eminent domain applied in Darfur as else-where. The sultan was the state.³⁴⁰

Hakura operated based on communal land tenure with access to the land allocated to a designated group. Usufructury land use would fall to individual members of the community who would be expected to maintain the cultivation of the land on a continuous basis or the land would be considered unoccupied.³⁴¹ Sedentary groups, especially those located in the heartland of the Sultanate benefited most, as O’Fahey explains, from the *hakura* system but the system was not necessarily designed to advantage one ethnic group over others. With surplus land and water available to all groups, neither sedentary farmers nor pastoralists were disadvantaged by the allocation of lands. Rather, the system was a way of effectively managing human and

³⁴⁰ Sean O’Fahey, “Professor Mamdani and Darfur: Some Comments on the Land Issue,” Making Sense of Darfur, SSRIC Blogs, <http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/darfur/2009/04/20/prof-mamdani-and-darfur-some-comments-on-the-land-issue/>

³⁴¹ It was mandatory aspect of the *hakura* system that land would not be left fallow for more or three years in which case occupancy would be reclaimed by the *sheikh* for redistribution.

natural resources and for preventing disputes over land. In addition, the Sultan's absolute control of land allocations provided him with the leverage necessary to control the aristocracy. Successive Sultans utilised control over land title to sanction/eradicate real or potential political opponents and to consolidate alliances with leading notables. Land was a powerful mechanism of control which successive Sultans employed to their advantage.

It is a mistake to view the *hakura* system or any other aspect of Darfur as somehow static. By the time of the colonial take-over of Darfur, according to Alex de Waal, *hakura* had evolved into a system of freehold land tenure where land had become 'a valuable commodity and *hakura* owners were wealthy and prestigious.'³⁴² The colonial government brought this practice to an end and instituted what it believed was a "traditional" method of land tenure based on usufruct land rights assigned to tribal chiefs.

The local economy also benefited from the stability and integration of diverse groups into the Sultanate. The economic ties forged between camel nomads and sedentary farmers were particularly important for maintaining balance in the region. G. Halaand's study of ethnicity in Darfur illustrated that the patterns of interdependence in Darfur between nomadic groups and sedentary farming communities were extensive and that these groups had forged strong ties across extremely fluid ethnic boundaries.³⁴³ The fluidity and ethnic crossover in Darfur is used by the eminent anthropologist F. Barth to illustrate the complexities of ethnicity and the relationship between ethnic fluidity and economic interdependence. Barth explains that,

³⁴² Alex De Waal, *Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 49.

³⁴³ G. Halaand, "Nomadization as an Economic Career".

Perhaps the most striking case is that from Darfur provided by Haaland which shows members of the hoe-agricultural Fur of the Sudan changing their identity to that of nomadic cattle Arabs. This process is conditional on a very specific economic circumstance: the absence of investment opportunities for capital in the village economy of the Fur in contrast to the possibilities among the nomads.³⁴⁴

Ian Cunnison's study of the Baggara also identified a level of coexistence and cooperation between sedentary farming communities and nomadic groups which he defined as symbiotic.³⁴⁵ Overall, the anthropological studies conducted in Darfur demonstrated the nexus between ethnicity and economic relations with the study of the the Berti people by L. Holy, a particularly salient example. Holy's study found that as one branch of the Berti shifted from practicing sedentary agriculture to pastoralism there followed a gradual Arabization with linguistic, cultural and ethnic change. The change has been so thorough, that today the Berti of western Darfur and eastern Kordofan identify as Arabs, and '[N] owadays the Berti are incredulous when they are told they have not spoken Arabic since the dawn of time...'³⁴⁶

During the dry season, the camel herders, or *abala*, would travel south in search of water and pastures. The dry season was also the time when farmers left their land fallow allowing the *abala* to travel through Darfur unencumbered. Over time, the farming communities and the *abala* nomads developed robust patterns of cooperation based on economic needs. The farmers allowed the nomad's animals to graze on the

³⁴⁴ Fredrick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference*, Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1969, p. 23.

³⁴⁵ Ian, Cunnison, *Baggara Arabs*.

³⁴⁶ Ladislav Holy, *Religion and Custom in a Muslim Society: The Berti of Sudan*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 20, also see L. Holy, *Neighbours and Kinsmen*.

weeds and grasses to be found in the fallow fields and provided access to water and in exchange the animals would manure the fields. The owners of the animals would barter meat and milk products for grain and vegetables. In this way, a symbiotic relationship was formed between pastoralists and farmers, which the Sultans supervised, and when disputes arose it was the authority of the Sultanate that would provide resolutions. While the bonds between the diverse economic communities in Darfur were formed out of the economic interdependence and intermarriage facilitated by the Sultanate were strong, disputes over access did arise, as the documents of the Keira translated by O’Fahey and Abu Salim³⁴⁷ illustrate, making strong centralized juridical authority a necessary component of stability and security in the region: a fact that should not be lost in terms of recent conflict in Darfur.

4.7 The Decline and Conquest of the Keira Sultanate

The Keira Sultanate’s dominance of the eastern Sudan lasted until the Egyptian expansion into Africa brought a stronger power into the region. The Egyptian ruler Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha, driven by aspirations of defeating the Mamluke threat and of creating an immense slave army, ordered his forces southwards in 1821.³⁴⁸ The decision by Mohammed ‘Ali to expand southwards in the early period of the nineteenth century was influenced by the challenges to Egypt from European colonial powers commencing with Napoleon’s brief conquest of Egypt from 1798 until 1801. In fact, the entire eastern Mediterranean faced upheaval as new forces entered an area which had been undisputedly controlled by the Ottoman Empire since the early

³⁴⁷ R.S. O’Fahey and Abu Salim, *Land in Dar Fur: Charters and Related Documents from the Dar Fur Sultanate*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

³⁴⁸ Hasasn Ahmed Ibrahim, “The Egyptian Empire, 1805-1886’ in M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 204-205. Gabriel Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley*, is an excellent survey of the historical debates in regards to perceptions of the Egyptian involvement and impact on the Sudan, pp.37-42 deals with the Turko-Egyptian period from the three main contending perspectives: Sudanese, Egyptian and British.

sixteenth century. With Ottoman power on the decline vis-à-vis Western Europe since at least the beginning of the eighteenth century, European powers increasingly advanced into the eastern Mediterranean. Egypt became an important locus for the power struggle between empires competing for the control of the lucrative markets of Egypt, Syria and the Red Sea. Darrel Dykstra in his summation of the implications of Napoleon's French invasion of Egypt suggests that throughout the nineteenth century, '...control of Egypt would not be the whole of the "Eastern Question," but it would be part of it, and that would affect Egypt's history on many future occasions.'³⁴⁹ As Egypt became increasingly involved in the affairs of its southern neighbours, the role of Europe's most powerful states would also come to have a major impact on the history of Darfur.

Isma'il Pasha, under orders from father Muhammad 'Ali, set out on 21 February 1821 to extend Egypt's dominions into the *bilad al-Sudan*. In rapid succession, Dongola and then Sinnar surrendered to Isma'il and by 13 June 1821, Isma'il was in command of the domains north of the Funj capital.³⁵⁰ Conquering Darfur would not turn out to be as uncomplicated. Darfur's location some 700 miles to the west of Sinnar proved to be a far more difficult challenge for the Turko-Egyptian forces and it would be over half a century before the Turko-Egyptian forces would finally enter Darfur as conquerors. However, Darfur would not escape completely from the expansion of Egyptian power into the *bilad al-Sudan* at this time. In 1821, Isma'il divided his armies and sent an expeditionary force with somewhere between three and four thousand troops to conquer Darfur under the command of Muhammad Bey

³⁴⁹ Darrell Dykestra, "The French Occupation of Egypt" in M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 134.

³⁵⁰ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, provides a detailed account of the Egyptian expansion into the Sudan in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Khusraw.³⁵¹ On hearing of the invasion of Kordofan, the Sultan Muhammad al-Fadl (1803-1838/1839) dispatched his troops to join with a force organised by the governor of Kordofan, the *Maqdam* Musallim, to face the invaders. The two armies met at Bara in eastern Kordofan where the superior firearms of the invaders crushed the Sultan's army. Muhammad al-Fadl sent a second army to face the invaders in an attempt to recover the province Kordofan was lost and became a part of the Turko-Egyptian Empire. The loss of the Kordofan region to the Turko-Egyptian invaders was a setback from which the Sultanate never fully recovered and which over time seriously weakened the state.³⁵²

Not only had Darfur lost control of a vast region that had contributed both material wealth and military personnel to the Sultanate, but also for the first time in Darfur's modern history a more powerful neighbour threatened its position as the dominant political and military entity in the region. It was not long after the Turko-Egyptian expansion into the Sudan that the Keira's hold on the trade with Egypt in products procured from sub-Saharan Africa came under direct threat from the stronger forces of the invaders. Some blame for the deterioration of trade relations with Egypt rest with the Sultan who retaliated to the loss at Bara by denying Egyptian merchants access to markets in Darfur, so that by the late 1830s, it was reported that caravans from Darfur had all but stopped travelling to Egypt.³⁵³ Subsequently, the Sultanate lost its access to those areas from where it had raided for slaves and other goods which it traded with its northern neighbours. The loss of these substantial trade revenues proved to be a significant blow to the Sultans that ultimately weakened the

³⁵¹ R.S. O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, pp.172-173 for a brief description of Turko-Egyptian invasion of Kordofan and the implications for Darfur.

³⁵² R.S. O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, p.180.

³⁵³ R.S. O'Fahey, *The Darfur Sultanate*, p. 79.

sultanate's ability to resist the Turko-Egyptian forces when they finally decided to incorporate Darfur into their African Empire.

In 1841 the Ottoman Sultan 'Abd al-Majid issued a *ferman* to Muhammad Ali Pasha granting the '...provinces of Nubia, Darfour, Kordofan, and Sennaar, with all their dependencies...' to the Egyptian Viceroy.³⁵⁴ Despite, the Ottoman and Turko-Egyptian claims to Darfur the province remained independent for another three decades after the *ferman* was granted until the ambitious "independent merchant prince" al-Zubayr Rahman Mansur who had set up his considerable empire south of Darfur in what is today the Bahr al-Ghazal region of Sudan decided to send his large army against the Keira Sultanate in 1874. Al-Zubayr had cultivated trade ties with the Baggara as a way of strengthening his position in the border area between the Sultanate and his own expanding African empire. This alliance was short-lived as competition for slaves drove al-Zubayr to launch an invasion of Darfur in 1874.³⁵⁵ Acting in concert with the governor of Kordofan Isma'il Ayyub Pasha, al-Zubayr began his campaign by conquering the Baggara before turning his attention to the conquest of El Fasher.

The Battle of Manawashi in southern Darfur in October 1874 was a disaster for the Keira army and for the Sultanate with the death of Sultan Ibrahim and his elder brother.³⁵⁶ The Sultan's heavily armed knights and spear carrying infantry were no match for al-Zubayr's rifle-bearing *bazingers*. With the Sultan lying dead on the battlefield and the army in disarray, the occupation of El Fasher took place with no further Keira opposition. Al-Zubayr and Isma'il both sought to reach El Fasher before

³⁵⁴ P.M Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 63.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 78.

³⁵⁶ John P. Dunn, *Khedive Ismail's Armies*, Milton Park: Routledge, 2005, pp. 91-92.

the other and it was Zubayr who arrived there first only three days after the Battle of Manawashi. Two days later Isma'il at the head of his army entered the capital. Despite al-Zubayr's achievement in conquering the Keira his rule in Darfur was short lived as he was promptly recalled to Egypt by the Khedive, and remained there under house arrest until his death.

Al-Zubayr justified his decision to invade Darfur on the basis that it was his responsibility as a Muslim to deliver the people from the distorted Islamic practices typical to the region by incorporating Darfur into the *dar al-Islam* of the Ottoman Empire.³⁵⁷ Whether Zubayr believed in this religious mission he described, or not, the final incorporation of Darfur into the Ottoman Empire was in no way incidental to Turko-Egyptian plans as shown by the request by Muhammad 'Ali for a *ferman* in 1841, thirty years before the actual conquest took place. Darfur's long history as an independent Islamic Sultanate mattered little as far as the Sublime Porte was concerned. The Ottoman Sultan believed that Darfur was his to dispense with as he wished, and in 1874 the decision was reached that al-Zubayr would relinquish Darfur so that it could be placed under the jurisdiction of the Turko-Egyptian Khedive on behalf of the Sultan. The era of the Keira Sultans seemed to be at an end.

4.8 The Turko-Egyptian Occupation: 1874- 1898

The Turko-Egyptian administration of Darfur ran into a number of problems. Firstly, the foreign rulers lacked legitimacy. Secondly, the last Sultan to rule was succeeded by brothers and sons each equally entitled to the throne and who continued the struggle for independence. Thirdly, the Turko-Egyptian administration of Sudan was

³⁵⁷ R.S. O'Fahey, "Some Recent Sudanese Biographies, Memoirs and Histories (including music): A bibliographic note", *Sudanic Africa*, Vol. 6, 1995, p. 139.

weakened by the destabilising events that had overtaken Egypt, such as the bankruptcy of Egypt in 1876, and the subsequent Anglo-French administration of the economy. The few resources available to the new rulers for governing Sudan combined with a widespread popular resistance undermined any effort at effective administration. These problems, according to Theobald, restricted government to the major cities and urban centres such as Omdurman and Khartoum in the east and El Fasher in Darfur.³⁵⁸ The lawlessness and insecurity in many rural areas which were left without any effective government, O’Fahey remarks are still remembered by the people of Darfur, as the “years of banditry”.³⁵⁹

Darfur seemed to experience the most negative affects of poor administration at a time when the Turko-Egyptian government in Cairo was collapsing under the pressure of a huge foreign debt and Anglo-French violation of Egyptian sovereignty. It is, on the whole, important to place the Turko-Egyptian rule over Sudan in the context of Egypt’s growing economic indebtedness to Britain and France, and the political instability that economic problems caused for successive Egyptian rulers from the 1840s onwards.³⁶⁰ While the period of Turko-Egyptian domination of Sudan was depicted as a period of severe economic decline and famine across Sudan by colonial historians³⁶¹, there is now a body of revisionist history that questions accuracy of the British portrayal of the Turko-Egyptian administration of the Sudanese regions as

³⁵⁸ A.B Theobald, *‘Ali Dinar*, p. 21.

³⁵⁹ R.S. O’Fahey, *State and Society*, p. 12.

³⁶⁰ There is a comprehensive literature on the cause and affect of the indebtedness of the Egyptian government to British and French creditors which led to the financial takeover of the country and then the British conquest of 1882. The concern here is that as the Egyptian government went into economic and financial crisis the administration of Sudan also suffered. For a study of the debt and the takeover of Egypt by the “dual controllers” and the continuing debate over the reasons for Gladstone’s government decision to order the British invasion and occupation of Egypt, see R. C. Mowat, “From Liberalism to Imperialism: The Case of Egypt 1875-1887,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1973, pp. 109-124, also Alexander Scholch, “The ‘Men on the Spot’ and the English Occupation of Egypt in 1882,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1976, pp. 773-785.

³⁶¹ Gabriel R. Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Sudan*, pp. 11-29.

an era of brutality and ruin.³⁶² Undoubtedly, there was maladministration and pillaging, but overall the economic performance and the development of the Sudanese regions under Turko-Egyptian rule was varied. Muhammad ‘Ali’s expectations that the lands of the Sudan would provide a source of easily extractable gold and labour from which he could finance the expansion of his military proved to be a huge miscalculation. The result of the endeavour proved disappointing, and rather than finding the wealth that Muhammad ‘Ali and his descendants desired, ‘...the whole of the Turkiyya, witnessed attempts by Egypt to make its southern Empire profitable.’³⁶³

Turko-Egyptian expansion into Sudan led to an increase in the gum trade, live cattle exports, and the sale of hides. In addition, the introduction of cash crops such as sugar, coffee and indigo stimulated the economy in certain areas. The failure of industrialisation projects was mitigated by the successful expansion of the export trade in gum arabic. Daly asserts that as early as 1827-28 the gum trade reached 1,270 metric tonnes. As British and French influence in Egypt increased during the 1800s, European merchant capital, in particular, began to take an interest in the Turko-Egyptian Sudan. In 1843, the last state monopoly in Sudan was abolished by the Khedive, under pressure from Britain, and soon afterwards, trade was fostered between Europe and Sudan. Trade routes expanded and trade flourished and in, ‘...1879 annual exports from Suakin had a declared value of £E254, 000, and in 1880 some 758 vessels were said to have called.’³⁶⁴

³⁶² Gabriel R. Warburg, “The Turko-Egyptian Sudan: A Recent Historiographical Controversy,” *Die Welt des Islams*, Bd. 31, Nr. 2, 1991, pp. 193-215, presents recent Egyptian scholarship of the Turko-Egyptian period that challenges the British and Sudanese accounts of Egyptian mistreatment, incompetence and exploitation of the Sudan.

³⁶³ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1898-1934*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.193.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

Alongside the efforts at economic development by the Turko-Egyptian administration in the Sudan, infrastructural projects were inaugurated including the spread of the telegraph, which extended to around 3000 miles of line by 1880. Cultivable land along the Nile was expanded, leading to a greater quantity of agricultural produce available for sale at markets. Trade led to the expansion of the port at Suakin and loading stations were constructed along the Nile to support the transportation of goods from Sudan to Egypt.³⁶⁵ There is much evidence that the Turko-Egyptian rule over the Sudanese region was more complex than the one-dimensional depictions relayed by colonial historians who focused on slavery and taxation to compose a very negative depiction of Turko-Egyptian rule in Sudan. British designs for the Sudan and late nineteenth century Victorian egoism and the British belief in the “white man’s burden” ensured the Turko-Egyptian period would receive only the harshest assessment from historians. The significance of Turko-Egyptian rule, whether positive or negative, were not experienced in Darfur to anywhere the same level they were in the rest of the northern Sudan, due to the brevity of the interlude of the foreign occupation. Another factor inhibiting the Turko-Egyptian legacy in Darfur was the strength of the resistance to the foreign rulers.

While the Turko-Egyptians had no difficulty in occupying the main population centres in Darfur, the country was never completely pacified. The Keira Sultans had much less difficulty than the conquerors in ensuring effective government over the peripheries of the Sultanate. O’Fahey argues that the power of the Sultanate was based on a combination of economic dependency, affilial ties, legitimacy and military

³⁶⁵ Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, “The Egyptian Empire,” pp. 204-216 provides a succinct account of the Turko-Egyptian rule in Sudan.

force.³⁶⁶ The Sultanates power over groups was connected to the ties engendered by the granting of lands and the incorporation of members from disparate groups throughout Darfur into the hierarchy of the ruling group. In addition, intermarriage was an important method of forging alliances across the region. Thus, O'Fahey argues that, '...the Sultanate may be seen structurally as a series of zones radiating out from the centre in each of which the nature and strength of the ruler's authority varied.'³⁶⁷ The difficulties faced by the conquerors of Darfur in the late nineteenth century went beyond the pacification of southern dissidents as residual support for the Sultanate engendered continuing agitation against the foreign occupiers. The Keira Sultanate may have lost formal control but throughout the period of foreign rule in Darfur there is every indication, from the evidence of numerous uprisings that the Sultans continued to command a level of legitimacy and appeal that the Turko-Egyptian administration was unable to develop.

4.9 The Defeat of the Turko-Egyptian Regime: The Mahdiyya in Darfur

General Charles George Gordon whose death at Khartoum in 1885 forms the basis of an entire mythology of the savagery and fanaticism of Mahdism was dispatched to Darfur as Governor General of the Turko-Egyptian Sudanese Administration in 1878 to quell serious rioting in the western province. The rebelliousness that Gordon experienced in Darfur against the Turko- Egyptian occupation was not the last to be inspired by religious leadership. Insurgencies against foreign rule in this period were partly inspired by *fakis* and partly from loyalty to the indigenous rulers. Gordon was unable to restore complete order in Darfur, before he was summoned to face equally

³⁶⁶ R.S O'Fahey, *State and Society*, p. 81.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

serious disturbances in the east of the Turko-Egyptian Sudan.³⁶⁸ Events were rapidly overtaking Gordon and the administration he governed. The Turko-Egyptian regime in Sudan was descending into a state of anarchy and despite Gordon's attempts to resurrect administrative control over the occupied territories widespread dissatisfaction was increasing.

The causes of the Mahdist revolt have been the subject of ongoing debate.³⁶⁹ The overwhelming consensus has tended towards explaining the widespread rebellion as a reaction to the exploitative Turko-Egyptian regime installed throughout the Sudan, and the Sudanese opposition to the crusade against slavery. General Gordon is reported to have stated while at Cairo on route to Khartoum that he was 'convinced that it is an entire mistake to regard the Mahdi as in any sense a religious leader: he personifies popular discontent.'³⁷⁰ The religious dimension to the uprising cannot be completely dismissed, as Gordon does, as it was the strength of the conviction in the Mahdi that inspired so many people from Darfur and elsewhere in northern Sudan to join the rebellion. Nevertheless, it was ultimately a popular movement of discontent against the Turko-Egyptian rulers, as Samir Amin explains:

The Mahdist revolt, 1881-98, was a rebellion of those oppressed...the people of the village communities, the slave-peasants of the estates and the craftsmen, slavers and beggars of the market towns.³⁷¹

³⁶⁸ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 54.

³⁶⁹ Gabriel Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley*, also Peter Malcolm Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881-189: A study of its origins*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.

³⁷⁰ Charles Gordon quoted in "The Sudan", *Science: American Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol.4, No. 97, 1884, p. 531.

³⁷¹ Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Origins and Contemporary Forms", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1972, pp. 502-24.

The force of the rebellion across the Sudan emphasises the dissatisfaction felt in those areas that came under the domination of the Turko-Egyptian regime. As mentioned, it was the Mahdist movement's Islamic character that proved so incredibly powerful in mobilising and uniting the various groups across a region of great diversity. In historical context, it is difficult to disconnect the analysis of the Turko-Egyptian politico-economic system in Sudan from the debt crisis that gripped Egypt in the 1870s.³⁷² The impressive industrialisation project that had been undertaken by Muhammad 'Ali in the first half of the nineteenth century was undone in the following half century as Egyptian debt to British and French creditors provided the basis, if not the motive, for British interference and control of Egypt.³⁷³ Markets were opened to cheaper British manufactures and the Egyptian economy was forced to reorient towards the production and export of cotton, which serviced the textile factories of Lancashire.³⁷⁴ Harsh taxation and the exploitation of labour and natural resources ensued which led to further discontent throughout the region. But, pressure on the administrators of the Sudan to extract more taxation was one side of the Turko-Egyptian legacy in Sudan. The fiscal problems faced by the Turko-Egyptian rulers prevented the continuation of the development projects which had been commenced in the first half of the nineteenth century, was the other side. Projects such as the Egyptian- Sudan railway, the telegraph lines linking Egypt with Sudan, or the nascent industrialisation and the expansion of agricultural production were curtailed as funds dried up.

³⁷² Charles P. Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, pp. 36-43.

³⁷³ John S. Galbraith and Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot, "The British Occupation of Egypt: Another View", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1978, pp. 471-488.

³⁷⁴ Ehud R. Toledano, "Social and Economic Change in the 'long nineteenth century'" in M.W. Daly, *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 272.

In Darfur, the autocratic nature of the Turko-Egyptian regime, and the very real possibility of liberation, mobilised the population to enlist in the Mahdist revolt. Darfur revolted after they received news that British officer William Hicks and his army had been surrounded at Shaykan, just south of El Obeid in Kordofan, and the entire Anglo-Egyptian force annihilated. The Turko-Egyptian governor of Darfur Austrian Rudolph Slatin realised the precariousness of his situation and promptly submitted to a subordinate of his, Muhammad Khalid, who happened to be a cousin of the Mahdi.³⁷⁵ The period of Turko-Egyptian rule ended when the Mahdi and his army of *Ansar* (Arabic followers or supporters) overran the entire country, rapidly reducing the foreign presence to a small force holding out under the leadership of Gordon at Khartoum. Even this remnant of the Turko-Egyptian African force was destroyed when Khartoum fell to the Mahdi's forces in the early hours of January 26, 1885.³⁷⁶

The reign of the Mahdi was short lived, as Muhammad Ahmad died suddenly, not long after the conquest of Khartoum.³⁷⁷ After his death, the Mahdi was succeeded by the 'Abdallahi ibn Muhammad of the Ta'aisha group from southern Darfur. The death of the Mahdi represents a clear point of departure. While the Mahdi lived, he was dedicated to eschatological expansionism that was embodied in the personae and worldview expectant of the Mahdi. With his death, the ideology of global expansion was replaced by practical considerations grounded in the consolidation of rule. The change in leadership was not an upheaval, for as Holt and Daly's argue, even before

³⁷⁵ P.M Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 92.

³⁷⁶ As mentioned the death of Gordon has inspired many accounts of his heroism and of the character of the dervishes and Muslim fanatics that followed the Mahdi.

³⁷⁷ John Voll, "The Sudanese Mahdi: Frontier Fundamentalist", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1979, pp. 145-166, Richard H. Dekmejian and Margaret J. Wyszomirski, "Charismatic Leadership in Islam: The Mahdi of the Sudan", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1972, pp. 193-214, P.M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881-1898*.

the death of the Mahdi '...a large part of the substance of power was already held by the Khalifa 'Abdallahi.'³⁷⁸ Holt and Daly also explain the transition from the Mahdiyya to the Khalifat as:

...the passing of the Mahdist theocracy and the creation of a personal rule exercised through a bureaucracy, largely composed of Sudanese civil servants inherited from the Turko-Egyptian regime.³⁷⁹

Even with the acquisition of power over the Sudan and with the total expulsion of the Turko-Egyptian administration, the Mahdist state continued fighting. A constant state of war, with the Turko-Egyptian forces from 1885-1887, rebellion in Darfur 1887-89, with the Italians in 1893-94 and with the Belgians in 1894, determined the political and economic structure of the Mahdist state.

The gold and silver acquired from warfare became the basis of the first Sudanese currency and throughout the period of the Mahdist state taxation was supplemented by the spoils of war and the acquisitions associated with the suppression of disloyal Sudanese rebels. Norman O'Neill explains that the military requirements of the state were to take priority and as a result,

...increased trade, prompted by a war economy that had stimulated the manufacture of gun-powder and cartridges, boots, shoes and clothing...in

³⁷⁸ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 97.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 113.

addition to spears, swords and saddles, did serve to transform relations of the production, and led to the introduction of a national currency.³⁸⁰

If warfare had some positive effect on the development of a manufacturing sector in Sudan, it severely debilitated the rural economy. The ravages of the Mahdist uprising and the heavy taxation of the later Turko-Egyptian period had debilitated the economy. Forcing peasants into further military service only deprived agriculture of labour at a crucial time when the Sudanese should have been rebuilding. In Darfur, rebellion and unrest against the foreign rulers brought further insecurity to the region. The stationing of 36,000 Maydiyya soldiers in Darfur to deal with the rebellions and unrest only added to the pressure on the food supply during this period. Ultimately, the region paid the cost of garrisoning such a large force. Lidwiens Kaptejins remarks, that the soldiers ‘...ate, drank, wore or stole’ everything they could find.³⁸¹ These result was the outbreak of severe famines which even today are remembered as a period of ruin, and in the folklore of the people of Darfur the ‘famine of 1888-92... was possibly the worst ever.’³⁸²

The great famine corresponded with a major uprising in Darfur. In 1887, Yusuf Ibrahim, a son of the last Sultan of Darfur, rose up in rebellion against the Khalifat. The rebellion forced the Khalifa to transfer forces to Darfur and deal with the uprising which was finally defeated almost a year after it commenced. Another more dangerous revolt was led by a *faki*, Abu Jammayza who was originally from Dar

³⁸⁰ Norman, O’Neill, “Class and Politics in the Modern History of Sudan” in Norman O’Neill and Jay O’Brien (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd., 1988, p. 31.

³⁸¹ Lidwien Kaptejin quoted in Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, p. 63.

³⁸² Alex De Waal, *Famine that Kills*, p. 63.

Masalit west of El Fasher.³⁸³ The “shadow sultan” Abu’l- Khayrat promptly attached himself and his supporters to the movement and the combined forces of disaffected groups from Darfur won two notable victories against the Khalifat. The death of Abu Jammayza from smallpox deprived the advancing army of its spiritual leader and on 22 February 1989, the rebellion was defeated just outside El Fasher. Rebellions continued to flare with regularity, but the death of Abu Jammayza and the defeat of the movement he inspired was the last significant threat to the Khalifat’s rule in Darfur. A.B. Theobald argues that, whilst the defeat of the Abu Jammayza revolt brought “some peace” to the central parts of Darfur, the north, south and west were autonomous areas that remained external to the Khalifat’s authority.³⁸⁴

The Khalifat in Darfur failed to create the legitimacy or popular support that had characterised the rule of the Keira Sultans. That the regime of the Khalifat, which ruled over Darfur for fifteen years was so hastily dismantled and replaced by a new Keira Sultan had as much to do with the legacy of the Keira Sultanate as the legitimate rulers of Darfur than with misrule. The memory of the Keira Sultanate was too resilient to be extinguished even by twenty-five years of foreign rule. Sudanese elites have continued to mythologise the Mahdiyya movement into the first nationalist movement of modern Sudanese history. However, the unity that was created between the disparate groups in the Sudan under the Mahdiyya rapidly expired with the defeat of the common Turko-Egyptian enemy. In the case of the Darfur region, unity with the Mahdi’s cause was clearly ephemeral.

³⁸³ Lidwien Kapteijns, “The Emergence of a Sudanic State: Dar Masalit, 1874-1905”, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 4 1983, p. 604.

³⁸⁴ A.B. Theobald, *‘Ali Dinar*, pp. 20-22.

4.10 The Restitution of the Sultanate under ‘Ali Dinar and the Conquest of the Sultanate by the British

The Anglo-Egyptian conquest of Sudan did not reach to Darfur. While the Anglo-British force occupied Khartoum and Omdurman, and extended their military force south along the Nile into the regions occupied by the Nuer, Shilluk, Dinka and other southern groups, the west remained beyond the reach of the British. El Obeid the capital and the important Sudanese trading town located in Kordofan was occupied and the boundary separating Kordofan from Darfur became the westernmost point of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in 1898. Kitchener's main concern was with securing control of the Nile and preventing French expansion into the southern Sudan. Darfur was distant and beyond Kitchener's reach as he worked to establish Anglo-Egyptian rule over the Nilotic regions. When the question of Darfur was first raised by Kitchener's successor in the Sudan Reginald Wingate, the British Consul-General in Egypt Lord Cromer made it very clear that the conquest of Darfur was unwarranted because the '...administration of Darfur from Khartoum, would be costly, useless and inefficient...' ³⁸⁵

‘Ali Dinar became Sultan in 1898 but little is known of Dinar before his ascension to the throne. Dinar's reestablishment of the Sultanate faced few challenges from within Darfur, and little interference from the British authorities in Khartoum. The Keira Sultanate resumed its control over the region that it had previously ruled with little bloodshed. The reign of ‘Ali Dinar witnessed periods of discord and discontent but the first decade passed with few serious difficulties due mainly to Dinar's ability to successfully reassert the authority of the Sultanate over most communities. The

³⁸⁵ Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate: Administration in the Sudan, 1899-1916*, Milton Park: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1970, p. 51.

Baggara continued to cause problems in the borderlands to the south but remained independent, which was a fact Dinar resented. On numerous occasions, Dinar ordered the use of the military to punish the Baggara without ever being able to subjugate them.³⁸⁶ Without doubt, the most threatening event to occur during Dinar's reign was the French conquest in 1909 of Wadai and the minor kingdoms of Dar Tama, Dar Masalit, Dar Gimr and Dar Sila.³⁸⁷

The peoples of Tama, Masalit, Gimr and Sila had occupied the territory between Wadai and Darfur and had formed kin relationships through intermarriage with the ruling families from both of the Sultanates. These smaller Sultanates concluded different treaties of rights and obligations with the larger more powerful Sultanates that flanked them. 'Ali Dinar disputed the French annexation of territories allied to the Sultanate and sought British intervention to force the French to relinquish their recent conquests. Subsequently, the British and French, by this time they had become allies in Europe, agreed to discuss the issues raised by Dinar. The British prevented Dinar from sending a representative to speak on behalf of the Sultan preferring to act for the Darfur Sultan. Similarly, the French denied the conquered a right to be represented at the negotiations which were scheduled to be held in August 1914. The outbreak of the First World War relegated this dispute to the post-War settlement, by which time, the British had killed Dinar and Darfur had been incorporated into the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The issue of the boundary between the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium and French *Soudan* would have to wait another twenty years before being decided.

³⁸⁶ A.B. Theobald, *'Ali Dinar*, p. 225.

³⁸⁷ Ibid, p.103, states that the minor kingdoms were clients of the Keira and that historically perceived themselves as protectorates of their larger eastern neighbour. The French had no interest in such arguments from 'Ali Dinar because they claimed that the people in the disputed region were also bound to Wadai and therefore came under French power.

4.11 The Final Stand of the Last Keira Sultan

The outbreak of the World War One precipitated a change in the relationship between the British and the Sultan of Darfur. Darfur as an Islamic state was tied to the Ottoman Sultan. As news of the outbreak of war reached Darfur, and with the threat of the French a continuing concern for Dinar, he promptly and clearly sent a message to Wingate designed to alleviate any British fears that Darfur would act to destabilise the region. On December 6, 1914, Dinar's message to Wingate stated:

We have received your letters of 12 November, 1914, the first of which says that war has broken out between you and the Turks...we are not interested in the war and what is happening in it.³⁸⁸

Wingate replied to 'Ali Dinar in May 1915 with assurances that the British had no intention of invading Darfur. Within two months, on July 11, Wingate announced a change in policy, deciding that it was inevitable that the British would have to act, conquer, and incorporate Darfur into the Sudan. The possibility that the French would attempt to advance beyond the territory they had attained prior to the outbreak of European hostilities, combined with rumours that Dinar was planning to launch an attack of his own, along with the strategic opportunism that presented itself with the availability of troops in Egypt, created a situation where an immediate British invasion of Darfur was considered justifiable.

Holt and Daly, add that 'Ali Dinar had also recognised the urgency of acting aggressively, to which they add that,

³⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 138.

With the Anglo-French alliance in the First World War, 'Ali Dinar's posture towards the Sudan Government became more belligerent, and the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war and the consequent deposition by the British of the Egyptian khedive, convinced 'Ali Dinar that he must join the jihad against the infidel Europeans.³⁸⁹

Wingate's ambitions for Darfur were aided by events occurring across the Darfur-Kordofan border. The Kabbabish, a nomadic tribe located in northern Kordofan but who regularly crossed into Darfur as part of their nomadic cycle, realized that the British intervention in Sudan altered the relative balance of power in the region. The Kabbabish who were 'comparatively few in number and poor in animals' began to raid across the border into Darfur because they were now aware that the protection of the British prevented 'Ali Dinar from sending troops against them in reprisal for their raids against the Sultanate.³⁹⁰ Khalil 'Abd ar-Rahman, 'Ali Dinar's trusted general was determined to put an end to the insecurity on the eastern border and maintained an active policy of pursuing the interlopers. On one occasion in 1915, 'Ali Dinar's troops crossed into Kordofan in pursuit of fleeing nomads, almost causing the first major incident between Darfur and the Anglo-Egyptian administration. Within months of this incident Wingate had made a decision to embark on the conquest of Darfur. It seems, at least from one scholar's viewpoint, that Wingate's decision to invade and conquer Darfur was based on personal ambitions as much as it was on geo-strategic or administrative reasons.³⁹¹

³⁸⁹ P.M Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 128.

³⁹⁰ Talal Asad, *The Kabbabish Arabs*, p.163.

³⁹¹ Peter Woodward, 'In the Footsteps of Gordon: The Sudan Government and the Rise of Sayyid Sir Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, 1915-1935', *African Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 334, 1985, p.43.

The British invasion was launched under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel V.P Kelly. The British prepared for the campaign by focusing on a policy of trying to create divisions amongst the different groups in Darfur and as a part of this strategy they decided to co-opt the Baggara. The Baggara needed very little persuasion to join the British assault against the Sultan as Dinar's implacability towards the Baggara had resulted in numerous raids into Baggara lands. Other than the support from the Baggara, there is little evidence that this strategy was successful in persuading the different groups inhabiting the Sultanate to rebel against their Sultan. 'Ali Dinar was still able to muster a force twice the size of that of his adversary with 800 regular cavalry and 3000 regular infantry in the Sultan's army.³⁹²

The British commander's main concern was not the strength of his enemy, but the short supply of available water and the vast terrain to be traversed by the Anglo-Sudanese army before it was to reach El Fasher and come face to face with Dinar's forces. Kelly and his troops reached El Fasher in May 1916 without having to fight a major battle. 'Ali Dinar had concentrated his troops at El Fasher and on 23 May the two armies met in battle with a decisive victory being won by Kelly's forces. Dinar fled and Kelly entered El Fasher to claim Darfur for the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. 'Ali Dinar was located by an expeditionary force under the command of a Major Huddleston in western Darfur on 5 November 1916 and after a short skirmish was shot dead. The death of Dinar and the occupation of El Fasher signalled the passing of the Keira Sultanate and the demise of the independent state of Darfur. On 1 January 1917, Darfur was incorporated into the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of Sudan and the present territory of the Sudan state was more or less settled.

³⁹² A.B. Theobald, *'Ali Dinar*, p.177.

4.12 Conclusion

The scramble for Africa which had commenced in earnest in 1885 had spared Darfur until 1916, but in the shadows of the First World War the ambitions of the Sudanese governor for just one more piece of territory ensured the end of independence for Darfur. With the passing of the Keira Sultanate also came the end of three hundred years of state-building in Darfur. The fortunes of Darfur were now tied to Khartoum, and London and Cairo, in a more pervasive way than ever before. On occupying Darfur, British civil officials accompanying the army found to their surprise that Darfur was not a state in anarchy. British administrator H.A MacMichael arrived in El Fasher shortly after the conquest of Darfur in 1917 and commented on the splendour of the Sultan's palace and the efficiency of the clerical staff of the Sultan, concluding that,

The more I see and understand of the system on which this country was run do I pay grudging respect to Ali Dinar. It is no small thing to have kept it in entire subjugation, paying its taxes, never revolting (the Rezeigat were really outside the administrative scope all along), and obeying the ruler's smallest behest, for all these years.³⁹³

Wingate's denunciations that the government of 'Ali Dinar was of a brutal and backward nature proved an unfair representation invented to justify the invasion of Darfur.

Darfur's history as an independent Islamic state had little bearing on decisions about its incorporation into the Sudan. A brief period of rule by the Turko-Egyptian and

³⁹³ H.A MacMichael quoted in A.B. Theobald, *'Ali Dinar*, p. 219.

then the Mahdist government defined the future of Darfur. The decision to include Darfur into the already existing Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was never debated by the British because no other alternative suggested itself. Darfur's history as a distinct successful polity had no influence on the "manufacturers of states" located in London whose concerns were with imperial rivalries and efficient administration. In attaching Darfur to the rest of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium the colonial rulers laid the foundations for the creation of a state that comprised at least two pre-colonial political entities that were '...strongly independent and even hostile toward one another as is witnessed by offensive military activities and attempts at invasion by one against the other.'³⁹⁴

There are important lessons which emerge from a survey of the history of the Keira Sultanate. Firstly, racial and ethnic differences played little part in the politics of the region because the state defined identity in ways largely unrelated to racial and ethnic distinctions. Race, at least as it is understood today was absent in terms of defining identities prior to the colonial era. Arab could mean a number of things, including nomad, bandit, or a reference to migrants from Arabia. The royal family and other notables from Darfur were comfortable with drawing their ancestry from Arab migrants and also from indigenous traditions, and there was no need to reconcile these divergent claims as race was as fluid and as invented as nationalism is today. Islam was an important component for integrating diverse communities into the Sultanate and in Darfur; Islam became the principal identity on which state-building was based.

³⁹⁴ Sharif Harir, "'Arab' Belt versus 'African' Belt", p. 151.

Secondly, an effective state authority is a crucial component for maintaining order and ensuring livelihoods in the region. During the foreign occupation of Darfur (1874-1878) war, banditry, and rebellion culminated in severe famines that even today are remembered by the people of Darfur as the worst in history. The return of ‘Ali Dinar brought a degree of stability to the region which was based on the legitimacy he was able to command as Keira Sultan. The colonial conquest may have been irresistible in military terms but for a decade, the British faced the same problem that plagued prior foreign occupiers: ruling Darfur required more than just force of arms. The colonial era that followed ‘Ali Dinar would be largely defined by how it solved the problem of controlling a vast land and peoples without any traditional authority, and with very limited human or financial resources.

Chapter Five -

The Construction of the Colonial State in Sudan: Tribalism, Regionalism and Race in Colonial Sudan

5.1 Introduction

The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was only a condominium in name. Any sense of a British-Egyptian partnership was as fictional as the premise put forward by the British government that the conquest of the Sudan was undertaken to reinstate Egyptian rule from where it had been lost to the Mahdi in 1885. In practice, though, Sudan was administered as if it was a British possession. Authority for the affairs of Sudan were vested in a governor-general, of which every one from 1898 until independence in 1956 was British. By the time the British finally conquered the Sudan, they already held vast imperial possessions.

The logic of British colonialism in Sudan developed from the wider colonial experience, especially the Indian³⁹⁵ and West African models.³⁹⁶ Not only was Frederick Lugard, the architect of Indirect Rule in West Africa, a student of colonialism in India, but the architect of British imperial policy on the Nile, Evelyn

³⁹⁵ Thomas Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Area, 1860- 1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, argues that India was the central pivot of the British Empire, more than just a model it was the from India that the Imperial framework was forged, this argument is beyond the scope of this thesis, but we can take Metcalf's point on page 2 that, 'The practice of Empire was, as well, shaped by structures of governance devised in British India.'

³⁹⁶ Frederick John Dealtry Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, London: Frank Cass, 1965 provided the blueprint for the administration and civilizing mission of African colonies. Margery Perham transferred Lugard's ideas into the academic institutions training the next generation of colonial administrators, additionally Lugard retired from active service in Africa and joined the higher echelons of the colonial administration his eminence adding weight to his views.

Baring, spent a decade in India where he was trained in colonial administration³⁹⁷, and it was from India that Baring was eventually called to Cairo.³⁹⁸ But Africa was obviously not India, and African colonies came to represent something different for the British even if the logic of colonialism remained similar in different parts of the Empire.

The basic logic of British colonialism can be said to have been based on three premises. First, colonial governments were concerned with the consolidation and maintenance of effective control over the “natives”. Second, London had made it clear that all colonies were required to be self-financing and third, there was broader imperative for creating colonial economies that served the interests of the Empire. In governing the Sudan according to these basic principles of colonialism, the administrators grappled with the contradictory affects of their policies, the peculiarities of a vast and diverse colony, and the problematics of ruling over a foreign people in a foreign land. The colonial state that developed did so as a consequence of the application of the colonial logic to concrete realities of colonialism in Sudan.

Colonialism in Sudan, as elsewhere, was possible, most of all, due to the faith in the “white man’s burden” and the certainty that western European’s had in their power

³⁹⁷ Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer: Victorian Imperialist, Edwardian Proconsul*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 61-88 for an excellent biographic analysis of the influence of India on Baring.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 183. However, not all of the significant British players in Africa were shaped by India equally as M.W. Daly, *The Sirdar: Sir Reginald Wingate and the British Empire in the Middle East*, DIANE Publishing, 1997, p8, states, Sir Reginald Wingate, Sudan’s own “pro-consul” for the first decade of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium also served in India, but according to Daly, ‘India left no noticeable impression on Wingate.’

over the colonized. Nicholas B. Dirks remarks that the power of Europeans resided in this same dual power over the “other”:

Colonial conquest was not only the result of the power of superior arms and military organisation as important as these things were. Colonialism was made possible, and then sustained and strengthened as much by the cultural technologies of rule as it was by more obvious and brutal modes of conquest that first established control on foreign shores.³⁹⁹

The “cultural technologies” first and foremost rested on the power of discovering and ordering the natural and human worlds inhabited by the colonized. In particular, power came from the capacity of deciding on, and then ordering, the identities of the ruled. African and Arab, northerner and southerner, semi-civilized and uncivilized, rural and urban, and European and non-European were all classifications animated by the colonial government in Sudan, and each set of identities has left behind an indelible mark. Race, tribe, and religion, in particular, were the most powerful means of control in the Sudanese context. Sudanese identities in the colonial period were shaped by the exigencies of controlling and administering a huge territory comprising diverse social and political communities, faced with serious economic limitations, and the byzantine politics of the Anglo-Egyptian relationship.

5.2 The Formation of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium

The British decision to invade and occupy the Sudan, Gabriel Warburg argues, ‘was a logical outcome of the British occupation of Egypt in 1882.’⁴⁰⁰ By 1896, the year

³⁹⁹ Nicholas B. Dirks, “Foreword” in Bernard S. Cohen, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996, p. ix, quoted in Heather Jane Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism, and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, p. 42.

⁴⁰⁰ Gabriel R. Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1985, p.48.

Kitchener set out to conquer the Sudan, controlling Egypt had become a cornerstone of British imperial policy even if the original occupation of Cairo and the Suez was conceived as a temporary measure by the Liberal government of William Gladstone.⁴⁰¹ Sudan's geo-strategic importance to the British Empire was directly related to British control over Egypt, the Suez Canal and the sea-rotas to British India.⁴⁰² The importance of Suez for the British lasted until the loss of the Canal in 1956, in the wake of Nasser's decision to nationalize the Canal. The crisis that followed emphatically signalled the decline of the British and French Empires as the US and Soviet Union intervened to hand Nasser a major diplomatic victory and the British and French a reminder that they were now subordinate states in the post World War Two international system.⁴⁰³ Six decades of domination over Sudan also came to end in the same year. By this time, Britain's imperial reach had dramatically decreased. But in 1896, when the British government assigned Kitchener the task of conquering and occupying the Sudan, the Suez and Egypt were very much at the centre of British imperial considerations.

Kitchener's defeat of the Khalifat's army in 1898 at the Battle of Omdurman was decisive and in the aftermath, Sudan became, in effect, a part of Britain's African Empire. The estimated death toll from the battle was 11,000 Sudanese dead and 16,000 wounded.⁴⁰⁴ The devastation to the Khalifat's forces was caused, first and

⁴⁰¹ Martin W. Daly, "The British Occupation" in M. W. Daly (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Volume 2: Modern Egypt from 1517 until the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 240.

⁴⁰² Anthony Eden described the Suez Canal as the "swing-door" of the British Empire in the House of Commons on 23 December, 1929, emphasizing the centrality of Suez for the preservation of the Empire, quoted in Keith Kyle, *Suez: Britain's End of Empire in the Middle East*, London: I.B. Taurus and Co. Ltd., 2003, p. 7.

⁴⁰³ William Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: the scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization: collected essays*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2006, pp. 3-5.

⁴⁰⁴ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 1-11 provides an account of the campaign which ended with the bombardment of Khartoum and the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb.

foremost, by the vastly superior firepower of the Anglo-Egyptian army. Whilst the justifications for the campaign were stated, as on the one hand as the liberation of the Sudanese from the tyranny imposed by the Mahdist state, and on the other hand revenge for the killing of Gordon, it was the geo-political importance of securing control of the Nile River that prompted British action in Sudan.⁴⁰⁵ The Nile was the lifeblood of Egypt and if the Nile fell into the hands of another European power⁴⁰⁶, control of Egypt and the Suez could be endangered.⁴⁰⁷ It was this threat of impending French, Italian, or Belgian expansion into the Sudan that led to the overturning of an earlier British government viewpoint that there should be no invasion of the Sudan, for Gladstone believed the Mahdist uprising was the action of ‘a people rightly struggling to be free.’⁴⁰⁸

Victory at Omdurman failed to deliver Kitchener total control of the Sudanese territories. The southern Sudan remained outside the control of the new government as did the western reaches of the Sudan. The major problem facing Kitchener even after Omdurman was the possibility of an offensive by the remaining Mahdist loyalists and the constant fear of future Mahdist uprisings. This danger of a resurgence of Mahdism coloured the politics of the early colonial period and

⁴⁰⁵ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, pp. 110-111 suggests that the catalyst that prompted the British into Sudan in 1896 was neither geo-strategic nor financial but rather related to great power politics in Europe. Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, pp. 524-529, considers the threat of French conquest combined with the protection of the Nile as the key reasons for the British invasion of Sudan. In addition, the popular motive was driven by a desire to revenge the death of Gordon.

⁴⁰⁶ Darrell Bates, *The Fashoda Incident of 1898: Encounter on the Nile*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984 provides a comprehensive account of the Fashoda incident and the British and French interests in securing a bridgehead on the Upper Nile. Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, gives an always interesting and complete account of the British, French, Belgian and Italian “race to nowhere” of which Fashoda was just one such race.

⁴⁰⁷ Lord Cromer as Vice-Consul of Egypt argued that, ‘Whatever power holds the Upper Nile Valley must by the mere force of its geographical situation, dominate Egypt.’ quoted in Makkī Shibīkah, *The independent Sudan*, Berkeley: University of California, 1959, p357.

⁴⁰⁸ William Gladstone quoted in W. S. S. Churchill, *An Account of the Reconquest of the Sudan*.

determined many of the policies that the nascent colonial administration enacted.⁴⁰⁹

Kitchener's own disquiet regarding the Mahdi's legacy, led to the destruction of the Mosque in Omdurman which housed the Mahdi's tomb, and the desecration of his remains, which Churchill at the time remarked, was,

... a gloomy augury for the Sudan that the first action of its civilised conquerors and present ruler [Kitchener] should have been to level the one pinnacle which rose above the mud houses .⁴¹⁰

Slavery provided the first dilemma for the conquerors. The institution of slavery was deeply entrenched in the northern Sudanese political economy and outlawing the practice was seen as potentially a dangerous move. Most northern Sudanese resented interference in matters related to slavery, while the British had taken a very clear line against slavery since 1833.⁴¹¹ Kitchener was predisposed to leave the slavery question to another time, as his initial primary concerns were with consolidating his rule and ensuring the security of the Anglo- Egyptian investment in Sudan.⁴¹² Ahmad Alawad Sikainga argues that the slavery issue was complicated because of a widespread belief amongst the British in Sudan that, 'all economic activities in the Sudan depended on slaves playing a key role...'⁴¹³ A fear of destroying the very fabric of the economic system lay at the centre of Kitchener's decision to maintain the status quo. The parlous economic situation that the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium faced in the

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, pp.104-105.

⁴¹⁰ Churchill quoted in M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 5.

⁴¹¹ Since the publication of Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* in 1944 the question of what created such intense passions against slavery in Britain in the early nineteenth century has been a topic of major dispute. For an overview of the debate see Seymour Drescher, "Capitalism and slavery after Fifty Years," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, Vol. 18, No.3, 1997, pp. 212 – 227.

⁴¹² Edward M. Spiers, *Sudan: the reconquest reappraised*, London: Routledge, 1998, p. 8 describes the position taken by the new administration towards the issue of slavery and reform as 'incremental'.

⁴¹³ Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, *Slaves into Workers: emancipation and labor in Colonial Sudan*, Houston: University of Texas Press, 1996, p. 1.

aftermath of the occupation of the Sudan ensured that dealing with the institution of slavery was held off for discussion until later.⁴¹⁴ The result was a compromise that heavily favoured those Sudanese owners of slaves without abandoning altogether the promise of destroying the practice in future. The decision to prohibit slave trading was observant of the anti-slavery sentiment and a compromise that was hoped would help to prevent the outbreak of another major upheaval in the Sudan and still make some inroads in terms of destroying the practice. However, Holt and Daly argue that ‘the eradication of the institution would be gradual, and instances of slave-trading, especially along the Ethiopian border, continued well into the 1920s.’⁴¹⁵ But by the 1920s, slavery had all but ended across the Sudan.

Throughout six decades of British rule in Sudan, Egyptian politics would have an influence on the decisions taken by the Condominium Government toward Sudan. Sudan’s fate as a colony was dependant on British interest’s vis-à-vis Egypt. Anglo-Egyptian-Sudanese relations were always extremely complex and British rule in Egypt tenuous at best, especially after the annexation of Egypt from the Ottoman Empire in 1914.⁴¹⁶ The policies of the Condominium Government were often determined by the exigencies of relations between Britain and Egypt.

⁴¹⁴ Robert L. Tignor, “The Sudanese Private Sector: An Historical Overview,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 25, 1987, pp.182-183 describes the economic situation in the late 1890s in Sudan as perilous. In 1900, Sudanese revenues collected by the British were a ‘pitifully small amount’ according to Tignor, with only £E140,000 collected. the economic practices in Sudan were overwhelmingly subsistence in nature and in some areas production and trade in agricultural goods were strong but production was insufficient to sustain the British administration in the Sudan.

⁴¹⁵ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, pp.126-127.

⁴¹⁶ Martin W. Daly, “The British Occupation” pp. 243- 250 assesses the period in which Egyptian nationalism agitated towards the partial independence achieved in 1922. The defining moment for galvanizing Egyptians against the British occupation was the heavy-handed British response to the Dinwashai incident in 1906. Amongst other things, the Egyptian response was a major factor in Cromer’s decision to retire as consul-general and consequently the implementation of political reforms.

Another of the defining factors in determining British policy in the Sudan was that of financial self-sufficiency, which was inter-related with the question of Egypt's role in Sudan. Financial self-sufficiency was an axiom of British colonial policy everywhere as Anthony Appiah points out:

But despite the variations in the political economy of empire, the colonial systems had shared a fundamental set of structuring assumptions...each colony was supposed to be economically self-financing until after the Second World War...⁴¹⁷

The difference in the case of the Sudan was the ability of the colonial government to call on the financial resources of Egypt to finance the invasion, subjugation and pacification of the country.

The task of pacifying, administering and exploiting such a huge territorial acquisition as the Sudan was complicated by the ethnic, religious, and political differences of the people that were forced to accept British rule. Daly ascertains that the defeat of the Mahdist state was all but completed with the capture of Amir 'Uthman Digna in 1900,⁴¹⁸ but Sudan remained unstable, especially in its peripheries for decades afterwards.⁴¹⁹ The conquest of Darfur, in 1916, only added another layer of anti-colonial struggles upon the already strained authorities. The pacification of the country in the early years of the Condominium required the construction of roads and railways to transport troops to quell the numerous uprisings that occurred across the

⁴¹⁷ Anthony Appiah, *In My Fathers House*, p. 164.

⁴¹⁸ Martin Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁹ John W. Burton, "Pastoral Nilotics and British Colonialism", *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 1981, p. 126, also Anne Moseley-Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities*, Bloomington, Indiana: University of Indiana Press, 1998, p. 31.

Sudan.⁴²⁰ The military railroad from Port Sudan to Khartoum was completed immediately after the conquest of the country in 1899. The expansion of Port Sudan and the linking of the central regions of Northern Sudan, in particular Khartoum, to the sea by rail were important factors in the eventual creation and consolidation of the export economy of the country, but must be viewed initially in the context of internal security.⁴²¹ Most of this infrastructure was financed by Egyptian loans and grants to the Condominium Government.⁴²²

Egypt's financing of the initial invasion and the consistent drawing from the Egyptian treasury to pay for the consolidation of British control of Sudan came at a price even if it proffered some initial benefits to the Sudanese administration. The primary benefit came from the ability of the authorities to relax tax burdens on the Sudanese in the initial years and, they hoped, reduce the potential resentment foreign occupation would naturally create.⁴²³ The fear that taxation would result in a mass uprising on the scale of the Mahdist rebellion in the years 1882-5 was as important a consideration as the slavery issue in determining Condominium policy.⁴²⁴ The British authorities also feared what they believed was the spectre of Egyptian nationalism spilling-over in Sudan. British anxiety rose particularly in those unstable years before World War One when the Dinshawai incident sparked mass resentment in Egypt against the British

⁴²⁰ Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, "Mahdist Uprisings against the Condominium Government in the Sudan, 1900-1927", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1979, p. 440 for example says that 'With the exception of the war years, hardly a year passed during the first generation of Condominium rule without a Mahdist uprising.'

⁴²¹ Robert I. Tignor, "The Sudanese Private Sector", p. 182, states that the railways were almost exclusively used by the military after the conquest of the Sudan in 1899.

⁴²² Ibid, p. 185.

⁴²³ Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, "Mahdist Risings against the Condominium Government in the Sudan", p. 442.

⁴²⁴ Peter Woodward, "In the Footsteps of Gordon", pp. 40-42.

occupation⁴²⁵, and then again when Egypt was proclaimed a British protectorate in the aftermath of the Ottoman declaration of war on Britain in 1914.

Egypt was also affected by the Anglo-Egyptian-Sudanese relationship, as the it evolved in the first decades of the twentieth century. In Egypt, there was widespread resentment amongst Egypt's increasingly vocal nationalists against the British policy of diverting Egyptian funds to consolidate what was widely perceived by Egyptian nationalists as British colonialism in Sudan.⁴²⁶ Sir Eldon Gorst who succeeded Cromer in 1907 as British agent and consul-general became increasingly alarmed at the potential for unrest if Egyptian funds continued to be spent in Sudan without any advantage accruing to the Egyptians. In 1909, Gorst wrote to Wingate that, '...we must try and reconcile the Egyptians to spending some of their money on the Soudan, and the only way to do this is to make them feel that Soudan is part of Egypt...' ⁴²⁷ The expansion of Egyptian involvement in Sudan followed, mainly with increased opportunities for mid-level Egyptian administrators. Bringing Egyptians into the Sudan at this time served the dual purpose of expanding the administration which was to cover such a vast territory, and also created the illusion that the Condominium was more than just a legal fiction but a genuine partnership between Egypt and Britain.

The primary detriment, to the British in Sudan, of relying on Egyptian funds was that much of Sudanese policy was determined by the consul-general, who could restrict funding for projects and policies he opposed. Lord Cromer certainly used this financial control as a lever to ensure his wishes were accommodated by the Sudanese

⁴²⁵ Martin W. Daly, "The British Occupation," p. 243.

⁴²⁶ Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate*, p. 37, actually in Egypt the 'Sudan was one of the most thorny issues used by nationalists in their anti-government propaganda.'

⁴²⁷ Gorst quoted in Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate*, p. 36.

authorities.⁴²⁸ As noted, Cromer's successor, Sir Elton Gorst, was more aware of the danger of continuing to finance the Sudanese administration from Egypt. With the nationalist upsurge in Egypt after 1907 at the forefront of Gorst's mind, Wingate had greater manoeuvrability. Wingate immediately approached British capital to invest in Sudanese agricultural and infrastructural projects. Gorst also supported such plans, as he hoped it would lead to a reduction, and eventual suspension, of Egyptian subsidies. The financial independence of Sudan from Egypt became a key consideration of the Condominium Government and led to a process that culminated in the Gezira Scheme and Sudan's dependency on cotton exports. But just as important as financial independence was the question of restricting the Egyptian role in Sudanese affairs on which the British had also become reliant.

5.3 The "Thin White Line" of British Rule in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium

The British anxiety over the role of Egyptians in the Sudan led to a constant pursuit of methods to reduce this presence but the British were continually hampered by the unavailability of non-Egyptian manpower (colonial administration was restricted to males only) due to an ever-expanding Empire of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Unlike the French colonial service, the administration of the British colonies was restricted to members who came from the better-classes. With Sudan barely conquered and far from pacified, the Boer War broke out in South Africa. Kitchener, along with his soldiers, was reassigned to fight the Afrikaner resistance which deprived the government in Sudan of much needed military and administrative

⁴²⁸ Ibid, p. 13, Wingate was well aware that Cromer used the financial power that he had to ensure the subservience of the Sudanese governor to the interests of his rule in Egypt.

personnel at a crucial time in the consolidation of colonial rule.⁴²⁹ Just over a decade later, the emergent administrative structure was again deprived of human resources as Britain redirected as much colonial manpower as it could spare to the Western Front at the outbreak of World War One. After almost two decades of colonialism, the British impact on the vast territory under its control was minimal, especially in the rural areas where the Condominium faced continual challenges from revolt and nomadic groups disinclined to be ruled by any government, let alone a foreign and non-Muslim one.⁴³⁰ The British had little inclination to employ the Sudanese in government positions and were faced with a major labour-shortage problem that really only left one option, which was to expand the number of Egyptians involved in the administration of the Sudanese territories.

Even with Egyptian support, the Condominium Government had control over Khartoum and the regional capitals, including El Fasher in Darfur, but had little reach beyond those limited spheres of authority. In Darfur and across the southern Sudan, rural based rebellions against the Condominium Government continued well into the 1920s. Thus, colonial rule outside of the major urban centres in the Sudan was tenuous in some areas and non-existent in others for much of the first two decades.

The solution to the “Egyptian problem” was laid out by Lord Cromer, when he argued that the answer to Sudan’s administrative deficit was in training ‘a number of young English civilians’ who would be come to regard Sudan as a vocation.⁴³¹ While the outbreak of the First World War intervened to delay the implementation of Cromer’s

⁴²⁹ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 82.

⁴³⁰ Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, London: Rex Collins Ltd., 1974, pp. 24-25.

⁴³¹ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 83.

plan, after the War the Sudan Political Service would come to be regarded within Britain as ‘the most admired body of British administrators in Africa...second only to the Indian Civil Service world wide.’⁴³² Although the Sudan Political Service would expand over the course of time, the numbers of trained administrators would always remain too few for the task of administering a colony that stretched from the Red Sea to the Sahara. Controlling the largest single colony in British Africa required more than just the creation of a professional body of British-born administrators to allow for the expulsion of the Egyptians from the Sudan. As anti-British sentiment in Egypt intensified at the end of World War One and signs of an increase in Sudanese based pro-Egyptian sympathies became noticeable, British motivations for excluding the Egyptians from the Sudan heightened. The British were also sensitive to the possible broader anti-British sentiments that may manifest from a decision to expel Egyptians from what was widely perceived, at least by the Egyptians and some Sudanese, as a joint venture. The fears that such a move may provide the spark to light the tinderbox of anti-British feelings in the region were taken very seriously in Cairo and Khartoum. Therefore, the British realized that without a *cassus belli* any attempt to curtail the Egyptian involvement could potentially result in popular uprisings in both the Sudan and in Egypt.⁴³³ Before, long events would determine the fate of both the Egyptians and the Sudanese supporters of Egypt. In the meantime, the British had begun to implement a system of local administration, commonly known as indirect rule, which allowed for the subtle reduction of Egyptian involvement in the administration of the rural Sudan by promoting government by “traditional” rulers in rural areas.

⁴³² Peter Woodward, “In the Footsteps of Gordon”, p. 40.

⁴³³ Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate*, p. 23.

Initially, the introduction of indirect rule to the Sudan in 1922 was limited to a few of the most geographically isolated regions including Dar Masalit in Darfur's far western reaches.⁴³⁴ An opportunity to implement indirect rule more widely across the Sudan presented itself with the assassination of the Governor-General Sir Lee Stack in Cairo on November 19, 1924. The British now had their *cassus belli* to expel all Egyptians from the Sudan. The British Government issued an ultimatum to their Egyptian counterparts to immediately recall all Egyptian personnel from the Sudan. As the Egyptian troops were preparing to evacuate from the Sudan, three platoons of Sudanese soldiers mutinied in support for the Egyptians. The Sudanese rebels engaged the British and the loyal Sudanese soldiers in a night-long battle which the rebels finally lost.⁴³⁵ British intelligence blamed Egypt for inciting the unrest which only served to reinforce the integrity of the decision to terminate Egyptian involvement in Sudan.⁴³⁶

The conundrum now facing the British in Sudan was how to administer the vast territories under their control without Egyptian assistance and with too few British administrators at the disposal of the Sudan Political Service. In 1924, the British responded to this problem, a problem that may be called the problem of the colonial façade or the "thin white line", by planning the implementation of indirect rule wherever it was possible to do so. However, it would take the appointment in 1926 of

⁴³⁴ Dennis Tully, *Culture and Context in Sudan: The Process of Market Incorporation in Dar Masalit*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1998, p. 24, makes the point that the decision to structure the government of Dar Masalit on the basis of tradition was ironic since Dar Masalit only emerged in the 1880s some thirty years before indirect rule was applied.

⁴³⁵ Hasan Abdin, *Early Sudanese Nationalism, 1919-1925*, Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1985, pp. 92-93 provides a description of the events known as the White Flag rebellion.

⁴³⁶ Mohammed Nuri El-Amin, "Was there an Alliance between the Watanist (Nationalist) Party, International Communism, and the White Flag League in the Sudan?", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1992, p. 177.

Sir John Maffey, an ardent supporter of the policy of indirect rule, before the policy was wholeheartedly implemented in the Sudan.⁴³⁷

In the Sudan, in the wake of the expulsion of Egyptians in 1924, the colonial government's attitude to the Sudanese also changed to meet the new requirements. In rural Sudan, traditional leaders became necessary agents of stability. Also "tradition" was seen as a way of insulating the natives from the unsettling affects of social change and, importantly would "protect" the Sudanese from the corrupting influence of Egyptian nationalism emanating from north of the border. Additionally, the British had come to the view, even before the events of 1924, that not all Sudanese were suitable for the task of government as C. P. Browne made clear when in 1920, he described the urban elite as '...the irresponsible body of half educated officials, students, and town riff-raff...' ⁴³⁸ Browne instead advised that 'the solid elements in the country, sheikhs, merchants...' were the most trustworthy individuals to be invested with "magisterial powers" and it was just these element who would come to constitute the core people entrusted with indirect rule over the rural areas of Sudan.⁴³⁹ Stability, rather than progress, was the cornerstone of the colonial system, and indirect rule was widely perceived as the most effective way to maintain stability across the rural Sudan.

As the policy of indirect rule was implemented in the rural areas of Sudan, colonial rule didn't necessarily constitute a *dual mandate* as Frederick Lugard presented it, but

⁴³⁷ M.W. Daly, *Imperial Sudan: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1934-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 26-28.

⁴³⁸ Endre Stiansen, and Michael Kevane, *Kordofan Invaded: peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 1998, p. 125. C.P. Browne is also quoted in Francis Mading Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in Sudan*, Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1995, p. 112.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

rather colonialism came to represent a system of dual authority, in the sense that urban populations were governed differently from the people in rural Sudan. In particular, indirect rule was implemented in the western and southern Sudan where geographic distance and the backwardness of the “natives” were perceived by the British to create the most difficulties for efficient administration.⁴⁴⁰ In particular, the British had faced regular opposition and rebelliousness from Darfur and the southern Sudan. British rationale for promoting indirect rule in the south was based on the backwardness of the people and the lack of educated southerners who could support the extension of modern administration to the region. Even so, it was actually in the western Sudanese regions of Kordofan and Darfur that indirect rule was most quickly and rigorously implemented. The speed and efficiency of extending indirect rule to western Sudan was aided by the intimacy of the Civil Secretary H.A. MacMichael with the western provinces where he had held previous posts. His knowledge of Darfur and Kordofan allowed MacMichael to implement indirect rule in the western Sudan with greater certainty than in the southern Sudan and other peripheral regions of the Sudan.⁴⁴¹

In the end, indirect rule replaced the limited efforts undertaken by the Condominium Government to construct a civil authority to administer all of Sudan equally. The promulgation of the Native Administration Ordinance (1927) extended the powers of native authority to the southern Sudan, Kordofan, Kassala, Nuba and the province of Darfur. However, as Alex de Waal points out, the recourse to traditional structures of rule in Darfur, except possibly in Dar Masalit, differed from Lugard’s model. Rather,

⁴⁴⁰ M.W. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 27.

⁴⁴¹ Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, this is an important part of the argument put forward by Mamdani. While he makes too much of the role of MacMichael, Mamdani does place sufficient importance in the legacy of indirect rule in creating the tribal and ethnic system in the Sudan which has caused numerous problems for successive Sudanese governments.

the authorities pursued indirect rule, or Native Administration as the policy became known, as ‘the creation of a new hierarchy of tribal administrators’ aimed at regulating and regularizing tribal identities and boundaries in Darfur.⁴⁴² In describing the application of Native Administration to the Sudan, Peter Woodward described the dual mandate, of which Native Administration was a key pillar, as British pragmatism ‘...backed by a derived ideology...of serving both Africans and the world.’⁴⁴³ But, in essence, dual mandate and in particular, the policy of indirect rule served the interests of a British colonial system light on manpower and concerned with maintaining a stable colonial order for ruling over people they considered naturally inferior, difficult to govern, and continually prone to sedition.

While Native Administration may have differed from locality to locality, the overarching policy was framed in Darfur by the same exigencies of parsimony, social stability, and prejudice, as that which determined colonial rule elsewhere in Africa, and as such the legacies of Native Administration that have been the focus of analysis of ethnicity and ethnic conflict in post-colonial Africa also apply to the historical legacies of colonialism as experienced by Darfur.

5.4 Native Administration, Tribalism and the Construction of Ethnic Identity in Darfur

As noted, the colonial administration in Sudan was a “thin white line” but in Darfur the line was thinner than elsewhere in the Sudan.⁴⁴⁴ The conquest of Darfur occurred at a time of significant labour shortages for the British Empire. World War One had

⁴⁴² Alex de Waal, “Who are the Darfurians? African and Arab identities, violence and external engagement,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 104, No. 415, 2005, p. 189.

⁴⁴³ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁴ M.W. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, p. 30.

diverted thousands of potential administrators and military personnel to the western front. The consolidation of British rule in the vast kingdom of Darfur under such circumstances was only possible by preserving the institutions and the notables of the Sultanate and by substituting the Sultan with the *mudir* (governor) Colonel P.J.V. Kelly right down to placing his office in the former sultan's throne-room. Martin Daly provides a thoughtful description of the attention taken by MacMichael, with Wingate's approval, of retaining as much of the Sultanate's structure as possible.⁴⁴⁵ Daly's examination implies that the conquest of Sudan and the incorporation of the Sultanate into the Condominium changed little in the region. His principal argument is that Native Administration promoted a form of benign neglect, which in the Darfur case is difficult to disagree with.⁴⁴⁶ However, even though indirect rule was premised on preserving the old order and theorised as continuity between the pre-colonial and the colonial, in the case of Darfur colonial rule was responsible for change.

Native Administration was instituted legally with the promulgation of the Powers of Nomad Sheikh Ordinance of 1922 which applied to approximately three hundred shaykhs, *nazirs* and *omdas* across the Sudan. By 1923 the government had drawn up a policy that ordered and regularized the traditional judicial functions of nomadic shaykhs.⁴⁴⁷ In 1927 the Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance further extended the powers and authority recognized and enjoyed by the shaykhs of nomadic groups to the sedentary communities. In the province of Darfur authority over land and legal jurisdiction, including the power of punishment and incarceration, and the power to issue fines,

⁴⁴⁵ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 118.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 125.

⁴⁴⁷ Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk, "Kordofan: From Tribes to Nazirates" in Endre Stiansen and Michael Kevane (eds.), *Kordofan Invaded: peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke, Brill NV., 1998, p.126.

were invested in shaykhs.⁴⁴⁸ In 1928, the legislation was amended to extend the legal powers of shaykhs by investing them with the power to preside over legal matters pertaining to each particular tribe in pre-designated tribal courts. Land allocation and settling disputes over land, were also regarded as issues which were to be arbitrated within the tribe, which made tribal identities and boundaries important features of the Native Administration policy. In addition to judicial authority and land allocation, shaykhs also had control,

...of markets, of various departmental activities (agriculture, veterinary, etc.) and of many of the duties hitherto performed by the Government accountants and police, were taken over by the Native Authorities.⁴⁴⁹

Developing such authority to administer each tribe separately through “traditional” leaders led to tribal delineation.

Yousif Takana explains the colonial policy and the impact on Darfur:

The third device of the colonial administration was the demarcation of the tribal Dars. Looking at the colonial literature concerning Darfur since the inception of so-called Native Administration in the 1920s, when the whole of Darfur province was divided into five districts and one commissionerate, one is struck by the huge efforts that colonial officers put into the demarcation of tribal boundaries. The final outcome of this process of tribal lands demarcation in the late 1920s was a rigid tribal boundary with detailed maps fixing tribal

⁴⁴⁸ Talal Asad, *The Kababish Arabs*, pp. 168-176 explores the impact of Native Title on the authority of the *nazir* and the sheikhs of the Kababish, concluding that native title was responsible for the centralization of power in the hands of the *nazir* and the solidification of the identity of different nomadic groups which had been loosely tied by tradition into the Kababish tribe.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 169.

identities in complete isolation from each other. Again, this policy of “tribal fixation” within recognized territorial lands created conflict-prone ethnic communities...⁴⁵⁰

MacMichael’s own study of Sudan was premised on the underlying belief in the existence of self-contained and identifiable tribes. Even as MacMichael asserted the hybridity of the “tribes” that he classified, he also assigned ethnic and racial labels with a certainty few anthropologists would view as sufficiently nuanced today. But tribe and race were everything to the British in the colonial period as they mapped the empire in terms of a human geography very much invented to meet the expectations of administration and prejudice alike.⁴⁵¹

Tribal differences were emphasised to justify the separation of one group from another. Summarizing O’Fahey’s seminal studies on the Keira Sultanate it is clear that the colonial order differed in significant ways from past practices. In the pre-colonial period, the core of Darfuri society was held together by a common allegiance to the Sultan who ruled with the authority of Islamic tradition combined with the customary symbolism and power of an African king. Furthermore, the Sultan retained the absolute ownership of land and absolute power to allocate land or deprive individuals or groups of land as he saw fit. During the Sultanate, the Sultan allocated land based on loyalty and service to the kingdom and expected from his loyal retainer’s an acceptance of the cultural and ethnic markers that characterised the Sultanate. De

⁴⁵⁰ Yousif Takana, “The Politics of Local Boundaries and Conflict in Sudan: The South Darfur Case,” Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2008, accessed at <http://www.cmi.no/sudan/doc/?id=967>

⁴⁵¹ Andrew Apter, “Africa, Empire, and Anthropology, A Philological Exploration of Anthropology’s Heart of Darkness,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 28, 1999, pp. 577-598 presents an excellent summary of the role anthropologists played in the classifying and ordering of the colonies for administrators. V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, discusses the role of anthropology, and also acknowledges the role that missionaries and traders played in inventing a popular European perception of Africa. It was this popular perception that provided the legitimacy and mission which accompanied the colonial conquest of the continent.

Waal has described the dominant identity of the Keira as “ethno-political” which he adds changed from,

...a process tightly focused on the Fur identity (from about 1600 to the later 1700s), to a more secular process in which the state lost its ideologically ethnic character, and ruled through an administrative hierarchy (up to 1916).⁴⁵²

De Waal’s perspective does not preclude the existence of group differences in fact it relies on diverse identities. The point is that prior to colonialism ethnic identities co-existed within a political system comfortable with assimilating and incorporating ethnic heterogeneity. In Darfur, identities were fluid; people could exchange identities and carry multiple identities simultaneously. In this milieu, there was no need to reconcile being both Fur and an Arab. The situation in pre-colonial Darfur is similar to the situation in some contemporary societies where a person’s multiple identities can comfortably coexist. A political system where ethnic, racial or religious identities overlap and coexist is today recognized as a feature of functioning citizen-based and multi-cultural politics in advanced democracies.⁴⁵³ However, the ability to allow multiple-identities to co-exist seems, in the case of Darfur, to have pre-dated the development of modern democratic states.

The British conquest of Darfur established an administration in the region that differed philosophically from that of the Keira Sultanate. Where the Sultanate emphasised unity and integration, British administrators, in the words of Sir James

⁴⁵² Alex de Waal, “Who are the Darfurians?,” pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵³ Bruce Berman, Will Kymlicka, Eyoh Dickson (eds.) *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, London: James Currey Ltd, 2003, is a recent edited collection dealing with the question of ethnic pluralism and democratic government in Africa as a possibility based not on building ethnically based polities such as the federal systems in Ethiopia and Nigeria which are similar in terms of dividing the political system, geographically and electorally, on the different ethnic identities located in the respective states.

Currie searched enthusiastically for ‘lost tribes and vanished chiefs.’⁴⁵⁴ Native Administration in Sudan and indirect rule more widely, is described by Daly as ‘an anomalous attempt to ‘tribalize’ people who had no memory of tribal authority or desire to recall it.’⁴⁵⁵ The tribalisation of the people of the Darfur region created a terrain where self-contained and distinctive group identities developed. The policy of Native Administration resulted in a decentralised power structure under the authority of shayks, *nazirs*, *maqdums*, and *omdas*, where tribes became the primary unit of social organisation. The benefits bestowed on tribes, including government recognition of semi-autonomy and the allocation of a tribal homeland, or tribal *dar*, left those groups that failed to be recognized as tribes in their own right, as outsiders in the system. This is a theme that has been emphasized in more recent explanations of the violent conflict that erupted over land during Darfur’s tumultuous decade of the 1980s.⁴⁵⁶

Even though the problems associated with Native Administration became apparent to British officials as colonialism entered its final stage after World War Two, very little changed, and in fact, tribal authority was embedded further by colonial policies designed to forestall independence.⁴⁵⁷ In Khartoum, the Graduates’ Congress was organized by a group of northern intellectuals as a vehicle for Sudanese political expression. In 1938, the colonial authorities relented and established the Graduates’ Congress, which they hoped would help to contain the increasingly vocal nationalist

⁴⁵⁴ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 137.

⁴⁵⁵ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 367.

⁴⁵⁶ Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, argues that the distinction between native and settler is a key distinction between opposing groups in Darfur and that the allocation or non-allocation of *dars* played some part in the formation of this distinction. Alex de Waal, “Who are the Darfurians?” and Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *A Short History of a Long War*, also explore the question of non-allocation of tribal lands as a cause of resentment amongst certain of the northern Rezeigat.

⁴⁵⁷ Peter Woodward, *Sudan: 1898-1989*, p. 77, Muddathir ‘Abdel Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, p. 209.

aspirations of the educated urban elite by permitting the Congress to function as an advisory body to the government.⁴⁵⁸ The Congress served to temporarily defuse the agitation for independence, at least for a few years. In 1942, the Graduates' Congress presented a list of demands which the government refused to entertain.⁴⁵⁹ In response to the clearly articulated nationalist pretensions of the Graduates' Congress, as shown by the demands contained within the memorandum, the colonial government looked to the tribal leaders as the most loyal native allies against the nationalist elite. To counter the urban movements for change the government created a political institution comprised of tribal delegates which they called the Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council was established by the colonial government in 1943 and was designed to undermine the authority of the Graduates' Congress and empower the tribal leaders to act as the official and authentic representatives of the Sudanese.⁴⁶⁰ Unfortunately, for the British this body failed for two reasons. First, the tribal leaders themselves had been captured by the influence of the two religious *tariqas* who supported the nationalist aspirations of the urban elite.⁴⁶¹ Second, nationalist aspirations in the Sudan, like elsewhere in the world, had developed beyond a point where they could just be suppressed. The British failed in their efforts to subvert the Graduate's Congress and the nationalist movements in Sudan but in doing so further empowered the tribal leaders in Sudan's rural areas and prevented any erosion of Native Administration even though reform of the regional political institutions had

⁴⁵⁸ The discussions on the Graduates' Congress are well-rehearsed in the literature on Sudan, see Peter Woodward, *Sudan 1898-1989*, pp. 68-69 M.W. Daly, *Imperial Sudan: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1934-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 76-83, Muddathir 'Abd al-Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, pp. 125-136.

⁴⁵⁹ The memorandum included a guarantee of self-government at the conclusion of World War Two, an end to the Southern Policy and abolishment of Native Administration.

⁴⁶⁰ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 73.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 74.

been identified by the Sudanese elite and the colonial government as an important step towards modernising the country.

In fact, Native Administration was finally placed on the reform agenda in 1949.⁴⁶² Even so, tribal leaders were still considered as an indispensable element of the colonial government's struggle to forestall independence, and maintain control over the decolonization process. Throughout the 1940s, the mood for independence amongst the Sudanese heightened. Events in Asia and elsewhere in Africa encouraged the Sudanese nationalists to agitate for a complete transferral of colonial power into their hands. Instead, they received from the colonial government a promise of independence, a general election and a guarantee that more positions in the Sudan Political Service would be filled by Sudanese. In 1952, amidst the turmoil created by the Free Officer's Coup in Egypt led by General Neguib, the British felt they had little choice but to call Sudan's first general election.

The colonial government looked to the conservatism of the government-sponsored Socialist Republican Party to restrain the urban-based nationalist movements from entirely dominating Sudanese pre-independence politics. Predominately a party of tribal leaders, the Socialist Republican Party was expected to outpoll the Umma Party of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and the National Unionist Party representing the Khatmiyya and secular nationalists.⁴⁶³ The election result disappointed the British

⁴⁶² The Marshall Report (1949) criticized the system of local government in Sudan and was followed by the Local Government Act of 1951, but as A.M Elhusein, "The Revival of 'Native Administration' in the Sudan: A Pragmatic View," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 9, 1989, p. 438, argues, '... the newly established local governments councils, under the 1951 act, housed the old Native Administration under the umbrella of a warrant...in rural areas, native chiefs continued to hold the upper hand. This entrenched position of native chiefs continued even after independence in 1956.'

⁴⁶³ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p.174, Daly adds that the failure of the SRP in Darfur was due to the ambivalence of the tribal leaders compared to the well organized campaigns of both the Umma and NUP delegates.

hopes that independence could be prevented by a strong electoral performance from the Socialist Republican Party. Instead, the election result was a disaster for the Socialist Republic Party winning only three seats in the General Assembly. The failure can be attributed to the Socialist Republican Party, being neither Socialist nor Republican (and neither was it really a party), rather it being a belated and cynical effort by the colonial authorities to undermine the nationalist parties. The Socialist Republican Party failed not because of the weakness of the tribal leaders but because of the strength of the two sectarian parties which between them dominated Sudanese politics.⁴⁶⁴ Native Administration largely remained intact and entrenched and even if the tribal leaders were no longer allied to the British administration they remained important because the sectarian parties realised they could act as key conduits for rallying political support in the underdeveloped regional areas of Sudan. Native Administration had served British colonial interests in the Sudan for years and rather than unravel the system, as had been widely anticipated upon independence, the post-colonial Sudanese government maintained the system largely unchanged, until major reforms were attempted in the 1970s.

5.5 The British Policy of Segregating Darfur

In 1922, the Closed Ordinances Act followed by the Permits to Trade Ordinance of 1925, were enacted by the Condominium Government with the aim of preventing the *jellaba* from infiltrating rural Sudan and upsetting the tenuous stability that existed in Sudan's peripheries. In particular, the British policy was designed to segregate the southern Sudan from the north. The expanding cultural and economic influences of northern Sudanese in the south were considered a danger to British security and the stability of southern Sudan. The colonial authority's fear of the spread of Arabism to

⁴⁶⁴ A.M Elhussein, "The Revival of 'Native Administration' in the Sudan", p. 87.

the south is evident from the short communiqué issued by the District Commissioner of Western Bahr al-Ghazal in 1935 to merchants trading in the south:

I notice that in spite of frequent requests to the contrary, large quantities of 'Arab' clothing are still being made and sold. Please note that, in future, it is FORBIDDEN to make or sell such clothes...No more Arab clothing is to be made from today: you are given till the end of February to dispose of your present stock.⁴⁶⁵

Trade relations, in particular the role of merchants, had always been a conduit for the expansion of Arabic language and culture, and Islam, in the Sudan. The expansion of Arabism through dress, language and the spread of the Islamic religion threatened to undermine British colonial dominance of the south and the British were unwilling to compete with the *jellaba* for the loyalty of the southerners. British economic imperatives were thinly veiled behind the politico-cultural project of entrenching traditional cultures in southern Sudan through Native Administration and segregation as a means of control. In this way, the British were able to eradicate economic competition in southern Sudan while simultaneously preventing the expansion of Islam. Control of the economic relations was a vital element of colonial power.⁴⁶⁶ But it was not only in the south where the British felt there was potential for subversion of the colonial order.

⁴⁶⁵ D.C. Raja, 21 Jan, 1935 quoted in Muddathir 'Abdel Rahmin, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, p. 78.

⁴⁶⁶ Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa", pp. 105-119.

The Closed Ordinances Act (and the Permit to Trade Ordinance) was aimed at reducing the interaction between the *jellaba* and Darfur's "natives".⁴⁶⁷ Arabism and Islam were already well established in the western Sudan and the Closed Ordinances Act could not have had entirely the same intentions as for the southern Sudan. In particular, Darfur represented for the British the constant fear of resurgent Mahdism.⁴⁶⁸ The emergence of the Mahdi in 1882 from the western Sudan was a particularly influential motif in the narrative of the history of the Sudan which undoubtedly each member of the Sudan Political Service was familiar. Recurring religiously inspired uprisings seemed to vindicate the colonial governments fear that Darfur was heavily influenced by Mahdism. The danger of a resurgent Mahdism was apparent to the members of the Sudan Political Service in 1922 when a major revolt originated in the southern Darfur town of Nyala.⁴⁶⁹ The response from the authorities was to act to immediately include Darfur in the provinces that were separated from the central Sudan by the enactment of the Closed Ordinance Act. In particular, British officials had noticed the flow of people from Darfur to the Mahdist stronghold of Aba Island and members of the Ansar preaching in Darfur.⁴⁷⁰ Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman, the posthumous son of the Mahdi, had survived the initial hostility of the conqueror of the Sudan, General Kitchener, and by the outbreak of World War One had was able to demonstrate his usefulness to the authorities. The British saw 'Abd al-Rahman's eagerness to profess loyalty to the Government as a way of disarming Mahdism, but always with one eye open to the possibility that 'Abd al-Rahman would betray the

⁴⁶⁷ H.A MacMichal conveys this point when he argues that in the southern Sudan 'The limitation of Gallaba trade in towns or established routes is essential.' quoted in Muddathir 'Abdel Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, pp. 75-76,

⁴⁶⁸ Peter Woodward, "In the Footsteps of Gordon," p. 43.

⁴⁶⁹ Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, "Mahdist Risings against the Condominium Government in the Sudan" and also see Lidwien Kapteijns, "Mahdist Faith and the Legitimation of Poplar Revolt in Western Sudan", *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 55, No. 4, 1985, pp. 390-399.

⁴⁷⁰ Peter Woodward, "In the Footsteps of Gordon," p. 42.

Condominium and declare himself King of the Sudan.⁴⁷¹ With this in mind, the authorities used the Closed Ordinance Act from 1922 onwards to restrict ‘Abd al-Rahman and his agents access to Darfur. The combination of Darfur’s long border and the meagre resources of the Condominium most likely failed to impede external influences, including those from ‘Abd al-Rahman, from entering or leaving Darfur. It is especially unlikely that the influence of ‘Abd al-Rahman could be curtailed in Darfur since he spent his early childhood in Darfur being the son of a Keira princess. But the Closed Ordinances Act did have a negative impact on Darfur and while it could not have achieved the Sudanese government’s aim, as Muddathir ‘Abdel Rahim writes, of making each province as ‘self-contained and independent as possible,’⁴⁷² the segregation of the province from the wider world was partly achieved.

One of the impacts of colonialism was that Darfur became disconnected from the wider *dar al-Islam* it had been a part of since the 1700s. Trade relations were one way that the Keira Sultanate maintained relations with the states to the north and west. In particular, relations with Egypt and the Maghreb had continued throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ensuring that the Keira Sultanate was integrated into the wider Islamic setting. Also, the Sultan sent representatives from Darfur to study at the Al-Azhar University, Cairo’s prestigious Islamic university, providing the Darfuri royal family and elite with the means to remain in touch with the ideas and politics from the north.⁴⁷³ Colonial rule, while never able to completely erase such a

⁴⁷¹ Lidwien Kapteijns, “Mahdist Faith and the Legitimation of Poplar revolt in Western Sudan”, p. 396.

⁴⁷² Muddathir ‘Abdel Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, p. 73.

⁴⁷³ Stefan Reichmuth, “Murtada al Zabidi (1732-91) and the Africans: Islamic discourse and the scholarly networks in the late eighteenth century” in Scott Steven Reese (ed.), *The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004, pp. 142-143. R.S. O’Fahey, “Endowment, Privilege and Estate in the Central and Eastern Sudan”, *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. iv, No. 3, 1997, pp. 334-351 also describes the Keira Sultanates commitment to sending students to Al-Azhar in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

history or hermetically seal Darfur from the world was responsible for diminishing Darfur's association with its traditional relations in North and West Africa. Institutionally Darfur was unable to maintain the formal diplomatic contacts that had been established with the Muslim states of North Africa and that had allowed it to develop from the seventeenth century onwards as a Muslim state amongst Muslim states.

The segregation of Darfur had other negative implications as well. Education policy was one area where the people of Darfur suffered from the prejudices of the colonial government. The restriction of educational opportunities to Darfur was no accident, but rather, a conscious decision by the colonial government. It was widely held by colonial administrators in Africa that anything more than the most practical education 'posed a greater threat to the country than no education at all.'⁴⁷⁴ Native Administration was based on creating an administrative model that promoted stability and an education policy designed to stimulate social mobility was not only deemed dangerous, but contradictory to the very philosophy of Native Administration.

It was clear from the establishment of Condominium rule in Darfur that the authorities were not going to permit the evil of modern ideas to infiltrate the region and spoil their chargers. Daly reports that, '[A]s late as 1929, not a single student in the government secondary school was from Darfur, whereas there were 218 from Khartoum, 93 from Blue Nile, 41 from Kordofan, and even some foreigners.'⁴⁷⁵ The

⁴⁷⁴ P.M Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p. 124.

⁴⁷⁵ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, pp. 134-135.

very minimal number of students from Darfur to attend Gordon College betrayed the intentions of the colonial authorities.⁴⁷⁶

As late as 1945, the policy of providing education above the level of elementary vernacular schools was considered by the central authorities to be excessive. All in all, Daly's account of the education policy in Darfur reveals the level of prejudices towards Africans inherent in the colonial project. So, it should come as no surprise when Daly recounts that in 1935 the funding allocation to Darfur for the educational needs of a province with a population of 750,000 people was £E (Egyptian pounds) 1,200 per year, which was, 'less than the salary of one senior government official.'⁴⁷⁷

Heather J. Sharkey argues that the colonial education policy led to a situation where the British favoured a small group of,

...self-defined Arabs at the expense of everyone else, including not only Arabic-speaking former slaves or their descendants, but also non-Arab Muslims and non-Muslims (such as the Dinka), the British cultivated a group of men who had the literacy and the political know-how to develop and articulate nationalist ideologies. Not surprisingly, these men defined a nation in their own social image, as an Arab Muslim community.'⁴⁷⁸

Native Administration, in effect, imitated the practice of segregation imposed by the Closed Ordinances Act but on a smaller scale. On a micro-level, Native Administration was designed to effectively seal different tribal groups from each other to facilitate greater control and decrease the cost of administration while on a

⁴⁷⁶ M.W. Dal, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p135, reports that in 1934, Darfur had only one student enrolled at Gordon College and in 1936 two boys from Darfur undertaking teachers college. The name of these students are as it turns out erased from the record.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 136.

⁴⁷⁸ Heather J. Sharkey, "Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity and Race," *African Affairs*, Vol. 107, No. 426, 2008, p. 30.

provincial level Closed Ordinance Act was designed to maintain the stability of Darfur by preventing influences from the rest of the world from reaching the province. The British were never able to achieve this goal but what they did create was a detached population who were isolated from the formation of the national economic and political elite. It was these elite who led the struggle against colonialism and who sought the reigns of power for themselves upon independence.

The lack of a nationalist movement in Sudan's peripheries was testimony to the success of the colonial policies of segregation and tribalisation. These policies prevented the consolidation of trans-provincial alliances and blocked the development of a national identity. The absence of an indigenous elite from Darfur added to the marginalisation of the region in the colonial and then in the post-colonial politics setting. Furthermore, just as the people of Darfur had had no say in 1916 in the decision to attach Darfur to the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, the marginalization of Darfur from a "western" education and the debates about the future of the Sudan after independence denied the people of Darfur from involvement in setting the political and economic framework that the post-colonial country would take at independence. The legacy of political and cultural segregation would remain one of the most decisive of the colonial legacies for the people of Darfur. Beyond the colonial period, the policies of segregation, tribalization and social underdevelopment reinforced the racist stereotypes that have dominated successive Sudanese government perceptions of Darfur.

5.6 Colonial Racial Ideology in the Sudan

Much has been written on the topic of race and racism as a feature of the modern era.⁴⁷⁹ This is not the place to rehearse the question of the causes of modern racism, except to say that the concept of race as understood today was a feature of the European expansion of the world. It was in the nineteenth century that the British came to perceive that black Africans were significantly different to themselves. Nancy Stepan notes that there was a ‘... change from an emphasis on the fundamental physical and moral homogeneity of man, despite superficial differences, to an emphasis on the essential heterogeneity of mankind, despite superficial similarities...’ so that, ‘By the middle of the nineteenth century, everyone [in Britain] was agreed, it seemed, that in essential ways the white race was superior to non-white races.’⁴⁸⁰

Despite, the best efforts of scholars like Bernard Lewis⁴⁸¹ to export the European version of racism towards Africans to the Arab world there is a clear distinction between the attitudes that Arabs and Europeans held to skin colour. As John O. Hunwick has argued in this regards, ‘...there is a lack of consistent literature that theorizes the inferiority of black people. Islam did not have its Gobineau.’⁴⁸² This different attitude is summed up neatly by Ali Mazrui who states that while ‘Arabs alerted the people of sub-Saharan Africa that they were *black*. Europe tried to

⁴⁷⁹ Cornel West, “A Genealogy of Modern Racism” in Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg, *Race, Critical Theories*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2002, pp. 90-112. Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*. George Frederickson, “Social Origins of American Racism” in Martin Bulmer and John Solomos (eds.), *Racism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp 70-81. Immanuel Wallerstein and Etienne Balibar, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, London: Verso Books, 1991. Robert Miles, *Racism After Race Relations*, London: Routledge, 1993.

⁴⁸⁰ Nancy Stepan quoted in Roxanne Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth Century British Culture*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001, p. 33, my addition in parenthesis.

⁴⁸¹ Bernard Lewis, “From *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry*” in Kevin Reilly, Stephen Kaufman and Angela Bodino, *Racism: A Global Reader*, New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 2003, pp. 52-58.

⁴⁸² John O. Hunwick and Eve Troutt Powell, *The African Diaspora in the Mediterranean Lands of Islam*, Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2002, p. xx.

convince Black people they were inferior.’⁴⁸³ British colonialism brought a specific form of racism to Sudan that introduced skin-colour as a marker of inherent racial qualities based on a Eurocentric typology, at times grounded in cultural superiority, and at other times racially determined.

In pre-colonial history in Africa it is even difficult to speak of Arab-African relations in the sense that these identities are understood today. A more accurate demarcation of relations in pre-colonial *bilad al-Sudan* is in terms of Muslim and non-Muslim relations. This is especially true in Sudanic Africa where the majority of “Arabs” were Arabized Africans and not racial Arabs. It was predominately the Arabized Africans that were involved in the raiding for slaves from non-Arabized non-Islamized African societies. Slavery in *bilad al-Sudan* was no less dehumanizing and brutal than slavery elsewhere in the world but was not racially determined. Arab-African identities in the *bilad al-Sudan*, and more widely across Africa, were not mutually exclusive. The gradual conversion of African societies to Islam over a thousand year period is testament to the non-racist foundations of Islam, and the potential for African societies to assimilate and adapt to cultural change.⁴⁸⁴

Mahmood Mamdani’s examination of the question of race in Darfur appreciates the disjuncture between attitudes to group identities in Sudan held before, and later, as a result of colonialism.⁴⁸⁵ While overall, Mamdani’s analysis is enlightening and represents an important advancement in the scholarship by identifying the colonial

⁴⁸³ Ali. A. Mazrui, ‘The Re-invention of Africa’, p. 70.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid, also see Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, and Ali A. Mazrui, Ricardo René Laremont and Tracia Seghatolisami, *Africanity Redefined*, Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2002, pp. 87-97 and pp. 99-146., also in the specifically Sudanese context, Muddathir ‘Abdel Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁸⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, pp. 76-108.

involvement in bringing specific forms of racism to Sudan, there a number of issues which make his analysis somewhat problematic. First, Mamdani treats the British attitude toward race as monolithic and he fails to explore the very complex and often contradictory position in the British imaginary toward Black Africans prior to the solidification of an accepted view, as Stepan notes, at the height of the Victorian age. Mamdani explains the complex history of racial mixing in Sudan which makes any claims by Sudanese of Arab and non-Arab identity, especially in northern Sudan, very hard to authentic. This question of racial mixing is well treated in the literature on Sudan with numerous scholars working from the premise that Arabs and non-Arabs are biologically indistinguishable and that there is almost every certainty that claims to Arab ancestry by Sudanese are invented.⁴⁸⁶ This issue is not in question and making claims that post-colonial academic attitudes such as those held by Yusuf Fadl Hasan imitate the colonial perception of an Africa without history fails to take into account how different the nationalist historiography was in the post-colonial period. Sudanese nationalist historians composed histories of the Sudan that emphasized the unity of the Sudanese and even when they privileged Arab cultural values and Islam over non-Arab and animist perspectives, which they often did, they did so from a position that all Sudanese had a common heritage. The point they were making was that Arab Muslim Sudanese were neither Arab nor Muslim but became so through gradual acculturation over time and that by promoting a dominant Arab and Muslim identity in the Sudan this process would continue to extend those cultural values. This position differs markedly from the British position that racial markers were

⁴⁸⁶ Oluwadare Aguda, "Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1973, pp. 177-200. Muddathir 'Abd Al-Rahim, "Arabism, Africanism, and Self-Identification in the Sudan," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Jul., 1970, pp. 233-249, Ali A. Mazrui, "The Black Arabs in Comparative Perspective: The Political Sociology of Race Mixture" in Dunstan M. Wai, (ed.), *The Southern Sudan: The problem of national integration*, London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1973, pp. 48-82.

permanent. The nationalist historians may have been prejudiced towards Africans who were un-Arabized and unconverted to Islam but their aim was to promote nation-building through homogenization while colonial forms of racialism were designed to divide the population into specific racial groupings for administrative purposes. This distinction is an important one and while Mamdani presents a thorough exposé of colonial racism in the Sudanese context, tying it to specific political and economic policies would have shaped this section of his analysis more concretely.

Third, Mamdani's challenge to the notion of the Arab and non-Arab (Fur, Masalit, Funj) identities as fluid and exchangeable is accurate and helpful for understanding the constructedness of racial identities. Yet, Mamdani still applies these terms as if they are separate and exclusive rather than interchangeable and coexistent. So, when Mamdani argues that the 'difference was that whereas most former slaves in Funj became Arabs, former slaves in Darfur became Fur'⁴⁸⁷ he fails to add that the new identities that were adopted by slaves could have been both Fur and Arab, it did not have to be one or the other, and this would have been true for slaves in the Funj kingdom as well. Despite, these issues with Mamdani's treatment of race and racism in Sudan, the key point he makes is important for understanding the impact that colonial perspectives of race had in elevating Arab identities in Sudan above non-Arabs.

The Sudan, according to Janice Boddy was a special case in British colonial terms, because of the way that it was ruled as a partnership, and the competition with the

⁴⁸⁷ Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, p. 92.

Egyptians and Arabs for civilizing the regions that were considered most primitive.⁴⁸⁸

Boddy's analysis revolves around the theme that the British administration encouraged ethnographic work that emphasised the cultural and genealogical differences between north and south, Arab and non-Arab in Sudan. In this way, she argues, the British could restrict the reach of both the Egyptian Arabs and riverain Arabs into the southern Sudan. H.A MacMichael, the author of a major ethnographic work himself, reveals the purpose of the "southern policy" as providing the environment where:

...a series of self-contained racial units will be developed with structure and organisation based on the solid rock of indigenous traditions and beliefs ... and in the process a solid barrier will be created against the insidious political intrigue which must in the ordinary course of events increasingly beset our path in the North.⁴⁸⁹

Overall, one of the key themes that emerges from Boddy's work is that race functioned as a corollary of colonial administration, in much the same way as tribalism did, by systematically classifying and ordering the colonized. Heather J. Sharkey also examines the contribution of British colonial policies to the racialization of Sudan, in her case by looking principally at education policy. Her starting point for the Sudan shares certain key similarities with those taken by Mazrui and Hunwick, as noted earlier, that Arab-African relations were not determined by race in the same way as those that were formed by the colonizers. Sharkey writes that,

⁴⁸⁸ Janice Boddy, "Anthropology and the Civilizing Mission in Colonial Sudan," Firth Lecture, London School of Economics, 2008, accessed at

http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/anthropology/pdf/asa_conf_08/Boddy_Firth_Lecture_2008.pdf

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

When British and Egyptian forces overthrew the Mahdist state in 1898 and established the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, there was no such thing as self-identified ‘Sudanese Arab’ among the riverine region’s Muslim elites. At that time, to be Arab was to be Muslim, to be Arab was to be free, and ideally, it was to claim an Arab pedigree.⁴⁹⁰

Race played a large part in the British imaginary of the Sudan. Arabs and Africans as racial profiles were introduced and extended to the Sudanese with the same level of eagerness that it was suggested earlier described the colonial administrators search for lost tribes. However, colonial officials had no need to need to invent the racial profiles they used but only to apply them to the Sudanese setting. By the early twentieth century the invention of both the Arabs and Africans had solidified around a number of basic principles. Cromer’s declaration on the Oriental mind is a concrete example of the British attitude to the Arabs, over which they ruled:

The mind of the Oriental, on the other hand, like his picturesque streets, is eminently wanting in symmetry. His reasoning is of the most slipshod description...They are often incapable of drawing the most obvious conclusions from any simple premises...⁴⁹¹

It might seem extraordinary, in the context of the orientalist attitude of Cromer and other British colonial administrators, to read the view of L.F Nalder Governor of the Northern Province from 1930-1936 when he describes Arab and British minds as inherently similar. Nalder believed that,

⁴⁹⁰ Heather J. Sharkey, “Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan”, p. 29.

⁴⁹¹ Lord Cromer quoted in Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East*, p. 93.

...the culture of the north is one which is easily comprehensible to ourselves...Moreover the Arab mentality is not far removed from our own; we continually find things which surprise us, but seldom things which shock us. His ideas of right and wrong are broadly similar to our own.

For Nalder, the African mentality was incomprehensible and their way of life baffling, '...for him our laws of cause and effect have little existence or meaning...' and that the African,

...lives in a tiny portion of a dimly realized earth capriciously interfered with by a spirit world that can be partially controlled by magic. In anything abnormal, anything strange, he realises the working of that world.⁴⁹²

Nalder's position can be best understood placed in the wider British world-view. In the case of the Sudan, the British rationalized colonialism as they did elsewhere, as a "civilizing mission". In this world-view, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians and more recent Islamic empires had reached levels of civilization that had been at one time the most advanced in the world. It was held, at least publicly, by the British that Sudanese Arabs could also achieve a similar level of progress if provided with suitable guidance. The non-Arabs, though, fitted into another discourse that Black Africans were a primitive race without "history". For Francis Mading Deng, the British historian A.J. Arkell articulated the British view of southern Sudan most aptly when he argued in 1955 that, '...what is known as the southern Sudan today has no history before 1821.'⁴⁹³ Arkell's perspective on the absence of a historical cycle in Africa is part of a longer western intellectual tradition that dates from G.W. Hegel (1770-

⁴⁹² L. Nalder quoted in Godfrey Lienhardt, "The Sudan: Aspects of the South Government among Some of the Nilotic Peoples, 1947-52," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1982, p. 25.

⁴⁹³ A.J. Arkell, 1955, quoted in Francis Mading Deng, *War of Visions*, p. 185.

1831), to Hugh Trevor-Roper the Regius Professor of History at Oxford University, who echoed Hegel on this point, in 1963.⁴⁹⁴ The African- Negro object has suffered from a stronger a more pronounced racialization than the Arab, despite the existence of a pronounced orientalism and Islamophobia in the western discourse on the Middle East.

The “Africans” and non-Arabs of the Sudan were considered to be particularly backward and their own “traditional’ laws and customs, it was argued, would be more appropriate for them at the stage of development they had reached. Some minimal educational opportunities were provided for the chiefs and the sons of chiefs but otherwise it was felt education would “ruin” the indigenous populace. The introduction of racial justifications for the domination of one group over another has been profoundly debilitating for the Sudan. Racism has been one of the primary fields on which political and economic struggles during the post-colonial period have occurred. The north-south conflict and now the Darfur-Khartoum conflict has been infused with racial ideologies that can be traced back to the colonial perspective of races and racial hierarchies. The racial element in colonial and post-colonial Sudan

⁴⁹⁴ G.W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Jibree. New York: Dover, 1956, p. 99, Hegel’s point was that Africa had no history of its own: ‘At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit.’ His view on the Negro was as racist as any in the nineteenth century for example, p. 93 from the same text: ‘The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all *our* ideas—the category of Universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence... The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality—all that we call feeling—if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character.’ Hugh Trevor-Roper later reiterated the claim that ‘...there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness...’ in an article published in 1969, Hugh Trevor-Roper, “The Past and Present: History and Sociology,” *Past and Present*, Vol. 42, 1969, p. 6. Trevor-Roper’s controversial comment on African history received a huge amount of criticism, especially as it was made at a time of general optimism and enthusiasm about the prospects of progress in an Africa no longer under colonial rule.

was a departure from the pre-colonial perceptions of identities held in Darfur, which were largely shaped by Islam, Arabicity and the power of the Keira Sultanate.

5.7 Colonial Religious Policy and the Consolidation of neo-Mahdism in the Western Sudan

The defeat of the Mahdiyya provided the opportunity for displaced groups to return and reclaim land appropriated by the Khalifa and his followers. The confusion surrounding land ownership prompted the early colonial administration to establish land titles courts to resolve conflicts over land. Additionally, the Sudan Mohammedan Law Courts Ordinance of 1902 was passed, which established Islamic courts, including a central court presided over by the Grand Kadi, the *mufti* and another judge.⁴⁹⁵ The new colonial authority determined that Sudanese knowledge of Islamic legal matters was insufficiently advanced for the task of upholding a judiciary, provided the basis for the appointment of Egyptians *'ulama* to the Islamic judicial hierarchy in Sudan.⁴⁹⁶ Tensions between the Egyptian *'ulama* and the popular Sudanese Sufi orders undermined the effectiveness of the religious-based legal system that the British hoped would place Islam at the service of the state.⁴⁹⁷

Sudanese politics since the late nineteenth century has been heavily influenced by two neo-Sufi movements which pre-date the British conquest in 1898. The older of the two movements, the Khatmiyya⁴⁹⁸ arrived in Sudan with the founder of the order,

⁴⁹⁵ M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, p. 61.

⁴⁹⁶ Abdelsalam Hassan, *History of Law reform in Sudan*, 2008, pp. 3-4,

<http://www.redress.org/publications/HISTORY%20LAW%20REFORM%20FINALFeb08.pdf>

⁴⁹⁷ Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, "Mahdist Uprisings Against the Condominium Government in the Sudan," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1979, p. 449. John O. Voll, "The British, the 'Ulama', and Popular Islam in the Early Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3, Jul., 1971, pp. 213-218.

⁴⁹⁸ The order is more formally known as *khatim al-turuq* (the seal of all paths/orders) and the leader of the order is known as *sirr al-khatim* (the secret of the seal), see Ahmed al-Shahi, "A Noah's Ark: The

Sayyid Muhammad ‘Uthman al-Mirghani (1793-1853) who was a student of the famous neo-Sufi reformer Ahmad ibn Idris (1760-1837).⁴⁹⁹ ‘Uthman al-Mirghani arrived in Sudan from the Hijaz in 1816 just before the great upheaval of the Turko-Egyptian military conquest of the Sudanese region.⁵⁰⁰ Even though al-Mirghani was able to gain a foothold in Sudan at this time, it was not until the Turko-Egyptian regime entered into a mutual arrangement with the Khatmiyya that the order gained a strong Sudanese following.⁵⁰¹ The strength of the order, as with other Sufist orders in Sudan such as the Sammaniyya and Tijaniyya, was found in the innovations they brought to the Sudan such as ‘...a new educational programme, an organizational structure and a sense of belonging to a wider Muslim world.’⁵⁰² The favour the Khatmiyya held within the Turko-Egyptian Sudan came to an end with the victory of the Mahdist uprising in 1885. The Mahdiyya was an unfortunate interlude for the Khatmiyya whose leaders were forced into exile in Egypt for the entire fourteen year period of Madhist rule in the Sudan. With the return of the Egyptians, the Khatmiyya also returned to the Sudan and were given tacit government support as an acceptable religious alternative to the much feared Mahdists.

The other strategy adopted by the colonial government was to try and create a centralized Islamic system under government control. O’Fahey represents the

Continuity of the Khatmiyya Order in Northern Sudan,” *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1981, p. 15.

⁴⁹⁹ R.S. O’Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint: Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990, on the tradition in Sudan in particular see pp. 173-179.

⁵⁰⁰ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan since the Maydiyya*, London: C. Hurst and Co., 2003, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁰¹ Ahmed al-Shahi, “A Noah’ Ark”, p. 16, states that the Khatimiyya under Muhammad al-Hasan al-Mirghani, son of the order’s founder Muhammad ‘Uthman al-Mirghani, arrived in Sudan and immediately ‘...supported the regime, and in return the authorities did not interfere with the activities of the Order to which people gave their personal loyalty and with which they identified themselves.’

⁵⁰² R.S. O’Fahey, “Islamic Hegemonies in the Sudan” in Louis Brenner (ed.), *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, p. 25.

institutionalization of Islam in Sudan by the British as both a novelty and a failure⁵⁰³, a position echoed by Peter Woodward:

The British attempt to promote orthodox Islam and create a controlling “Board of *Ulema*” that would, it was hoped, limit the spread of the influence of the *tariqas* turned out to be a disappointment...This failure did, however, mean that unlike the situation in some other Muslim countries the *qadis* and other officials did not themselves emerge as a significant political force that might have been a basis for a concerted Islamic political stance.⁵⁰⁴

The initial failure of the Condominium to successfully institutionalize Islam within the confines of the state was soon overcome through the readiness of the two most prominent and powerful Islamic leaders in the Sudan to collaborate with the new rulers. In particular, the reversal of the British attitude towards Mahdism was startling, as was the rehabilitation of the leader of the order, Sayyid ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, who became a vital accomplice in promoting stability and support for the Condominium.

The Mahdiyya, as already noted, was formed during the collapse of Turko-Egyptian rule in Sudan through the personae of the Mahdi and the mass movement he inspired to rise against foreign rule. Mahdism and the Khatmiyya, arose in very different circumstances in the nineteenth century and these contrasting origins are, in a number of ways, reflected in the political positions they occupied during the period of transition from colonialism to independence in Sudan. The British authorities

⁵⁰³ Ibid, p. 30

⁵⁰⁴ Peter Woodward, “Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Sudanese Politics Before Independence” in Gabriel R. Warburg and Uri M. Kuperferschmidt (eds.), *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983, p. 98 (italics in the original).

oscillated between the Khatmiyya and Mahdism throughout the colonial period and this vacillation was further complicated by the intricacies of the relations between the condominium “partners”, especially after the dramatic change that occurred after Britain lost control over Egyptian domestic politics in 1922. The British, at this time, overcame their last reservations towards ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi as they decided to place their trust in the Ansar because of the Mahdist aversion towards the Egyptians.⁵⁰⁵ The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (1936) eased Anglo-Egyptian tensions and had a similar affect on the relations between the British and the Khatmiyya in Sudan. By this time, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and his movement had become extremely wealthy and a powerful influence in Sudanese politics. Peter Woodward suggests the Mahdist order had become almost ‘a state within a state’ by the end of the 1930s.⁵⁰⁶

The influence of ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, and of Mahdism, grew to be especially strong in the western Sudan in the years between the two World Wars.⁵⁰⁷ Even though the original Mahdist revolt sprung from the western Sudan to sweep the Turko-Egyptian regime from power with the widespread support of the people, the movement rapidly lost all appeal becoming known in Darfur as *kubbū kullū*, which when translated means, “pour out everything”.⁵⁰⁸ Mahdist influence in western Sudan was not a direct consequence of the mass movement of the nineteenth century but resulted from conscious government strategy of using the Mahdist movement to pacify the western periphery of the Sudan. Kaptijens details a succession of rebellions against the Anglo-Egyptian presence in Darfur which threatened the

⁵⁰⁵ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan since the Mahdiyya*, p. 87.

⁵⁰⁶ Peter Woodward, “Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Sudanese Politics Before Independence”, p. 101.

⁵⁰⁷ Lidwien Kapteijns, “Mahdist Faith and the Legitimation of Poplar revolt in Western Sudan”.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 392.

tenuous government control over the peripheries of the colony.⁵⁰⁹ A major similarity of all these revolts was that they were led by *faki's* claiming the title of either the “Mahdi” or of the *nabi 'Isas* (the prophet Jesus).⁵¹⁰ In 1927, a *jihad* by Faqih Muhajir and his supporters from south-western Darfur was the last to emerge. The reason, according to Kaptjien’s for calm that finally came over the western Sudan was due to the influence that ‘Abd al-Rahman and the Ansar were able to exert over the region.⁵¹¹

Abd al-Rahman was a grandson of a Keira Sultan through his matrilineal line and through that connection and the active recruitment of followers from Darfur the hostile posture of western Sudan to the Mahdist order was gradually changed. The effect on Darfur of the authority of ‘Abd al-Rahman was that, ‘[I]nstead of generating prophet-led revolts of their own, the common people of the western Sudan put their hopes in a ‘Prophet Jesus’ in the Nile valley, namely Sayyid ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi.’⁵¹² Increasingly, it became clear to the colonial government that the Ansar were adept in maintaining order and that ‘Abd al-Rahman was as concerned as they were with order in the rural areas. After the 1927 revolt, the colonial government reversed the earlier edict restricting Mahdist involvement in Darfur. In particular, the government sanctioned movement from the western Sudan to the east. After the opening of the Gezira cotton-scheme recruiting the labour necessary to fulfil the needs of labourers from Darfur migrated to the Gezira Scheme to work for cash and found themselves working on ‘Abd al-Rahman’s vast cotton holdings and reliant on the Mahdist order for spiritual and other basic needs. In doing so, many westerners

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, pp. 393-394.

⁵¹⁰ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan since the Mahdiyya*, p. 88.

⁵¹¹ Lidwien Kapteijns, “Mahdist Faith and the Legitimation of Poplar revolt in Western Sudan”, p. 395.

⁵¹² Ibid, p. 395.

were conscripted into the Mahdist order and over time this relationship between migrants from Darfur and ‘Abd Rahman made Darfur the political stronghold of the Ansar, for years to come. Additionally, the migration of westerners to work on the holdings of the al-Mahdi family brought labour from Darfur into the Sudanese economy.⁵¹³

5.8 Economic Policy during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium: Gezira and not much More in Sixty Years

The one exception, in the Sudanese case, to the rule of colonial self-sufficiency, was the British decision to fund the Gezira cotton scheme. Norman O’Neill argues that international competition in the 1890s had pressed the Lancashire textile industry to specialise in the manufacture of fine cotton products.⁵¹⁴ The finer longer cotton required to supply the industry was only grown in Egypt and the United States. Egyptian cotton supply was unpredictable and unreliable due to the continual rebelliousness of the *fellahin*. Because of the incapacity of the market to fulfil the growing demands of the British textile industry, an alternative supply had to be generated in a region under the direct control of the British. Changes to the economic circumstances in Britain were to have a profound affect on the economic and social organisation of the Sudan.

The British government responded to the needs of the textile industrialists by providing the security for a thirteen million pound loan which was utilised to build the infrastructure to ensure the success of what was a ‘massive enterprise of primitive

⁵¹³ Abbas Abdelkarim, “Wage Labourers in the Fragmented Labour Market of the Gezira, Sudan,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 56, No. 1, 1986, pp. 54-70, argues that western Sudanese employed on the Gezira Scheme came to represent a major component of the shifting workforce in the 1930s and 1940s.

⁵¹⁴ O’Neill, “Class and Politics in the Modern History of Sudan,” pp. 32-33.

accumulation.’⁵¹⁵ The Gezira Scheme became the largest gravity-irrigated cotton plantation in the world. With the construction of the Sennar Dam in 1926, the land under cultivation escalated from 240,000 *feddans* in 1925 to almost a million *feddans* in 1956.⁵¹⁶ The manner in which the Gezira cotton scheme was structured led to an immense drain of wealth from the Sudan as millions of dollars were expatriated to British investors each year. As an example, Niblock calculates that over a third of the profit raised from the production of cotton in Sudan was returned to British investors, another million dollars was procured by the Condominium in taxes and other costs received from the tenants, leaving less than one half of the yield to the farmers.⁵¹⁷ The expropriation of the surplus from the Sudanese peasantry stifled the accumulation of wealth by Sudanese cotton farmers with the consequence that the petty indigenous agricultural bourgeoisie remained numerically and economically insignificant.⁵¹⁸ In addition, the inequities of wealth and political power created by an allocation of land that favoured large landowners created a considerable legacy the Sudan has yet to overcome.

The economic and social development of Sudan was considered principally in terms of ensuring the financial maintenance of the colonial infrastructure and the system of rule, or as Fatima Babiker Mahmoud argues, the Sudanese economy ‘during the colonial period was determined to a large extent by the colonial interests and the needs of external markets.’⁵¹⁹ The Gezira Scheme was no exception, as it was

⁵¹⁵ Ibid, p. 32.

⁵¹⁶ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan: The Dynamics of Sudanese Politics, 1898-1985*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1987, p. 14.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 350-355.

⁵¹⁸ Ibrahim Kursany, *The Dynamics and Limits of Capitalist Development in Sudanese agriculture*, Khartoum: Development Studies and Research Centre, Khartoum University, 1982.

⁵¹⁹ Fatima Babiker Mahmoud, *The Sudanese Bourgeoisie: Vanguard of Development?*, London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 149.

designed to provide the materials required for the British textile industry and to preserve the authority of the colonial administration. So, in addition, to serving the interests of British financiers and industrialists the colonial government was strengthened by the scheme in at least three ways. First, the allocation of large land grants to political elites, especially to ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, tied them even closer to the colonial government.⁵²⁰ Second, the regime’s control of water, property rights and export prices ensured that the Gezira Scheme strengthened the governments control over the means of production even if land was privately held. Third, the Gezira Scheme provided the colonial government with a larger pool of revenues with which to further consolidate and expand government administration in the colony.⁵²¹

Gezira aside, colonial policy continued to favour projects that facilitated the extraction of resources. Cotton production rapidly dominated the colonial economy of the Sudan resulting in the concentration of the investment in development projects in an arc in northern Sudan bounded by the Gezira Scheme, Khartoum and Port Sudan. The implication was an absence of investment for development projects in the peripheral areas of the Sudan. In the case of the most remote areas of Sudan, such as Darfur, investment in economic projects or for social and political institutions were very insignificant and came extremely late, so that by the end of the colonial period, the development project was, very much too little too late, for the people of Darfur.

⁵²⁰ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 51.

⁵²¹ Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: The Gezira scheme and agricultural transition*, London: Routledge, 1991 is an excellent survey of the history of the Gezira Scheme. In particular, the authors show that the Gezira scheme failed to offer the transition to capitalist agricultural production that it promised. Much of the reason for lack of expansion of the capitalist mode of production, they argue, can be attributed to the manner in which it was formed as a state-controlled enterprise and the division of labour that dominated Sudan during the colonial period discriminated so heavily against the landless peasantry.

Darfur was considered politically and economically backward. Without the raw materials that British manufacturing desired there was no impetus for investment in the Darfur province from the colonial regime. In making a point about Darfur's economic primitiveness, Robert O. Collins states, that, '[T]he British soon learned that Darfur had little to contribute to the rebuilding of the Sudan.'⁵²² The consequence for Darfur of being viewed from such a narrow perspective was that during the colonial period, the entire region was largely ignored by economic planners and administrators.⁵²³

5.9 Conclusion: The Colonial Legacy for Darfur and Sudan

Colonialism in Sudan followed a similar pattern of logic as in other colonial locations, even if the practices differed. In Sudan, British colonial governments operated to secure the interests of empire and the colony. In Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale's excellent study of colonialism in Kenya, the two scholars demonstrated that colonial governments behaved rationally by prioritising the reproduction of political power over other interests.⁵²⁴ In the case of Kenya, Berman and Lonsdale describe the tensions that emerged between British settlers and the colonial government over native policy. While Sudan was not faced with the complication of dealing with a settler class, there was the problem of having to share government with the Egyptians. Egypt would remain a thorn in the Sudan Political Service's side but after 1924, a minor one in most instances. The policies of Wingate and his successors demonstrate that the tendency of the Government to machinate in ways that protected power was no different in the Sudanese case.

⁵²² Robert O. Collins, "Disaster in Darfur", p. 4.

⁵²³ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, pp. 137-139, Daly labels the colonial underdevelopment of Darfur "institutionalized neglect."

⁵²⁴ Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*.

The major problem for those British appointed to the Sudan Political Service was how to maintain control. The land was vast, the people varied and the resources available to the state were meagre. In addressing this issue the colonizers introduced policies which revolved around tribalism, segregation and racism into the Sudan. Actually, the British did more than introduce new forces, but invented, manipulated and deformed the identities of the Sudanese to correlate with their prejudices and overcome the shortage of manpower and money. The failure to develop an integrated economy was another impediment to national integration and as Robert Tignor argues would resonate beyond the end of the colonial period:

A country's development is conditioned by its economic traditions and institutions. Although dramatic structural changes occur, they rest on prior foundations.⁵²⁵

The foundations of the post-colonial state evolved in the colonial period. In particular, the sense of national disunity was the major legacy of the colonial period. British colonialism did nothing to foster a sense of a national Sudanese identity. In fact, the opposite occurred, principally as a consequence of the policies of indirect rule, the Closed District Ordinances, and the introduction of a racial discourse. The policies of the colonial government undermined efforts at constructing Sudanese national unity after independence. The Sudan that emerged as an independent state in 1956 was a loose confederation of tribal, racial and regional identities. The further unravelling of the national ties was most rapid between the north and south, but the northern Sudan also struggled with national disunity, albeit not as spectacularly. Independence

⁵²⁵ Robert I. Tignor, "The Sudanese Private Sector", p. 179.

brought great promise but also great challenges. The story to come revolves around the disappointment of a Sudanese state that failed to meet the promise of independence, especially the twin disappointments associated with the permanent crisis of national politics and the perennial problem of economic underdevelopment.

Chapter Six -

The Failure of the Sudanese Post-Colonial Politics, 1956-1969:

Change in Darfur and the struggle for Inclusion

6.1 Introduction

The political institutions and economic structures bequeathed to the Sudan after almost six decades of British rule proved inadequate immediately the Sudan acquired independence. The transfer of power was, in the end, peaceful but not without complications. Egypt, which itself was throwing off the vestiges of its own colonial past, was still the major threat to British interests in the Sudan. The British continued to resist giving up control over the Sudan, for even in the post World War Two period Egypt was believed to be a strategic asset to the British, and the Sudan as the gateway to Egypt.⁵²⁶ British manipulation of the Sudanese nationalist movement in this period, was nothing new, but part of a longer pattern which had emerged as way of dealing with fears of neo-Mahdism, on the one hand, and Egyptian-Sudan unification, on the other.

In the end, the British were powerless to prevent either pro-Egyptian or Mahdist forces taking over the country. But the fact that neither did was testament to the effectiveness of the system of competing political forces the British had mobilized to secure their interests in the Sudan in the lead up to independence. The British attitude shifted in regards to the idea of Sudanese independence after 1952, but at no stage

⁵²⁶ William Louis Robertson, *End of British Imperialism: the scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization* : collected essays, London: I.B. Taurus and Co. Ltd, 2006, pp529-552, presents an interesting chapter of the change in British attitudes to the Sudan and Egypt through the eyes of Margery Perham the influential British scholar/administrative advisor for British colonialism in Africa. The shifting attitudes of the British, in particular Perham, are set amidst the decline of the British Empire, nationalist upsurge in Egypt and Sudan, and the British anxiety over control of Suez.

could it be said they were acquiescent decolonizers, and during the last years of colonialism in Sudan, only minor changes were made to the architecture of the colonial state in preparation for independence. Holt and Daly remark that the Sudanese greeted independence with some ambivalence which, 'was a reflection of the continuity not only of the system of government, but also the tenor of politics.'⁵²⁷ In 1956, Sudan had no constitution, the southern Sudan had no guarantees that they would not be subjected to northern Sudanese colonialism, and Native Administration remained in place in the outlying regions of the country. The augurs for independence did not bode well when soldiers in the south mutinied in 1955 only months before Sudan declared independence.

The Sudan emerged from colonialism with a number of structural impediments to state and nation building. The size and diversity of the independent state cannot be overstated as a challenge that faced the nationalist leaders that inherited power in 1956. The Sudan's regions were historically diverse and colonialism did very little to integrate the eastern, western and southern regions with the dominant central Sudan. Throughout the colonial period, the British concentrated economic and social development projects in and around Khartoum.⁵²⁸ Undoubtedly, the most apparent consequence of the lack of colonial interest in constructing an integrated state has been the ongoing conflict between the north and the south Sudan. As a consequence of the concentration of analysis of what had been perceived as the primary cleavage that existed in the Sudan little sustained scholarly work has been conducted on the centrifugal forces at work in the northern Sudan since independence. However, regional tensions within the northern Sudan were a notable theme of the early

⁵²⁷ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan*, p167.

⁵²⁸ Often referred to as the three towns, Khartoum, North Khartoum and Omdurman which together form a larger urbanized conurbation.

independence period especially with the emergence of regional movements and parties in the late 1950s and 1960s. The establishment of regional parties in Sudan illustrates the extent that the nation-building project had failed to develop a national consciousness as the Sudanese in the peripheries turned to ethnic, tribal and regional leaders to represent them at the national level. Sectarian rivalry and internal party factionalism distracted the ruling elite from forming a program on which the post-colonial state could be remodelled to meet the challenges of the colonial legacies. The absence of political leadership ultimately proved to be the catalyst for the demise of democratic politics in Sudan when a military coup brought the second period of parliamentary politics to an end in 1969.

The legacies of colonial state building in Sudan left its mark on Darfur, as did the failure of post-colonial politics to address these issues. Darfur was simultaneously inside and outside the political system of Sudan, a feature of the relationship between centre and periphery right through the post-colonial period. Darfur's elite adopted the perception of the homogeneous Arab/Islamic northern Sudan. But at the same time, the people from Darfur were westerners and considered to be inferior Arabs and Muslims from those Sudanese further to the east. While Darfur was an important electorate in the contest for control of the national parliament, at the same time Darfur's politicians were, on the whole, excluded from Sudanese government. Furthermore, Darfur was also a source of cheap migrant labour for the agricultural schemes in central Sudan, especially those owned and operated by the leaders of the Umma Party, but Darfur's economic elites were excluded from the ownership of the principal capital projects in the Sudan, and Darfur's labour was by and large absent from ranks of the growing labour aristocracy in the country. The result of these

ambiguous relationships was a growing ambivalence in Darfur towards the parliamentary parties and resentment at the marginalization of the region. Such a sentiment was not confined to just Darfur, other regions in the northern Sudan, and in fact, wider popular opinion in Sudan was infuriated with the politicians for the mismanagement of the state, which by 1969 had brought the Sudan to the point of impending collapse.

6.2 The Transition from Colonial to Post-colonial Rule: Sudanese Nationalism and Anglo-Egyptian Influence

The British behaved in the Sudan in much the same way as elsewhere in the Empire. In particular, the Condominium's efforts at manipulating the diverse elements of the emergent nationalist movement in a bid to forestall independence were similar to those in numerous other colonies that pressed for formal political separation from the Empire. In the Sudanese case, British policies concentrated on manipulating the rivalries of the two most important Sufist orders. O'Fahey has described the colonial politics in the Sudan as a 'complex dance' in which the British constantly shifted support from one of the movements to the other.⁵²⁹ This "dance" intensified as Sudan moved closer towards independence in the post World War Two period. The religious movements were favoured by the British for a number of reasons, some noted in the last chapter, but most of all because of the ingrained cynicism and alarm that the British felt towards secular nationalist movements and communist parties. One scholar of Sudanese politics has described the British attitude towards the urban educated political forces in these terms:

⁵²⁹ R.S. O'Fahey, "Islamic Hegemonies in the Sudan", p. 131.

The British saw secular nationalism in Sudan less as an ideological Achilles heel of the western education they themselves were importing into Sudan, and more as an infection caught from Egypt after 1918.⁵³⁰

However, as World War Two ended and Sudanese nationalism took inspiration from Arab, Asian and African anti-colonialism, the British were faced with an increasingly unfavourable set of actors with which to contend with, as they moved to shape the likely structure of the post-colonial Sudanese state.⁵³¹ The erstwhile allies of the colonial system, the two Sayyids, had lost the support of the colonial government, for different reasons in the post World War Two period. The growth in the power and wealth of the Ansar leader, led the British to abandon their support for Sayyid Rahman al-Mahdi in 1951, resulting in another shift in government policy. However, the Mahdi's chief rivals, the Khatmiyya had long favoured unification with Egypt which alarmed the British, as much as the threat that the Mahdist leader posed even if he declared himself monarch of Sudan.⁵³² Adding another layer of intricacy to the colonial government's approach to the nationalist movement in Sudan, the Khatmiyya had entered into an informal political alliance with the secular nationalist movement, thus overturning the tripartite character of the Sudanese nationalist movement. The British were faced with a number of impending threats.

The first threat was that 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi would seize power over the Sudan.

The second more alarming threat for the British was the possibility that the Sudanese

⁵³⁰ Peter Woodward, "Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Sudanese Politics Before Independence", p. 103.

⁵³¹ Gabriel Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan*, p. 43 presents a similar perspective as that of Ronald Robinson that the British decision to abandon Sudan was premised on the realization that they had finally run out of Sudanese collaborators.

⁵³² Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarian and Politics in the Sudan*, p. 132, reports that Selwyn Lloyd, Minister of State in the Churchill government visited 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and offered him the crown of Sudan 'to help Britain keep the Egyptians out of Sudan.'

leadership would choose unification with Egypt. The tumultuous events in Egypt, beginning with the Egyptian abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian agreement in 1951 and then the palace coup that toppled the monarchy a year later escalated the British fears of Egyptian-Sudan unification.⁵³³ Finally, the communist threat could not be completely overlooked even in a country like Sudan which seemed to be dominated by the traditional religious orders. The alliance of Sudan's communists, with the trade union movement and Gezira tenants had forced the colonial authorities to consider a possibility that there might be in the wings, a radical challenge to the existing system.⁵³⁴ Colonial authorities were faced with a potential situation where Sudanese politics could take a more radical path if there was no forthcoming declaration of support for immediate self-government. They decided, under these conditions, to take active steps towards transferring power to the Sudanese in a way that would, at the very least, prevent Egyptian expansion into the Sudan, and also emasculate the radical forces.⁵³⁵ Thus, the British realizing they had few alternatives, rehabilitated the two Sayyids, worked with the leader of the secular nationalists Ismai'l al-Azhari, and promoted rapid "Sudanization" of the Sudan Political Service.

The British decision to integrate the Sudanese into the higher levels of the Sudan Political Service was far too late to ensure an effective transferral of power. "Sudanization" of the Sudan Political Service had long been high on the agenda of demands of the Sudan's educated elite. In 1943, the colonial government reacted to the demands for independence issued by the Graduates' Congress and opened the

⁵³³ Gabriel Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1985, p. 43.

⁵³⁴ Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, London: Rex Collings, pp. 191-199.

⁵³⁵ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarian and Politics in the Sudan*, p. 132, reports that Selwyn Lloyd, Minister of State in the Churchill government visited 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and offered him the crown of Sudan 'to help Britain keep the Egyptians out of Sudan.'

possibility of Sudanese appointments to senior roles within the administration.⁵³⁶ This gesture was followed in 1946 with the establishment of a Sudanization Committee which reported back two years later with a plan to ‘Sudanize 62.2 per cent of the posts held by non-Sudanese over the next fourteen years.’⁵³⁷ However, little change occurred until 1953. In that year, 734 positions out of a total of 1219 jobs held by non-Sudanese were selected for immediate Sudanization and in the aftermath of the decision a further 200 British officials resigned voluntarily.⁵³⁸ The impact of the rapid transferral of authority is described by Woodward:

The loss of so many civil servants so quickly inevitably had an effect on the quality of the administration, which the new government accepted as a price to be paid for the reduction of British influence before the final decision to self-determination was taken. Some of the Sudanese replacements were inexperienced for the responsibilities thrust upon them, and charges of inefficiency were soon being made....A further administrative problem was that of rapid decentralization. The British had maintained a significant degree of devolution to province governors, but the new masters were keen both to create new central ministries and to gather in developed powers to them.⁵³⁹

The “Sudanization” of the civil service and the government in the years between 1953 and 1 January 1956, when Sudan declared independence, revealed the extent of the sectarianism that pervaded Sudanese politics.⁵⁴⁰ However, sectarian rivalries were momentarily transcended as the two Sayyids came together to ‘side with Egypt

⁵³⁶ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p.79.

⁵³⁷ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 59.

⁵³⁸ Ibid, the numbers provided by Niblock are actually ‘647 of the 1111 posts held by British personnel...and 87 of the 108 posts held by Egyptians.’

⁵³⁹ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 89.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

against Britain and then to throw out the former.⁵⁴¹ Colonialism came to an end in 1956 and indeed the outcome was a victory for the long-held Umma mantra of *Sudan li'l Sudaniyyin* (Sudan for the Sudanese), but as time would clearly demonstrate, the independent Sudan was not a Sudan for all the Sudanese, at least not equally.

The end of the colonial period was intended to constitute a break from the past, but the lack of change was more evident. Native Administration remained almost completely unreformed, the sectarian parties continued to dominate Sudanese politics, the economy was still dominated by cotton-production, and the uncertainty regarding the relationship between the central government and the regional administrations, especially the south, remained unresolved. The Condominium had lasted for sixty years in which time the colonial government's concern to maintain control over a vast region with the minimal resources possible superseded efforts at state-building, which only changed when the colonizers realized the force of nationalism was unstoppable. Even then, the efforts were too late and, ultimately, way too little. In the end, the structures and systems of control on which colonialism in Sudan was erected, namely Native Administration and sectarianism survived longer than the colonial regime they were intended to protect.

6.3 The Independent Sudan: Towards Political and Economic Crisis

The first two years of independence produced a number of issues which the Sudanese political system was unprepared to address, but were at the very core of the problem with the new state, as Daly stresses:

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

The rush to self-determination left many aspects of statehood incomplete. These included relations with the former codomini, ownership of their property, the rights of their and other foreign citizens, terms of service for remaining civil servants, currency, accession to treaties, the Nile waters, informal border arrangements, and much else. The country had no constitution: government carried on under authority of the old regime's ordinances, as implicitly recognized on parliamentary elections; the head of state was a five-man committee.⁵⁴²

The aspiration that the Sudanese people had for self-determination was that as an independent country the Sudan could overcome most of these concerns and take its place as an equal member of the international system.⁵⁴³ The optimism of independence and self-government was short-lived as the challenges facing the new leadership were ignored by sectarian rivalries and intra-party wrangling. To add to the uncertainty of independence new problems also surfaced. After independence, the al-Azhari government was faced with an economic challenge largely beyond its own control and a rebellion in the southern Sudan which it managed very poorly. The imposed amalgamation of the southern Sudan with the north left many southern Sudanese uneasy. The south had been administered differently from the north and for most of the colonial period considered a separate entity to the northern Sudan.⁵⁴⁴ The British had made no effort to integrate southerners into the northern Sudanese educational, political or economic structure until the Juba Conference in 1947. northern Sudanese were also denied a role in the south until Sudanization was rapidly

⁵⁴² M.W.Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 178.

⁵⁴³ Sudan became a member of the UN on November 12, 1956.

⁵⁴⁴ M. 'Abdel Rahim, "The Development of British Policy in the Southern Sudan 1899-1947," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.2, No. 3, 1966, pp. 227 – 249, highlights the British attitude to the South and the dramatic change to the policy on the Southern Sudan in the lead up to the Juba Conference in 1947.

deployed in 1953. Almost immediately, northern Sudanese filled administrative and government positions in the southern Sudan vacated by British personnel.⁵⁴⁵ This caused considerable resentment amongst the southern Sudanese intent on benefiting from the end of colonialism and who had no intention of trading one colonial ruler for another. Events throughout 1955 demonstrated to the southern Sudanese that the northern attitude was as heavy-handed and despotic as their British predecessors. Very soon, the situation deteriorated and the government was faced with rebellion in the southern provinces. The north-south conflict undermined the political and economic stability of Sudan for much of the country's post-colonial experience. Not only did the conflict in the south illustrate the lack of political unity of the Sudan but as Ann Mosely Lesch suggests, the problems that emerged in the southern Sudan were illustrative of the political paradigm that would dominate the relations, not only between north and south, but between the centre and the periphery for years to come.⁵⁴⁶

Economically, Sudan suffered from the dominance of the agricultural sector and the reliance on the international cotton price to maintain the revenues which was necessary to deliver on the material promises of independence. Despite, a belated attempt to diversify the Sudanese economy in the post World War Two period, the Sudanese economy remained hinged to cotton-production.⁵⁴⁷ In 1956, Sudan's industrial sector consisted of a brewery, soap and match factories, and a textile mill

⁵⁴⁵ Dustin Wai, "Pax Britannica and the Southern Sudan: The view from the theatre," *African Affairs*, Vol.79, No.16, July 1980, pp. 391-392.

⁵⁴⁶ Ann Mosely Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998, pp. 36-37.

⁵⁴⁷ Norman O'Neill, "Class and Politics in the Modern History of Sudan" in Jay O'Brien and Norman O'Neill (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd., p34, raw cotton exports accounted for over 70 per cent of Sudan's total export earnings in the thirty years from 1926 to 1956.

which in total accounted for only 2.5% of GDP⁵⁴⁸ and employed only 9500 Sudanese workers.⁵⁴⁹ Overall the lack of economic development in the Sudan is clear from an analysis of the composition of labour at the time of independence which clearly shows that the overwhelming proportion of the Sudanese labour-force was employed in the traditional agricultural sector. As Tim Niblock explains, taking the 1955-1956 census figures as his guide, over 70 per cent of the workforce were farmers or nomads, and without a permanent role in the modern economy.⁵⁵⁰ The Sudanese Government of Isma'il al-Azhari inherited an economy overly reliant on the production of cotton and exposed to the uncertainties of the international market. It did not take long for the first independent Sudanese government to be faced with economic difficulties they were unprepared to deal with, when the international value of cotton collapsed. The political paralysis of the first parliamentary period, combined with the negative impact of the rebellion in the southern Sudan, quickly exacerbated the problem.

Sectarianism determined the fate of the first prime minister and cabinet within months of independence. Ultimately al-Azhari was toppled because of the threat he posed to the pre-eminence of the two Sayyids over national affairs, and this threat led to a very rare moment of consensus between the two sectarian leaders.⁵⁵¹ Al-Azhari's ruling National Unionist Party (NUP) was replaced by a coalition that comprised the Khatmiyya defectors from the NUP and Umma members of parliament under the leadership of the Umma's 'Abdullah Khalil. Within weeks of taking power, this

⁵⁴⁸ Jay O'Brien and Norman O'Neill, "Uneven Development and Class Formation" in Jay O'Brien and Norman O'Neill (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd., p. 18.

⁵⁴⁹ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 43.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 81-83, according to Niblock 59.4 per cent of the workforce were farmers and 13.2 per cent were classified as nomads.

⁵⁵¹ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 207, according to Niblock both sectarian leaders feared the challenge to the political and economic power of the traditional sects from the radicalism of the secular nationalists and it was this common threat that helped them to overcome their natural distrust of each other and meet for the first time in 20 years.

coalition also unravelled due to the tensions and the rivalry between the two most powerful figures in Sudanese politics. The first election after independence in 1958 resulted in further political paralysis, as neither of the main parties was able to form government in their own right. The Umma with 62 seats and the Khatmiyya based People's Democratic Party with 25 seats formed what would, turn out to be, an unworkable a coalition as those that preceded it. The NUP succeeded in holding onto 40 seats and formed the opposition. 'Abdullah Khalil retained the position of Prime Minister of Sudan.⁵⁵²

Political machinations in Sudan after the dismantling of the Anglo-Egyptian colonial state were still heavily influenced by events in the wider international sphere. Even if domestic issues dominated the substance of politics in Sudan, as Woodward argues, international factors contributed by superimposing another layer of tensions on an already problematic political environment:

It was the system of Sudanese politics that forced the politicians to concentrate on domestic survival, and it was the political and economic system that basically governed Sudan's external relations or lack of them.⁵⁵³

The most important international relationships for Sudan were with immediate neighbours, but most particularly with Egypt.⁵⁵⁴ Relations with Egypt had shifted from a moment of unanimity in 1952 before sliding into a diplomatic crisis by the eve

⁵⁵² Harold F. Goswell, "The 1958 Elections in the Sudan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1958, pp. 409-417, also see Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 214 for a breakdown of the election results.

⁵⁵³ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, pp. 130-131.

⁵⁵⁴ Sudan's other neighbours would each in turn provide further challenges and opportunities in time. Ethiopia, Libya, Chad and Uganda would all have an impact on the Sudan, just as Sudan would itself be responsible for destabilising the neighbourhood.

of independence.⁵⁵⁵ The crisis was triggered by an announcement from Ismail al-Azhari that the Sudan had chosen independence over unity.⁵⁵⁶ The Egyptians believing they were being betrayed showed their indignation by openly criticising al-Azhari and began publicly criticizing the government in a campaign aimed at undermining the national leadership on the eve of independence. However, this enmity was short-lived. Sudan, as Tareq Ismael argues, was considered by the Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser as the key to the success of Egypt's Africa policy.⁵⁵⁷ And, of course, there was always the perennial Egyptian concern over Sudanese control of the water flows of the Nile, which played no small part in shaping Egyptian policies towards Sudan. In this context, with Sudan high on Egypt's list of external priorities, Nasser immediately set about repairing the fractured relationship between Cairo and Khartoum and demonstrated his commitment to the Egyptian-Sudanese relationship. Nasser changed the hostile Egyptian position toward Sudanese independence and Egypt became the first state to recognize Sudanese independence.⁵⁵⁸ Sudanese leaders reciprocated with similar gestures of goodwill, which they framed in terms of a historical closeness between the two nations. Following a similar gesture by al-Azhari in 1956, the new Sudanese Premier 'Abdullah Khalil declared that Egypt was '...the closest state in the world to us...' and further declared that he regarded Sudan and Egypt as '...two brotherly

⁵⁵⁵ When General Neguib assumed power in 1952 the relationship improved dramatically. Neguib was born in Sudan, was half Sudanese by birth and very popular amongst the unionists in Sudan. Neguib's presidency marked the high point of the Egyptian-Sudanese relationship which ended in 1954 when Neguib was deposed by Nasser.

⁵⁵⁶ Yehudit Ronen, "Sudan and Egypt: the swing of the pendulum (1989-2001)," *Middle East Studies*, 2003, Vol. 39, No.33, p. 81, he states that the swing in relations between the two countries in the 1950s was not an unusual feature: 'Since Sudan gained independence in 1956 and even before, relations with its powerful neighbour Egypt oscillated between the extremes of enmity and affinity.'

⁵⁵⁷ Tareq Y. Ismael, "The U.A.R in Africa," *The Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2, No.2, 1968, pp. 175-194.

⁵⁵⁸ Tareq Y. Ismael, "The United Arab Republic and the Sudan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 23, No.1, 1969, p. 19.

countries...'⁵⁵⁹ Despite these exclamations of intimacy, the relations soon soured as Sudan turned towards the US in 1957 amid a deteriorating domestic economic situation and increasing political instability.

Egypt's impact on Sudan would, along with the deteriorating economic situation, prove to be the main catalyst for the demise of the first democratic era. In particular, Nasser's status as a Third World hero in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis impacted heavily on the precarious balance between the different parliamentary forces. In 1957, the conservative alliance forged between the Umma Party and People's Democratic Party began unravelling as the parties moved to realign themselves along pro and anti-Egyptian lines.⁵⁶⁰ A poor cotton harvest in 1957 caused a fiscal crisis for the Sudanese government. Consequently, the Sudanese government, led by the Umma Party, turned to the US for economic and military assistance. This decision was met with strong opposition within his own coalition government, especially PDP parliamentarians from the Khatmiyya protested at the proposed ties with the US due to suspicions that the US interest in Sudan was part of an American ploy to isolate Egypt.⁵⁶¹ Sudanese-Egyptian diplomatic relations for the rest of 1957 and early into 1958 remained stable, even if they were a little cool, with Nasser remaining a popular figure in the northern Sudan. Sudan was no more or less immune from the rising tide of Nasser's radical Arab and Third World nationalism as any other of the neighbouring states.⁵⁶² In this context of rising pro-Egyptian and especially anti-western sentiment in the Sudan, the decision by Khartoum to align Sudanese interests

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 21.

⁵⁶⁰ Peter Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, London: I.B. Taurus 2003, p. 37.

⁵⁶¹ Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, "The United States and Egypt: confrontation and accommodation in Northeast Africa, 1956-60," *Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29, No.2, 1993, pp. 321-338.

⁵⁶² Ibid, pp152-153. Tareq Y. Ismael, "The United Arab Republic and the Sudan," p. 20, argues that the Suez Crisis, 'intensified the bonds between the Sudanese and Egyptians...'

with the US in exchange for economic assistance provided the context for the first major political crisis after independence.

The influence of Nasser inspired radical nationalist and socialist movements to emerge in a number of Middle Eastern states, including the Sudan, as there was ‘no doubt that the appeal of Nasser throughout the Middle East, even in Iran, was irresistible, especially after the Suez Crisis.’⁵⁶³ The US turned its attention to undermining Nasser and preventing the expansion of Soviet influence into the Middle East. Sudan was soon perceived by the US, as pointed out by US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in August 1958⁵⁶⁴, as a strategic asset in combating Nasser’s influence. The same year that Dulles expressed US interest in Sudan, in many ways represents the high-point of the revolutionary fervour inspired by Nasser with the formation of the United Arab Republic between Egypt and Syria in February, the Iraqi military revolt on July 14, the US Marine landing on Khalde beach in Lebanon three days later, followed by the Siege of the Casbah which brought the bloody Battle of Algiers to an end in July of 1958, even if the Algerian war of independence continued for another four years.⁵⁶⁵ Sudan’s importance to the US was never greater than at this moment.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶³ Peter Sluggett, “The Pan-Arab Movement: The influence of Cairo and Moscow,” in William Roger Louis and Roger Owen (eds.), *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958*, London: I.B. Taurus Press, 2002, pp. 213-214.

⁵⁶⁴ Dulles in a memorandum of a telephone conversation, 23 August, 1958, quoted in Diane B. Kunz, “The Emergence of the United States as a Middle Eastern Power: 1956-1958,” in William Roger Louis and Roger Owen (eds.), *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958*, London: I.B. Taurus Press, 2002, p. 94.

⁵⁶⁵ Sudan was also influenced by the experiences of sub-Saharan Africa where in the 1950s African independence movements were on the verge of dismantling the British, French and Belgian colonial empires, beginning with the independence of Ghana in 1957.

⁵⁶⁶ Peter Woodward, *US Foreign Policy*, pp 29-30.

What the events of 1958 demonstrate is that the Sudan was thrust into the international arena as an independent state at this moment when Egyptian fortunes were once again on the ascendant and radical nationalism was everywhere on the rise in the Middle East. It was in this environment of heightened tensions between pro-Nasserist revolutionary movements and conservative forces across the entire region, that the Sudan held parliamentary elections in November 1958.

The elections of 1958 were not only contested at a time of heightened international and regional tensions, which created a deep ideological chasm between the major political actors, but at a time of deteriorating economic conditions that also undermined whatever national stability existed in the Sudan. Suddenly, as if greater powers were conspiring against the Sudanese government of ‘Abdullah Khalil, cotton-prices on the international market collapsed due to a world-wide oversupply and 250,000 bales of cotton remained unsold at the end of that year.⁵⁶⁷ The crash in cotton prices followed a bad cotton harvest in 1957, and only added to the economic slump the Sudanese government was forced to address. With the economy in a slide and Sudanese foreign relations responsible for an increased amount of friction between the major parties, especially after Egyptian-Sudanese relations hit a further low with a series of diplomatic crises in the first half of 1958⁵⁶⁸, the Sudan held elections. The Umma Party won a total of 63 seats, with the National Unionist Party securing 44 seats, the PDP with 26 and the southern Liberals with 40 seats.⁵⁶⁹ The

⁵⁶⁷ Robert O. Collins and Robert L. Tignor, *Egypt and Sudan*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1967, p. 158.

⁵⁶⁸ Sudan brought a dispute over an unsettled boundary to the UN Security Council in February 1958 and then followed this up in July 1958 with an action which violated the 1929 Nile Water Scheme. Both disputes were resolved by later agreements.

⁵⁶⁹ Darfur’s allegiance to the Umma Party remained strong with 19 out of the 22 seats contested in the region won by Umma candidates. However, this was not translating into any increase in the allocation of social or economic development undertakings by the Umma led coalition government for Darfur province. Darfur’s centrality to the potential victory of political parties at national elections should have proven the stimulus necessary for the Umma Party, in particular, to focus on maintaining its huge

Umma Party were once more forced into an uneasy coalition with the pro-Egyptian PDP. When the Prime Minister ‘Abdullah Khalil negotiated a new aid package with the US that would have tied Sudan even more firmly into an anti-Egyptian front the coalition was all but doomed. Khalil fearing Egyptian intervention, which was rumoured to be impending, or the defection of the PDP to the NUP in parliament which would have brought al-Azhari to power again, (which was a more likely scenario) decided to take drastic action. The military intervened, with the tacit consent of the Umma Party, and took power from the civilian leaders on November 17, 1958. The fear of Egyptian interference was the catalyst that led to the coup but as Woodward contends the causes were much deeper:

In one sense the whole episode was a replay of the Condominium, in that a reflex international orientation penetrated directly into Sudanese politics. And in 1958, as in the earlier era, it was ultimately the Sudanese alignments and institutions, in this case the conservatively orientated army (which had grown from a force set up to counter Egyptian influence), that resolved the matter.⁵⁷⁰

The first period of parliamentary government had been wracked by dissension and the political parties were unable to provide the leadership necessary to unite the country or instil a sense of confidence amongst the public. Mansour Khalid makes the point that the politicking of the major parties in the lead up to independence and in the first parliamentary period was confined to inter-party and intra-party rivalries without any attempt, or imperative to “articulate a national policy” and it was this factor more than

support base in the province by allocating social services and economic opportunities to the western province. But, the brevity of the democratic periods in Sudan prevented this dialogic relationship from forming.

⁵⁷⁰ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p.132.

any other that led to the fall of the government and parliamentary politics.⁵⁷¹ Khalid is correct to identify, in this first parliamentary period, a distinct lack of any concrete progress in nation-building or any sign of a project of expanding the key state institutions that the Sudanese population expected from their government once independence was won. It was this absence of a program, more so than external factors, according to Khalid, that wore out the popular support for the political parties and provided the context for the military take-over. Inter and intra-party rivalries contributed to the instability of government, as did the anxiety that was held by the Umma Party, over possible political and economic changes resultant from a pan-Arab nationalist government following the nationalisation policies which Nasser had enacted in Egypt. But also, there was the complex mix of colonial legacies, which included problems with the cotton revenues that the Sudanese economy depended on so heavily, the intensification of the rivalries caused by Nasser's policies and the southern question which together left the politicians few options for effective nation-building. None of this obscures the fact, as Khalid is at pains to emphasise, that the Sudanese elite made many of the worst choices possible, especially in relation to the question of the southern Sudan.

The north-south dispute, not quite a conflict in this early period, has been regularly cast in terms of Arab-Islamic Sudan, on the one hand, and African and non-Muslim identities, on the other hand. Even if numerous other factors play a part in the conflict, one apparent dimension is without doubt the northern Sudanese Government's efforts at subjecting southern Sudanese to "Arabization" and "Islamization", which commenced in the transition to independence and intensified under the Abboud

⁵⁷¹ Mansour Khalid, *The Government they Deserve: the role of the elite in Sudan's political evolution*, London: Kegan Paul, 1990, p. 128.

regime.⁵⁷² It is more common since the Darfur crisis escalated in 2003, for commentators to also view in the northern Sudan an Arab and non-Arab demarcation in existence at independence as a reason for the instability of the new state. To prove this, it has become common for analysts to cite the census figures of 1955-1956 as evidence of the racial/ethnic divisions that plagued the northern Sudan with the statistics showing that more than 60 per cent of Sudanese were non-Arab at the time of independence.⁵⁷³ However, it can be argued that these figures only reflected the British colonial perception of who was an Arab and who was not considered an Arab, rather than any actual Arab and non-Arab dichotomy in the Sudan. In fact, in Darfur, the 750,000 people considered by the survey to be non-Arabs were categorized not as non-Arabs but as “Westerners” which was a further illustration of the complications surrounding racial/ethnic classifications of the northern Sudanese.⁵⁷⁴

According to the survey information available, Sudanese were asked to indicate whether they were Fur, Masalit, Zaghawa or Beja but which racial category the tribes fell within was a decision of the surveyors and not the surveyed. Racial differences were inscribed in the classifications adopted by the institutions but were largely overlooked by the Sudanese. The one-dimensional and unsophisticated optic which dominated the British view of Sudanese identities failed to take account of the multiple-layered and shifting nature of identity in northern Sudan. It is quite apparent from reading the extensive literature which analyses the racial identities of the

⁵⁷² Scopas S. Poggo, “General Ibrahim Abboud’s Military Administration in the Sudan, 1958-1964: Implementation of the Programs of Islamization and Arabization in the Southern Sudan,” *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2002, pp. 67-101

⁵⁷³ Philip Abbas, *Africa Today*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1973, pp. 29-43, including statistical information from the census in the appendix.

⁵⁷⁴ Heather J. Sharkey, “Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan”, pp. 26 presents a similar criticism of the reading of the census concluding that ‘the 1956 census did not distinguish between ‘Arabs’ and ‘Africans’ *per se* but rather between ‘Arabs’ and others. The census also assumed a distinction between the Sudanese North and South (as indeed British policy markers had done).’

Sudanese that the racial cartography of the colonial period introduced Arab, non-Arab and African identities into the Sudan in a way that obscured and denied the historical ambiguity and indifference towards race in this region of the world.⁵⁷⁵ Understanding “Arabism” and “Africanism” in Sudan since independence requires an analysis of the colonial and post-colonial political relations that have influenced identity formation that has led to Arab and non-Arab markers as political instruments of state and non-state actors in the struggle for access to power and resources. “Arab” or “non-Arab” identities have little concrete meaning abstracted out of the shifting political and economic alliances that have shaped the post-colonial Sudanese condition.

While the upsurge of pan-Arabism in the Middle East in the 1950s was one such influence it did not necessarily exclude non-riverain Sudanese from participation as Arabism, at this time, was a politico-cultural movement.⁵⁷⁶ Nasser’s ideology extended to pan-Africanist and African nationalist movements symbolized by the establishment of the Casablanca group under Nasser’s leadership in 1961.⁵⁷⁷ In establishing the group, Nasser was joined by Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, and the President of Mali Modibo Keita Keita. The Sudanese president was noticeably absent from the conference as was the other “Arab”-African leader, the Libyan King Mohammad al-Sanousi. Nasser’s appeal went beyond a narrow appeal to pan-Arabism and inspired radical nationalist and anti-colonial/western sentiments which included close links to African nationalists.

⁵⁷⁵ The literature is extensive and includes an number of authors already cited in the thesis such as Martin Doornbos, “On Becoming Sudanese”, Aguda, O., “Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics”, Alex de Waal, “Who are the Dafurians?”, Leif Manger, “On Becoming Muslim. The Construction of Identities among the Lafofa of the Sudan”, and Leif Manger, “The Nature of the State and the Problem of a National Identity in the Sudan”, Ann Mosely Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim, “Arabism, Africanism and Self-Identification in the Sudan”.

⁵⁷⁶ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1991, pp. 401-410.

⁵⁷⁷ Tareq Y. Ismael, “The U.A.R in Africa”, pp. 182-183.

“Arabism” in Sudan, itself, has always been affected by domestic factors such as the religious influence of the sectarian parties, the relations between the north-south, and the diversity of Arab identities across the northern Sudan. Notions of Arabism and Africanism in Sudan in this period were largely restricted to the perception of the north-south divide. Heather J. Sharkey has made just this point in regards to the projection of recent trends towards an Arab/African division in Darfur in the 1950s and 1960s, where in fact Sudanese intellectuals ‘stressed Sudan’s unique Afro-Arab hybridity, cultural tolerance, and capacity for internal coexistence.’⁵⁷⁸ Emphasis was placed on the representation of the people of the northern Sudan as constituting a homogenous Afro-Arab Islamic cultural entity with little recognition of any racial diversity.⁵⁷⁹ This homogeneity was well-accepted in the northern Sudan at this time, as Saad ed Din Fawzi elucidated only a year after independence:

Despite the persistence of old languages, dialects, and to a lesser extent customs, the North is, however, culturally homogeneous, thanks to Islam, for Islam is a culture as well as creed.⁵⁸⁰

“Tribal” differences created and consolidated by the colonial policy of Native Administration existed, but the primary identities in Darfur in the 1950s and 1960s were based on Muslim sectarian loyalties and on regional divisions. Regionalism in the Sudan emerged as a result of the dependence of the parliamentary system on the

⁵⁷⁸ Heather J. Sharkey, “Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan,” p. 28.

⁵⁷⁹ J. S. Trimingham, *Islam in the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1949. p. 4 as an example of the preponderance of this view, states that in the Muslim Northern Sudan, ‘...the adoption of Islam has fused the peoples so that they are culturally homogeneous, for Islam is not so much a creed as a unified social system.’

⁵⁸⁰ Saad ed Din Fawzi, "Ethnical and Cultural Pluralism in the Sudan," in *Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in Inter-tropical Communities*, International Institute of Differing Civilizations, Brussels, 1957, p. 395.

allocation of seats on the basis of regional voting patterns and not as ‘the natural product of some self-evident ‘regional-identity’ whose content is understood a priori, but is a social and political movement which emerges at a particular stage in the structuring and restructuring of the state.’⁵⁸¹

The distribution of the *Black Book: Imbalances of Power and Wealth in the Sudan* (*al-kitab al-aswad*) in 2000 highlighted not the racial or tribal imbalance of power and wealth in Sudan, but rather focused on regional inequalities.⁵⁸² The detail of the *Black Book* is an important reminder that discrimination and prejudice still existed within the northern Sudan, but the basis on which inequalities were structured were principally along regional lines, rather than through the application of a racial lens. Just as equally well-documented has been the marginalization and impoverishment of the so-called Arabs of Darfur by successive Sudanese governments. This meant that, in this period, Arab-Islamic and African identity conflict was largely restricted to the ongoing military action in the southern Sudan while regional grievances and movements increasingly shaped the political relations, and tensions, between northern Sudanese political actors.

6.4 Regional Disparities in the Sudan: Darfur’s marginalization

There is a small but important body of literature focused on the regional divisions in Sudan as a cause of the political instability that the country faced in the years between 1956 and 1969. The *Black Book* was mentioned earlier as one of the more recent

⁵⁸¹ Yoshiko Kurita, “The Social Bases of Regional Movements in Sudan, 1960s-1980s” in Katsuyoshi Fukui and John Markakis (eds.), *Ethnicity and Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, London: James Currey Publishers, 1994, p. 202

⁵⁸² Abdullahi El-Tom, “The Black Book of Sudan: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in Sudan”, *Journal of African National Affairs*, Vol. 2, No.1, 2003, pp. 25-35 details the primary arguments made in the *Black Book*. The book itself caused a huge controversy in Sudan when it was covertly distributed by members of the Darfuri based Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in 2000. The book has since become available on the JEM website at http://www.sudanjem.com/2004/en/books_php/books.htm.

efforts to highlight the regional inequalities existent in the Sudan, but it was not the first. In an earlier study, David Roden, writing in the 1970s, argued that the stark regional inequalities in economic development between the well developed central Sudan and the western, eastern and southern provinces was largely responsible for Sudanese political instability.⁵⁸³ Roden identified the cause of this phenomenon in the colonial legacy of concentrating economic activities on an arc surrounding Khartoum as a major cause of the imbalance that existed between the northern riverain regions and the rest of the country.⁵⁸⁴ This trend of concentrating investment in economic activities that were already established only exacerbated the problem of peripheralizing the outer regions of the country.

According to Roden, the first Ten Year Plan of Economic and Social Development launched in 1961 allocated the vast majority of funding to the geographical zone around the capital with only a few minor exceptions. In the period covered by the Plan, '[R]ailway links to Nyala and Wau were the only major government-financed projects undertaken in the west and the South since independence.'⁵⁸⁵ The outcomes Roden argues, was to encourage further regional imbalances between the developed central Sudan and the outlying areas in a number of important ways. The first consequence of the imbalance in development planning was in the area of education. There were no funding allocations in the 1960s for new universities or higher education facilities in any of the regional capitals. Second, the concentration of nearly all investment in extending existing agricultural and industrial projects or the initiation of new projects in the central Sudan while neglecting economic

⁵⁸³ David Roden, "Regional Inequality and Rebellion in the Sudan," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 64, No.4, 1974, pp. 498-516.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 503-508.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 511.

opportunities elsewhere in Sudan led to an increase in the disparities in wealth between a central Sudanese elite that were growing richer and outer regions which remained throughout the 1960s overwhelmingly engaged in the traditional sector. As a result, it was becoming more and more apparent over time that the central Sudan was benefitting from independence while the needs of the regional populace were continually overlooked. Thus, for Roden, as regional imbalances increased, regional discontent was bound to spiral.⁵⁸⁶

In another study of regionalism in Sudan, Yoshiko Kurita argues that the rise of regional movements is located in the nature of uneven capitalist development which created a developed centre where investment was concentrated, and underdeveloped peripheries from where cheap labour was drawn.⁵⁸⁷ In the early 1960s, the Sudanese government established labour recruitment centres in Darfur, amongst other areas, to ensure a constant source of seasonal labour for the picking of the cotton-crops. It is no coincidence, from this perspective, that the highest number of labour migrants came from the most underdeveloped region of Sudan. Whether maintaining the underdevelopment of Darfur was a way of guaranteeing a continual availability of cheap labour, as Yoshiko Kurita argues, or a result of the structural legacies of colonialism and the short-sightedness of Sudan's political elites, labour from Darfur migrated to the central Sudan in large numbers.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 516.

⁵⁸⁷ Yoshiko Kurita, "The Social Bases of Regional Movements in Sudan," pp. 202-216.

⁵⁸⁸ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, p. 151, states that 76,000 Darfuri were believed to be working in Khartoum or on agricultural estates in the central Sudan in 1984-85. It is widely recognized, without certainty regarding exact numbers that labour from Darfur regularly travelled to the central Sudan to undertake seasonal labour from the 1920s onwards.

The evidence that Darfur was largely unaffected by development investment in the period from 1956-1969 is overwhelming.⁵⁸⁹ The exception in this period, other than the Nyala railway, were the Jebel Marra and South Darfur Savannah Rural Development Projects undertaken by HTSPE, formerly called Hunting Technical Services Ltd, which undertook major surveys of Darfur's agriculture and livestock activities and prepared reports for the UNDP on land use technologies.⁵⁹⁰ The surveys themselves had little impact on Darfur until the UN led development projects were implemented in the 1970s in southern Darfur and in the 1980s in the Jebel Marra region. Nevertheless, the initiative produced a body of technical information which can be drawn from to help develop a better understanding of the socio-economic and environmental conditions in Darfur at that time, and as a basis from which to question the dominant perceptions of Darfur as a resource poor and economically stagnant region.⁵⁹¹

While it is clear that Darfur had been neglected by colonial and post-colonial governments in terms of investment in economic development, health care facilities, education or the modernization of communications and transport, this differs from the claim that Darfur was poor. Darfur has been cast as a poor, an economically stagnant region and a part of the world where natural resources are particularly scarce. This representation seems to be in contradiction with the evidence provided by the surveys

⁵⁸⁹ The literature on Darfur concedes that the development of the region was not undertaken by any of the post-colonial governments until Nimeri's government moved to devolve power as a mechanism for state-building, but this did not occur until the 1970s. Long-time scholars of Darfur including R.S. O'Fahey have made this point in commentary on the causes of the conflict, see R.S. O'Fahey and Jerome Tubiana, *Darfur: Historical and Contemporary Aspects*, <http://www.hf.uib.no/smi/darfur/A%20DARFUR%20WHOS%20WHO3.pdf>, p.13.

⁵⁹⁰ HTSPE Experience in Darfur, located at the HTSPE website at <http://www.htspe.com/pdfs/ExperienceInSudan.pdf>

⁵⁹¹ The notion has become popular in the mainstream media and has become an assumption in scholarly work that portrays the conflict in Darfur as a struggle for resources in a resource poor and hostile environment.

taken in the 1960s. If Darfur's poverty is not historical, then other factors must be responsible for the impoverishment which has been apparent to observers who visited the region in the 1980s and 1990s. Also, a number of long-time scholars of Darfur, such as Fouad Ibrahim, refute the notion that the region suffers from resource scarcity:

It is often said that the cause of the war in Darfur is the conflict between pastoralists and farmers over limited natural resources: water, agricultural land and pasture. No doubt, conflicts have always existed over these resources. But they are not the true cause of the current brutal war. In fact, the natural resources of Darfur are not meagre at all.⁵⁹²

Thus, the surveys provide a basis to reassess the economic and environmental conditions of Darfur.

James Morton argues that there needs to be a reassessment of the common assumptions that the entire region, while undoubtedly marginalized, was stagnant and poor.⁵⁹³ There is no contention from Morton that Darfur's economy in the 1960s was overwhelmingly dominated by traditional agricultural production, and nor does he disagree that there was an absence of industrial or, in fact, any value-added economic activities across the province, except for a small services sector located in the main urban centres of El Fasher, Nyala and in El Geneina. However, he argues this alone is not evidence of Darfur's poverty. The absence of industry is not surprising in the context of the wider Sudanese economy which was also dominated by the agricultural

⁵⁹² Ibrahim quoted in M. A. Mohamed Salih, "Understanding the Conflict in Darfur," Occasional Paper, Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, 2005, p. 22.

⁵⁹³ James Morton, *A Darfur Compendium: A Review of the Geographical, Historical and Economic Background to Development in the Region*, Hemel Hempstead, UK: HTSPE Limited, 1985 (reissued 2005), <http://www.htspe.com/pdfs/ADarfurCompendium.pdf>

sector.⁵⁹⁴ As mentioned, the only factories and industrial activities in Sudan were located in Khartoum and the central Sudan. Darfur and the other regions of Sudan were neglected by the Sudanese government and marginalized in terms of spending for education, health-care and the project of modernization which all Sudanese believed they had an equal right to obtain, but this does not mean Darfur was impoverished.

Darfur was, in fact, the most important livestock region in Sudan, as Morton explains:

The Darfur cattle herd was nearly twice the size of any other province and only Kordofan had anything approaching the same number of goats. Kordofan was also more important for camels, and both Kordofan and White Nile for sheep, but Darfur was still an important producer of both of these classes.⁵⁹⁵

This increase occurred despite a strong disinclination toward the pastoralist economy in the colonial period with policies that favoured sedentary farmers. In particular, in cases where pastoralists and farmers were in dispute over access to land or water, the 1944 Soil Conservation Committee recommended that ‘the rights of the cultivator be considered as paramount, because his crops yield a bigger return per unit area.’⁵⁹⁶ But, despite this bias against nomads, the cattle population in Darfur trebled between 1953 and 1976.⁵⁹⁷ Farm holdings in Darfur also reflected the general abundance of land with only 0.15 per cent of Darfur’s population recorded as landless, according to

⁵⁹⁴ Bikas C. Sanyal and Sammani A. Yacoub, “Higher Education and Employment in the Sudan,” Report for the International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1975, p. 21, Table 11, gives the percentage of Sudanese employed in the agricultural sector as 67.45 per cent plus another 3.96 per cent of Sudanese employed in Animal Husbandry.

⁵⁹⁵ James Morton, *A Darfur Compendium*, p. 96.

⁵⁹⁶ Quoted in Salah Shazali and Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed, “Pastoral Land Tenure and Agricultural Expansion: Sudan and the Horn of Africa,” Paper presented at the DFID workshop on Land Rights and Sustainable Development in sub-Saharan Africa, Berkshire, UK, 16 February, 1999, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁷ Adams, quoted in James Morton, *The Poverty of Nations: The Aid Dilemma and the Heart of Africa*, London: I.B. Taurus Publishers, 1996, p. 170.

the Census of Agriculture from 1964-65.⁵⁹⁸ The majority of land holdings in Darfur, almost 60 per cent of them, were recorded as being between 2.50 *feddans* and 9.99 *feddans*, with an average holding in Darfur of 7.06 *feddans*, according to the Census figures. Further the Census confirmed that the vast majority of land was still owned under tribal tenure arrangements with only 13 per cent of land classified as privately owned. The problems of land scarcity and competition which become defining issues from the 1980s onwards are not present in the studies conducted in this period, whether the HTSPE surveys or the Census. Poverty and dislocation in Darfur, in this period at least, are not apparent from the available evidence, and this is why Morton argues there has been a major misrepresentation of the economy of the region.⁵⁹⁹

So, Darfur, was not the impoverished, desolate and isolated region, as often represented, but rather:

The evidence of the three major export goods, gum arabic, cattle and groundnuts, is that Darfur has been through a number of periods of boom and bust but that there has been strong underlying growth through the first 75 years of this century. The strongest and most prolonged boom came after the Second World War, when gum arabic exports entered their period of most rapid growth up to 1965, the wartime cattle boom lasted through to 1960 and the early phase of expansion in groundnut exports lasted to 1965 as well.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁸ Census of Agriculture: 1965-65, The Republic of Sudan Department of Statistics, p. 5.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 13, also see Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 89 and pp. 87-88 where de Waal describes the upward trend in cash-crop production in Darfur in the 1960s and 1970s.

⁶⁰⁰ James Morton, *The Poverty of Nations*, pp. 66-67.

Despite this picture of the gradual expansion of economic production and further evidence of the gradual infiltration of the cash-economy⁶⁰¹, Darfur remained a “backwater” in terms of the investment in social welfare, education and the other essential building blocks of the modern state. The level of health services available to the population, even in El Fasher, was minimal, and the education system in Darfur received no serious upgrades during the first period of independence which can be said to have lasted until 1969. Education levels remained lower than any other northern province, and even if the figures for Darfur were only marginally lower than those for Kordofan, both western provinces lagged far behind in terms of the availability of school-level education which was offered in the central Sudan (see Table on page 148).

⁶⁰¹ Numerous studies referred to the existence of the cash-economy in Darfur in the 1960s such as L. Holy, “Drought and Change in a Tribal Economy: The Berti of Northern Darfur”, *Disasters*, Vol.4, No.1, 1980 pp. 65-77 who suggests that while gum arabic was the only source of cash, by the 1970s, the predominant system across Darfur was a mixture of subsistence and cash economies. Also, Abdullahi Osman El Tom, “Implications of the 1983-1985 Famine on the Rural Sahel of Sudan” in Mohamed Abdel Rahim Mohamed Salih, *Agrarian Change in the Central Rainlands, Sudan*, Uppsala: Nordiska Africainstitutet, 1987, p. 149 and *passim*, presents a very similar depiction of the co-existence of the cash and subsistence economies in Darfur.

Table 21. Percentages of enrolment with respect to total population in the groups by provinces - 1970-71

Province	Primary level (age 7-12)	Junior second. level (age 13-15)	Higher second. level (age 16-18)
	%	%	%
Khartoum (	62.8	28.3	20.9
Northern {	53.7	18.3	6.5
Blue Nile{	39.4	11.4	4.0
Kassala & Red Sea (	28.6	6.0	2.3
Kordofan (	16.6	3.5	1.2
Darfur (	16.5	3.5	1.0
Equatoria (	6.8	0.8	0.2
Upper Nile (	5.7	0.3	0.2
Bahr El Ghazal (	4.5	1.0	0.7
Whole Sudan	30.5	6.6	2.4

Table 6.1 From: Bikas C. Sanyal and Sammani A. Yacoub, "Higher Education and Employment in the Sudan," Report for the International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1975, p65.

In terms of higher education, in Darfur there were still no higher learning facilities and only 4.89 per cent of higher education students in Sudan were from Darfur.⁶⁰² If education, in particular, is symbolic of the project of nation-building then Darfur was excluded from the benefits that independence had promised to deliver.

In the literature on Sudan since independence, the grievances of the southern Sudanese have attracted most of the commentary while the struggle for recognition by

⁶⁰² Bikas C. Sanyal and Sammani A. Yacoub, "Higher Education and Employment in the Sudan," p. 74, it must be noted that Red Sea province had the lowest percentage of the Northern Sudan with less than 1 per cent of the student intake but only 2.41 per cent of the population compared with 13 per cent from Darfur.

the people of the marginalized northern provinces has only received cursory attention. This is understandable in the context of the appalling violence that has been visited on the south by the Sudanese military and northern Sudanese tribal militias since 1955. But with the outbreak of a major civil conflict in Darfur, a significant scholarly effort has been undertaken to retrace Darfur's history within the Sudan. However, knowledge of the southern Sudan still overwhelmingly exceeds what is available on Darfur. One period, in particular, stands out for the lack of available information on Darfur. Independence, as noted earlier, was accompanied by government efforts to centralize power and control Sudanese affairs from the ministries located in Khartoum. Along with this came a very strong Khartoum-centric, or Nilo-centric, optic in which Sudanese affairs have been portrayed.⁶⁰³ The one exception to this rule was the recognition of the difference of the southern Sudan, and the grievances which existed in the south, but in the northern Sudan a sense of the homogeneity of the people remained the dominant motif.

The divisiveness between the northern Sudan, led by the riverain elite and the southern Sudanese, reflected the colonial division of the "Two Sudans"⁶⁰⁴ and the Arabo-Islamic bias of the northern politicians. The north-south cleavage escalated into a civil conflict in 1958 when the southern politicians left parliament in protest over the decision by the northern politicians to adopt a national constitution which

⁶⁰³ Alex de Waal, "Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement," *African Affairs*, Vol. 104, No. 4, p181 makes exactly this point '...accusing much Sudanese historiography of 'Nilocentrism'...' Heather J. Sharkey, "Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity, and Race" views the tendency of the Khartoum elite to portray Northern Sudan through a lens developed in Khartoum that masks the inequalities and dissatisfaction in the Northern Sudan.

⁶⁰⁴ L. F. Nalder, "The Two Sudans: Some Aspects of the South," in J.A. Hamilton (ed.), *The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium from Within*, London, 1935 also a title used by D. Deng and Akol Ruay, *The Politics of Two Sudans: the South and the north, 1821-1969*, Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 1994.

would define Sudan as exclusively Arab and Islamic in character.⁶⁰⁵ The north-south division had solidified into a clear demarcation of regional and racial-cultural differences by 1958. Abboud's take-over of the state did nothing to alter the northern Sudanese attachment to the Arab-Islamic character of the Sudan but only promoted further division with the south which resulted in the situation rapidly deteriorating between 1958 and 1964.⁶⁰⁶ And, while the cleavage between north and south expanded and the Arab-Islamic character of the northern Sudan was largely unquestioned by the northern Sudanese there were growing regional divisions opening up between the central Sudan and the other northern provinces.

6.5 Regional Movements in Sudan: The Darfur Development Front

One of the first indications that regional politics would develop into an important dimension of the power relations of the northern Sudan was when the Beja Congress formed into a regional interest group in 1957. The Beja Congress was an expression of the regional solidarity of the loosely-related Beja tribes in their relationship with the Sudanese state and its purpose was to 'work with the major parties for policies favouring the region.'⁶⁰⁷ In 1958, the Beja Congress supported the southern politicians when the latter proposed that the political structure of the Sudan be altered to a federal system composed of regions that were governed independently of Khartoum.⁶⁰⁸ Parliamentarians representing Darfur, the Nuba and the Nubians also supported the proposal but the walkout by the southern politicians prevented further discussion on the proposal. Before the issue could be raised again the military junta of

⁶⁰⁵ Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Southern Sudan*, London: C. Hurst, 1975, pp. 47-49 gives a detailed account of the machinations in parliament at this time.

⁶⁰⁶ Abboud made a number of statements regarding the inviolability of the Arab-Islamic nature of the Sudan:

⁶⁰⁷ John Morton, "Ethnicity and Politics in Red Sea Province in Sudan," *African Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 350, 1989, p. 63.

⁶⁰⁸ Anne Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, p. 37.

General Abboud dissolved parliament and ended the regional politicking that was emerging as a challenge to the established northern political elite. The manifestation of a politics organized around regional identities and interests was not determined by the colonial invention of Sudan but influenced by a number of the colonial policies. Most notably, the colonial tendency to neglect the peripheral regions of Sudan and favour the central Sudan played a large part in creating division.

The first parliamentary period did nothing to alter the bias towards the centre and the neglect of the needs of the regional populace, but then the first parliamentary period achieved little in the way of developing the Sudanese state. The Abboud regime succeeded in addressing a number of the domestic and international issues that it inherited from its predecessor, the stabilization of the international cotton-price and high-yield harvests in 1960-1962 played a large part in the restoration of economic growth. However, the southern problem remained unresolved and reduced the impact of the economic recovery as much needed funding was diverted to finance a war in the south that most Sudanese did not want. The intensification of the rebellion in southern Sudan into a civil war, and in particular, the high cost in both economic and human terms of fighting the war, was a major cause of the northern disillusionment with the Abboud regime.⁶⁰⁹ There was a strong sense amongst the Sudanese that economic development was being threatened by the policies of the regime toward the south which by 1963 had driven the veterans of the 1955 mutiny to organize 'themselves politically and military to liberate the country.'⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁹ Francis M. Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of identities in the Sudan*, Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1995, pp. 138-140 explore the impact of the Abboud's government drive for Arabization and Islamization in the South

⁶¹⁰ Ibid, p. 139.

Furthermore, a deeper feeling had surfaced in the northern Sudan that the regime had failed in a more abstract sense led to a change in the popular mood, as Robert W. Crawford explains,

General Abboud's bloodless revolution of November 17, 1958 was accepted by most Sudanese as a necessary step in their struggle for an independent political maturity. Its acceptance was a result of their increasing disenchantment with civil political rule, due to the inability of the political parties to work together constructively. It was the hope of most that the new military government would be able to make the necessary decisions, and take the necessary steps, to ensure the country's progress without seriously curtailing the inherent determination to maintain liberty, and integrity demanded by the people. But as the military regime more and more consolidated its position of authority, an increasing number of individuals became more disenchanted with what was, as well as what was not, happening.⁶¹¹

By 1964, there was popular ambivalence to the Abboud government but amongst some groups a strong ideological hostility had developed. The trade unions, communists and students formed the core of the October revolution, as the movement that forced the resignation of the Abboud government has become known, and by 1964 they had become very dissatisfied with the direction that the regime was taking.⁶¹² In particular, the regime had maintained close links with the "west" and continued to protect the interests of the nascent indigenous bourgeoisie and the assets

⁶¹¹ Crawford quoted in Dunstan M. Wai, "Political Trends in the Sudan and the Future of the Sudan" in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.), *The Southern Sudan: The Problem of National Integration*, London: Routledge, 1973, p.149.

⁶¹² Ibid.

of foreign capital ignoring calls for a socialization of the economy. But, it was the deteriorating in the south which provided the issue needed to mobilize the left to openly oppose the regime in 1964. The immediate catalyst was the shooting of a student by the military on 21 October. However, disenchantment with the government was running high and the day after the shooting Khartoum's streets erupted in popular protest with tens of thousands of people pouring onto the streets. A general strike was called which brought Khartoum to a standstill and when the regime realized that middle-ranking officers were aligned with the opposition they came to the conclusion that they had no option but to dissolve government and appoint an interim administration.

After six years of military rule no notable structural changes to the shape, or content, of Sudanese politics were undertaken. But the transitional government which came to power under Prime Minister Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifah shared a similar ideological position as the radical forces which had been at the forefront of the October Revolution⁶¹³ The transitional government enacted a number of policies which challenged the dominance of the traditional elites including the legalization of the Sudanese Communist Party, providing women with the vote, and repealing the restrictions against the trade unions passed by Abboud in 1958.⁶¹⁴ The sectarian parties, formed a broad alliance which included the Islamic Charter Front, led by a young and dynamic Islamic ideologue Hasan al-Turabi, to face the challenge the al-Khalifah led- government posed to their interests. In February 1965, bowing to the pressure from the sectarian parties, al-Khalifah dissolved the government and appointed ministers from the traditional parties, which meant that the short-lived,

⁶¹³ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in the Sudan*, pp. 227-228.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 228.

‘radical experiment was over.’⁶¹⁵ The elections returned the Umma Party to power and the next three years were characterised by a similar set of themes as the earlier parliamentary period, sectarian rivalry, government instability, corruption, economic decline and popular disillusionment with parliamentary politics.

One of the other apparent themes of the second parliamentary period was the re-emergence of the regional parties as actors in national politics. In 1964, groups from Darfur and Nuba Mountains formed their own regional organisations, and together they joined the Beja in lobbying the government for greater access to resources and development allocations for regional Sudan. The resentment from the periphery towards the centre increasingly shaped the post-colonial politics of Sudan as Mohammad Salih explains:

A common complaint which the regional movements levied against the largest sectarian political parties (Umma Party and Democratic Unionist Party) was that they cared less about the people of the marginalized of provinces such as Darfur and more about their votes.⁶¹⁶

What had been a largely unorganized and spontaneous regional politics in the first parliamentary period had grown into a significant cleavage in Sudanese politics by 1964. Regional politics was playing its own part in undermining the fragile stability of parliamentary politics in the second half of the 1960s, and Darfur was at the forefront of that dynamic.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ M.A. Mohammad Salih, “Understanding the Conflict in Darfur,” p. 7.

The first indication that there was a level of regional dissatisfaction in Darfur became apparent with the formation of the Red Flame movement (*al-laheeb al-ahmar*) established in 1957.⁶¹⁷ The movement was small with concerns which seem to have been limited to protesting against the appointment of the riverain elite to the administrative positions in Darfur vacated by the British during the Sudanization program prior to independence.⁶¹⁸ Under the Abboud military regime, Darfur was relegated to a marginal position in Sudanese politics as the generals and conservative traditional elite controlled the political landscape from Khartoum. In 1963, Darfur's disgruntled soldiers formed a movement known as Sooney, named after the historic heartland of the Keira Sultanate, the very place where the 'shadow sultans' had launched their insurgencies against the Turko-Egyptian and Mahdiyya in the late nineteenth century. The soldiers had returned from the war in the south, '...convinced that the civil war in this part of the country is illegal and immoral, and they established their own movement in Darfur to address the issue of marginalization.'⁶¹⁹ The reaction of the regime was swift with those suspected of involvement purged from the military. The fall of the military regime and the return to party politics paved the way for a re-entry of Darfur into the political system. And, to make the most of this opportunity a number of Darfur's educated and tribal elite formed a new regional movement that would have far more influence on national politics than either the Red Flame or the Sooney.

⁶¹⁷ Abaker Mohamed Abuelbasha, "On the Failure of the Peace Talks in Darfur," *Sudan Tribune*, Friday 25 August 2006.

⁶¹⁸ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 194 makes a somewhat different point that the Red Flame directed its protests against the control of the local economy by the *jellaba*. It is more likely that the primary grievance was the lack of local appointments to government positions which produced the most resentment.

⁶¹⁹ Abaker Mohamed Abuelbasha, "On the Failure of the Peace Talks in Darfur".

The Darfur Development Front (DDF) was formed in 1965 by the respected Fur *shartay* Ahmad Ibrahim Diraige and was comprised mainly of members of Darfur's educated elite. The membership of the DDF was restricted to native Darfuri and excluded non-indigenous inhabitants of the region. The issue of regional marginalization was a very clear and sustained agenda the DDF was formed to address. But in more specific terms, the purpose of the DDF was to deal with two significant grievances held by Darfur's political class. The first was the appointment of non-natives to bureaucratic and other government positions in Darfur. These positions, it was argued by the educated elite, in Darfur should be filled by natives before being offered to riverain Sudanese, or Sudanese from any other region. Second, there was the more important issue of the exclusion of Darfur's political representatives from participating in the Sudanese government, as Ahmad Diraige in 1989 explained:

Then, after that, in 1956, the independence, there was a government till this government was overthrown by Abboud in 1958. In all this period there was not a single minister from the whole west, which is one-third of Sudan. There was not a single cabinet minister from Kordofan or from Darfur. It may never have been deliberate, but again this is a part of Sudan which is very significant, one third of the country. By historical accident there was nobody to represent it in Parliament as a minister. It was the first time in the history of the western Sudan when in 1965-66 I became a minister from the west, and with me Dr. Buhari.⁶²⁰

⁶²⁰ Ahmad Ibrahim Diraige, "Position Statement" in Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed and Gunnar Sorbo (eds.), *Management of the Crisis in the Sudan*, Proceedings of the Bergen Forum, 23-24 February, 1989.

The DDF, then, held similar concerns as its forerunners but it proved far more effective than the earlier movements for a number of reasons. First, the return to democracy in Sudan, with elections held in 1965 and then again in 1968, offered Darfur's politicians a legitimate institutional mechanism to argue for the rights of the region. Second, the DDF was able to organize a unified front, transcending tribal or racial identities in Darfur:

Unlike the other regional organizations that were launched around the same time, the Beja Congress (BC) and the General Union of the Nuba Mountains (GUNM), and which were characterized by a distinctly narrow ethnic base, the Darfur Development Front was founded on a wider ethnic base which made the whole region its base of recruitment.⁶²¹

Ahmed Diraige, also explains, that the shared interests held by the diverse groups across Darfur in the 1950s prepared the ground for the emergence of a genuine regional outlook to the problems that were faced.⁶²² Third, the DDF had greater success because it was 'part of a broader trend: elsewhere in Sudan, the Beja Congress in the East and the General Union of the Nuba in the Nuba Mountains were speaking out on behalf of Sudan's marginalized peoples'⁶²³ in the various regional and rural areas of the country.

⁶²¹ Sharif Harir, "'Arab Belt' versus 'African Belt': Ethnic-Political Conflict and the Regional and Cultural Factors", p. 156.

⁶²² Ahmad Ibrahim Diraige, "Position Statement" emphasises the multi-ethnic character of the regional movement, "In Darfur, the Fur, the Masalit, Zaghawa who are originally indigenous, and other tribes, and the real Arab tribes, who are real Arabs, we all rallied behind this Darfur Development Front irrespective of our origin, because we felt that this is a common forum that identified our problems, and that we have to stick together to fight together for our problems."

⁶²³ Victor Tanner and Jérôme Tubiana, "Divided They Fall: The Fragmentation of Darfur's Rebel Groups," *Small Arms Survey*, WSBA Working Paper, No. 6, http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/sudan/Sudan_pdf/SWP%206%20Darfur%20rebe ls.pdf.

In the elections held in 1965, the Beja Congress had remarkable success in capturing the electorate from the Eastern Sudan from the PDP. In doing so, the Beja Congress had ten members elected to parliament, which in the absence of the southern bloc of politicians made the Beja Congress the largest regional bloc in parliament.⁶²⁴ The Darfur Development Front, with Ahmad Diraige as leader, accepted an offer to join the Umma Party and Darfur was an important part of the Umma's overall victory in the elections. Ahmad Diraige, reflecting back on this time, has argued that the rationale for joining the Umma Party was that he believed that the DDF would be far more effective as part of a ruling party. Being involved in government, he believed, provided an access to power that would have been unavailable to a small regional party.⁶²⁵ While this move, in Sharif Harir's view compromised Diraige⁶²⁶, it also catapulted him to one of the senior positions in the Umma Party, and as a minister in government. Despite the dilution of the effectiveness of the DDF resulting from its envelopment within the larger Umma Party organization, the issues of importance to the regional parties still found their way onto the political agenda as a result of the influence of Ahmad Diraige and his Darfur colleagues. As Minister of Labour and Cooperatives (1966-68) and then as the parliamentary leader of the Umma Party (1968-69) Diraige was able to ensure Darfur's grievances were raised. However, with the genuine disarray of Sudanese government in this period there was little capacity or resources to address any of the major problems facing the Sudan, let alone the issues high on the agenda of the DDF.

⁶²⁴ James Morton, "Ethnicity and Politics in the Red Sea Province," pp. 63-76, explores the machinations which led to the election victory and the repercussions for the Beja.

⁶²⁵ Ahmad Ibrahim Diraige, "Position Statement"

⁶²⁶ Sharif Harir, "'Arab Belt' versus 'African Belt': Ethnic-Political Conflict and the Regional and Cultural Factors", p. 157.

Even though the 1968 elections ended in a clear victory for the Democratic Unionist Party, which had been formed by the amalgamation of the National Unionist Party and the People's Democratic Party in 1967, factionalism quickly erupted proving a major distraction from the important issues that required government attention. The Umma Party was itself in disarray and unable to act as a united parliamentary opposition after a split between Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's brother, Sayyid al-Hadi al-Mahdi, and his son Sadiq al-Mahdi, over the leadership of the party.⁶²⁷ The factionalism which tore the party apart filtered through to Darfur where the vote was split between Sayyid al-Hadi's Umma-Imam Party and Sadiq's Umma-Sadiq Party. The division was short-lived as the Party agreed in 1969 to unify behind the leadership of the Imam al-Hadi who maintained his position until he was killed by the military in an attack on the Mahdist stronghold of Aba Island in 1971.

Gerard Prunier has placed a greater significance on the split in the Umma Party than is warranted. In his view, the division between the factions of the Umma Party was responsible for the creation of a rivalry in Darfur, between the Fur supporters of Sadiq al-Mahdi and the Arab supporters of the Imam, which outlived the elections and the eventual re-unification of the party.⁶²⁸ While political rivalries were evident in Darfur in the lead up to the election and tensions between the supporters of different factions of the Umma Party exploited by politicians there is no evidence that there was the creation of an Arab and non-Arab political division in Darfur in this period.⁶²⁹ Sharif

⁶²⁷ The Umma Party suffered from a split in the ranks over the rightful successor to the leadership of the Party and the position as imam of the Ansar. In 1961, on the death of Sayyid 'abd Rahman al-Mahdi he was succeeded by his brother as the imam, or leader of the Ansar movement while his son Sadiq al-Mahdi became leader of the Umma Party. In 1966, Sadiq expected to be invested with the title of the imam in his uncle's place. His uncle declined to step aside for his young nephew leading to a split in the party.

⁶²⁸ Gerard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*, London: C. Hurst and Co. Ltd., 2005, pp. 41-42.

⁶²⁹ Ibid, Prunier speaks of a discourse of Arabism which differentiated the Arab tribes from the Africans in the region. This fails to take into account the much more common contention of the

Harir's list of tribal conflicts clearly demonstrates no upsurge of inter-tribal violence between Prunier's Umma-Arabs and the non-Arab supporters of Sadiq al-Mahdi.⁶³⁰ Neither does Prunier account for the impact of the re-unification of the party in the Darfur context. The 1970s were a period of major restructuring of Sudan and in the 1980s when Sudan returned to parliamentary rule the Umma Party was successful in recapturing support from Darfur without any evidence of a lingering political schism from the late 1960s. Finally, to assume that ethnic identities in Darfur are as pliable as Prunier describes, is to neglect the historical, geographical, economic and cultural traditions on which identities are based. Certainly identities are shaped by socio-political and economic factors but not in the one-dimensional manner of Prunier's account. Prunier's effort to shift the early popular perception of the Darfur conflict from primordialist explanations to a more nuanced and historically grounded constructivist account should not be discounted, just recast in terms of a longer process of identity formulation engendered by the collapse of the Sudanese state in Darfur.

The end of the second parliamentary period came in May 1969, and for many Sudanese the change could not have come soon enough.⁶³¹ The parliamentarians and political parties had failed to resolve Sudan's mounting problems. Above all, the increasing fiasco in the southern Sudan had reached a critical point with the Anyanya forces in a stronger position than ever before and the military suffering very high

hybridity of Arabs in the north, including the central Sudanese in this period. Without any evidence that such a mantra was used and accepted during the campaign it is difficult to accept that there was a successful introduction of a racist doctrine in Darfur at this time considering the evidence of Alex de Waal for example that places the introduction of the racist Arabism sometime in the 1980s.

⁶³⁰ Sharif Harir, "'Arab Belt' versus 'African Belt': Ethnic-Political Conflict and the Regional and Cultural Factors," p. 149.

⁶³¹ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 202, neatly describes the reaction to the coup from the Sudanese as 'between apathy and resignation.'

casualties. The cost of the war was becoming prohibitive, especially at a time when the Sudan was experiencing another economic downturn from another fall in international cotton-prices in 1968-69.⁶³² The situation in the Sudan was critical and the government was internally divided and without the experience to deal adequately with the pressing issues. As one scholar of Sudan commented,

The parliamentary regimes of 1965 to 1969 were thus characterised by chaos, intrigue and lack of purpose. The successive governments representing the traditional parties and groups failed to carry out what they set out to do. Crisis followed crisis and their impotence became obvious.⁶³³

The demise of the second parliamentary period brought to power a group of military officers committed to radical change. Inspired by the legacy of Nasserism, which was still evident in the Arab world despite the disaster of 1967⁶³⁴, the Sudanese Free Officers came to power with a clear purpose: to erase the legacies of the colonial era and reconstitute the state by applying socialist principles such as the nationalization of the economy and the reorganization of the political structures of the state. After thirteen years of independence the Sudan had experienced two military takeovers and two periods of parliamentary rule and regardless of the political changes there was little evidence of progress in terms of building the institutions of state or constructing a shared sense of the nation. In thirteen years of independence, the weaknesses of the colonial state proved a challenge beyond the capacity of the nationalist leaders to overcome. In 1969, it was obvious to everyone involved with the Sudan, that not only

⁶³² Elizabeth Collard (ed.), *Middle East Economic Digest*, London, Middle East Economic Digest Ltd., 1969, p.303.

⁶³³ Mansour Khalid, 1974, p. 226.

⁶³⁴ Another pro-Nasserist coup brought Colonel Gaddafi to power in Libya in 1969. Nasser's death in 1970 was the cause of mass scenes of grief in Egypt and the Arab world. In 1969, pan-Arab nationalism had yet to completely run its course.

had Sudan's leaders not met the challenge, they had in fact, compounded the problems and brought the country to the brink of collapse.

6.6 Conclusion

The independence period promised much but delivered very little for the majority of the people of Sudan. The provinces received far less than the central regions of the northern Sudan where development efforts were concentrated. Such development commitments mirrored the colonial tendency of neglecting the peripheries of Sudan. For the region of Darfur, the first decade of independence offered very little in the way of economic or social development or in terms of political representation. The traditional sectarian based parties, especially the Umma Party, relied on Darfuri voters for electoral success without reciprocating until the Darfur Development Front under the leadership of Ahmad Diraige placed Darfur's grievances on the political agenda. Still nothing much came from the Darfur push into national politics.

However, the government neglect of Darfur was reflective of a wider problem in Sudanese politics in this period. From the time of independence to the May Revolution in 1969, Sudan suffered from the machinations of the Sudanese elite that were unable to provide clear leadership on key issues that plagued the country. The rudderless nature of Sudanese politics was as much due to ineptitude as anything else. The Sudanese political elite produced no program for state-building except to reproduce the blueprint of the colonial period. And the results were the same, concentration of wealth and political power in the central Sudan, a marginalized regional Sudan, a reliance on agricultural production and foreign capital, and the emasculation of progressive forces by the traditional sectarian parties whose rivalries created political inertia. The regions may have successfully forced the issues of

regional underdevelopment and neglect into Sudanese politics in the 1960s but the failure of the Sudanese political system and the weakness of the Sudanese state ensured that those issues remained unresolved. The coup by the Nimeiri-led Free Officers installed the first government in Sudan since independence intent on overturning the colonial legacies through reconstructing the state and society. The impact on the state and on Darfur would, in time, prove disastrous.

Chapter Seven -

The Collapse of the Sudanese State in Darfur: A Prelude to War?

7.1 Introduction

The sixteen years that Ja‘afar Nimeiri ruled Sudan has been covered in some detail by scholars focusing on different elements of contemporary and recent Sudanese history and politics. Studies on the north-south conflict, for example, have examined the Nimeiri legacy in some length because he was, at one time, the bringer of peace and later, also the harbinger of war, in the southern Sudan. Political scientists concerned with the Sudanese state have also contributed much to our understanding of the Nimeiri period as it was under Nimeiri that state building reached its apogee and eventually led to the effective ruin of the state.⁶³⁵ Economists and political economists, also find the Nimeiri years as an exceptionally rich period for exploring the failures of the development policies that sent Sudan into an economic tailspin so that by the early 1980s Sudan had its debt payments rescheduled by the IMF a record eight times.⁶³⁶ Regional and international studies can claim much material for analysis in Nimeiri’s intervention in the conflicts in neighbouring states.⁶³⁷ Moreover, for analysis of the conflict in Darfur, the Nimeiri period is central in a number of important ways.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁵ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, pp. 137-200, also see Mansour Khalid, *Nimeiri and the Revolution of Dis-May*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1985.

⁶³⁶ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, pp. 233-287,

⁶³⁷ Dunstan M. Wai, “The Sudan: Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations under Nimeiri,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 312, 1979, pp. 297-317,

⁶³⁸ The Nimeiri years have not received adequate treatment in the studies of Darfur to date. There have been in M.W. Daly, *Darfur’s Sorrow*, Gerard Prunier, *The Ambiguous Genocide*, Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *A Short History of a Long War*, and J.M. Burr and R.O. Collins, *Darfur: The Long Road to Disaster*, amongst a plethora of shorter studies, a recognition that Nimeiri oversaw a period of increasing traumatising of Darfur through banditry, drought, and famine and some studies have

The Nimeiri period, covering the years from 1969- 1985 should have been a watershed in modern Sudanese history. The Free Officers that took power in a bloodless coup in May 1969 were inspired by a radical ideology that revolutionary structural changes were necessary to save the country from collapse. The basis of the the Free Officers view was that Sudan remained weak and backward due to the pervasiveness of the colonial legacies, especially, underdevelopment and national disunity. In turn, both of these colonial legacies would be confronted by the new regime.

To do so, the radical regime attempted to dismantle key structures of the colonial state such as native administration, customary title, and the traditional parties and in doing so endeavoured to end the sectarianism that had dominated Sudanese politics. However, despite the reformism of the Nimeiri era, these forces continued to pervade Sudanese society and remained influential determinants on state-society relations. To counter the traditional forces, Nimeiri's style of government increasingly became characterized by authoritarianism and continual political manoeuvring, leaving one analyst of Sudanese politics to write that:

Numeiri's coup of 1969 had turned Sudan inside out and upside down in the sixteen years that he had remained in power, sometimes by the skin of his

remarked on the impact of the political reforms and changes to land tenure that occurred as a part of Nimeri's transformation of the state in the early 1970s but few studies have acknowledged the part the demise of Nimeiri's project for state-building had on Sudan as it collapsed under the dual pressures of war and economic crisis in the alter 1980s and this chaos as being a central feature of the Darfur conflict.

teeth. Ideologically the regime had moved from left to right across the political spectrum.⁶³⁹

Nimeiri and the May regime were never successful in eliminating the vestiges of the colonial state and after the *al-Mussallaha al-Wataniya* (National Reconciliation) between Nimeiri and his political rivals the tide had turned against change. By the late 1970s Sudan's agricultural and industrial development schemes were in crisis and the state was running a huge deficit with debts it could not meet. Things started to crumble when in 1980; Nimeiri announced a restructuring of the political structure as part of a program of decentralization. In 1980, regional governments were re-established as a means of devolving power and shifting the responsibility for regional management from the central government to regional elites. The strategy may have prolonged Nimeiri's time in power and obscured, for a short time anyway, the extent that the Sudanese state was in crisis, but in the end, the economic and political crisis was too acute to be concealed by political manoeuvring or manipulation of populist sentiments.

But, the major ramification of the policies, was that by 1980, the state had all but returned power to the traditional leaders and sectarian parties in the country's peripheries while it maintained a firm hold over Khartoum and the most important economic assets. Nimeiri turned to the so-called traditional system for much the same reason that the colonial regime had relied on it: to maintain a cheap and efficient system of control. However, in doing so, the state placed the responsibilities for resolving the contradictions and tensions that had emerged to local and regional bodies unequipped to deal with them. When drought, famine and the war in Chad

⁶³⁹ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 165.

destabilised the region of Darfur, Sudan's government left the problems to the Darfur regional government to resolve with devastating results. This chapter tells the story of the rise and fall of the Sudanese state in Darfur and how the structures of the colonial system re-emerged when the state-building development project of the Nimeiri government failed. By the time Nimeiri was deposed as the head of state in 1985, the state in Darfur had become little more than skeletal.

7.2 Dismantling the Colonial State? Native Administration and Land Tenure Reform

Other than the reliance on cotton-production and the sectarian dominated political system, arguably, the most pervasive legacy of the colonial period was native administration. The decision to dismantle native administration was an initiative which the intelligentsia had long held out as a key element in the modernization of Sudan's "backward" regions.⁶⁴⁰ In 1971, the Local Government Act overturned both the logic and architecture of a native administration policy which had survived for fifty years. For the modern Sudanese, native administration was a residue of colonialism that the Sudan could well do without and removing this anachronistic political system was an important step in emancipating Sudan from the remaining legacies of colonialism. More cynical commentators tended to focus their attention on the political benefits which accrued to the regime from abolishing native administration. Especially, it was argued, the abolition of native administration was

⁶⁴⁰ In 1964, the transitional government planned to abolish native administration but before they could make the changes the government was reshuffled to include a majority of Umma and PDP ministers whose interests were very much aligned with maintaining native administration and tribal rule.

intended to undermine the power base of the sectarian parties in regional Sudan which rested in the traditional tribal elites.⁶⁴¹

Notwithstanding the political advantages to the new regime of dismantling a system of local administration dominated by the traditional parties there was a clear transformative ideological purpose behind such a move. The dominant discourse of the Sudan of the Revolutionary Command Council was, as Mahmoud El Zain argues, framed in terms of modernization and economic development, where identities, whether tribal, racial or religious, were erased by the ideal of constructing a Sudanese society based on notions of political equality and economic opportunity.⁶⁴² To achieve this goal, the RCC began the dismantling of the tribal system. The chief architect of the Local Government amendment was Ga'afar Bakheit who believed that the abolition of native administration was necessary to unleash the social forces that would eventually transform rural Sudan.⁶⁴³

Gaafar's primary objectives were to reverse the process of centralization to the capital, to eliminate the conception of local as distinct from central government that Marshall had assumed, and likewise to blur the distinction between political leadership and the public service, emphasized by the alleged 'neutrality' of the latter. Above all he had the aim of encouraging the widest public participation in government, bringing government activity to the most

⁶⁴¹ Ahmed Mustafa Elhuseein, "The revival of 'native administration' in the Sudan: a pragmatic view," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.9, 1989, p. 438.

⁶⁴² Mahmoud El Zain, "The Passing of Development Discourse and its Successors: Is the condition ripe for putting forward alternative development packages? (A case from the Sudan)," Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 11th General Assembly, Maputo, Mozambique, 6-10 December, 2005, retrieved from www.codesria.org/Links/conferences/general_assembly11/papers/zain.pdf

⁶⁴³ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 146.

accessible levels, multiplying opportunities for council membership, and at the same time changing the balance of involvement.⁶⁴⁴

The impact, though, proved less transformative in the long-term than Bakheit, and the framers of the revolution, anticipated. Abolishing native administration withdrew government support, including financial support, from tribal leaders but failed in most cases to undermine their authority and influence on local affairs. The government was able to enact legislation to undermine the authority of the traditional elite but they remained influential actors in regional politics. Ahmad al-Shahi argues that this resilience of the native administrative system was due to the fact that the tribal leaders ‘...saw themselves, not only as government representatives but also guardians of the tribal codes and ethnics....They were feared, respected and their decisions were accepted both because they had legal sanctions and because they were tribal representatives.’⁶⁴⁵ So, despite efforts to raze the edifice of native administration on which the traditional parties had been able to monopolize regional support in the northern Sudan, by the late 1970s the traditional elite had largely returned to their prior positions of local authority, as Dennis A. Rodinelli explains:

Decentralisation has neither completely broken the hold of traditional elites nor promoted decision-making that will achieve the kind of development desired by the Government. In many Sudanese villages, for example,

⁶⁴⁴ M.W. Norris, “Local Government and Decentralization in the Sudan,” *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.3, 1983, p. 212.

⁶⁴⁵ Ahmad al-Shafi, “Responses to Nimeiri’s Policies: Some Observations on Social and Political Changes in northern Sudan” in Peter Woodward, *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991, p.148.

traditional leaders have emerged as local councillors, and their demands are for social rather than productive investments.⁶⁴⁶

The amendment to native administration was long overdue, and Bakheit's plan well intentioned, but the strategy was poorly implemented.

Nevertheless, the decision to abolish native administration did have an impact. One change apparent in Darfur in the 1970s was the emergence of an alternative local elite who used their positions of authority in the newly formed local government councils to construct a rival patrimonial system to that already in existence between traditional leaders and their clients.⁶⁴⁷ They could distribute land and jobs, and dispense justice in the way the tribal leaders were formerly able to do. However, before long, funds ran low and in many localities across the Sudan, local councils were unable to raise adequate finances, either through local funding or from central government sources, to continue to fund clients or to finance normal governmental activities.⁶⁴⁸ Tim Niblock's observation of local government in Sudan in the 1980s led him to doubt 'whether many of the councils enjoy more than a paper existence'⁶⁴⁹, which is illustrative of the decay that the local government system had endured during the Nimeiri years, a result of the institutional collapse and mass departure from the

⁶⁴⁶ Dennis A. Rodinelli, "Administrative Decentralisation and Economic Development: The Sudan's Experiment with Devolution," p. 614.

⁶⁴⁷ Leif Manger, 'Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan,' International Colloquium, *At the Frontiers of Land Issues*, Montpellier, 2006, p. 7 retrieved from http://www.mpl.ird.fr/colloque_foncier/Communications/PDF/Manger.pdf

⁶⁴⁸ The collapse of local administration is not to be confused with the abolition of Native Administration which is not seen as the core problem here. The collapse of local administration due to underfunding and political manipulation during the second half of Nimeiri's time in power is referred to in Mahmud El Zain, "Tribe and Religion in the Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 23, No. 70, 1996, p. 528 wrote that 'It should be noted that the state plays no role at the local level... In contrast to the developmentalist state of the past, the state is shifting from its former role of providing services and benefits, to re-ordering and embellishing the 'tribal' as a representation of a glorious past.'

⁶⁴⁹ Timothy C. Niblock, "A New Political System in Sudan," *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 293, 1974, p. 409.

councils once they were starved of funds. When traditional leaders returned to local government they did so at a time when the system was in decay. Local administration eluded total collapse because of the capacity of the traditional elite to perform the basic responsibilities of government, efficiently and with a level of legitimacy that state appointments were unable to cultivate. The other pillar of the traditional system which had been identified by the designers of the revolution as a structural barrier to development was the customary land tenure arrangements. Land tenure became a major issue in the politics of Darfur and for many analysts of the current conflict in Darfur lies at the very heart of the problem. There is a large body of evidence that illustrates that access to land and natural resources figure prominently in the issues which lay at the very source of the breakdown of law and order and were responsible for increasing levels of inter-tribal mistrust amongst the various groups that inhabit Darfur region. The intensification of such resource-conflicts can be traced to the 1980s when the repercussions felt across Darfur from the Sahelian drought of 1983-85 revealed the extent that land tenure and land use had changed in the preceding years. Before discussing resource-conflict, the issue of land tenure requires further examination.

The origins of the changes to land tenure can be traced back to the enactment of Unregistered Land Act in 1970 by the Nimeiri government. As with the institutional transformation to native administration undertaken by the Nimeiri government the aim of altering the land tenure system in Sudan was based on undermining the power of the traditional leaders.⁶⁵⁰ The Act stipulated that ‘...all land of any kind whatsoever, whether waste, forest, occupied or unoccupied, which is not registered

⁶⁵⁰ Leif Manger, “Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan,” p. 9.

before the commencement of this Act, shall on such commencement, be the property of the Government and shall be deemed to have been registered as such.’⁶⁵¹ This was a major reform of land tenure in Sudan overturning the colonial system where control of land, according to Mohammed Hashim Awad, was placed in the hands of native administrators. The enactment of the legislation ‘...made the Government the biggest landlord in the Sudan. It is in full ownership of all unregistered land and can control the property market.’⁶⁵²

In acquiring untitled land the Government was not only concerned with the status of the traditional elites. The liberation of rural Sudan from traditional customary title was necessary to liberate both land and labour for the expansion of modern agricultural and industrial projects which the new regime was committed. As with the case of the abolition of native administration the reformist agenda was distorted by the political interests of the regime. This was also true of land distribution which as Leif Manger observes, after the changes to the law, that land became another state resource with which the regime rewarded its supporters.⁶⁵³ The new system altered the rules that had existed under customary title, which was based on a framework that all land, even unoccupied land that fell within the boundaries of a *dar*, fell under the authority of tribal leaders who had the authority to allocate land to members of the tribe, and also to outsiders.⁶⁵⁴ This system of customary land rights under the control of a tribal chief was introduced by the colonial system and overturned a system of land charters that had existed under the Keira Sultanate where land was a valuable

⁶⁵¹ The Unregistered Land Act, (1970) s.4 quoted in Casey N. Gordon, “Recent Developments in the Land Law of the Sudan: A Legislative Analysis,” *Journal of African Law*, Vol.30, No.2, 1986, p.148.

⁶⁵² Mohammed Hashim Awad quoted in Casey N. Gordon, “Recent Developments in the Land Law of the Sudan: A Legislative Analysis,” p. 148.

⁶⁵³ Leif Manger, “Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan,” p. 10.

⁶⁵⁴ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, pp. 47-48.

commodity.⁶⁵⁵ The Unregistered Land Act provided the impetus for the growth in private ownership in land in Darfur which de Waal explains is a 'return to an older tradition of land tenure.'⁶⁵⁶ Despite, the importance of overturning the colonial system, the new laws led to a number of related problems.

The first problem that arose was that traditional grazing and migration agreements were undermined leading to numerous disputes at the local level. However, this problem was often resolved by local mediation, even without the system of native administration. The second and more significant upheaval caused by the new policy was the possibility under the new law for an entire tribal group to make a claim to land contained within another tribal *dar* by petitioning the government. This became a major cause of resentment amongst the settled communities as observed by Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil.⁶⁵⁷ Equally obvious in this period was the escalating resentment from groups denied claims by local authorities to a *dar* of their own. This became a major source of resentment after 1980 when the regional government came under the control of the *Fur shartay* Ahmad Diraige. Unlike his predecessors from the riverain Sudan, Diraige was unable to retain the same level of impartiality because he was continually implicated by his Fur identity and connections in every decision he made, regardless of the content of those decisions. In reforming native administration and land tenure, the Nimeiri regime was showing its determination to 'remove the power

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 49, based on R. S. O'Fahey and M.I. Abu Salim, *Land in Dar Fur, : Charters and related documents from the Dar Fur Sultanate*.

⁶⁵⁶ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, p. 49.

⁶⁵⁷ Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil, "The Dynamics of Ethnic Identification in Northern Darfur, Sudan: A Situational Approach," in Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Sudan: Ethnicity and National Cohesion*, Bayreuth African Studies Series, 1984.

once and for all from the sheikhs' as the first essential step on which the transformation of Sudanese society would be able to proceed.⁶⁵⁸

The redefinition of the land law in Sudan in 1970 led to an intensification of changes that were already occurring in Darfur in the 1960s. Agricultural production was increasingly being influenced by merchants, mainly *jellaba* from central Sudan, who opened markets for cash crops in central Darfur.⁶⁵⁹ Not only was the economy of Darfur undergoing a process of commercialisation but there were signs that the expansion of the cash economy was leading to the development of a service industry, as well as markets for consumer goods, and higher levels of urbanization in the wealthier parts of the region, and:

As their need for cash increased, their strategies in agriculture gradually became market-oriented. Oil-seed production, (groundnuts, sesame and watermelon seeds) on the eastern *goz* has been greatly expanded to meet a growing export market. Vegetable and fruit cultivation is increasingly practised where conditions permit.⁶⁶⁰

By the early 1970s, merchants were also offering lines of credit for the expansion of agricultural production to meet the growing demand. Pastoralists participated in the market economy by setting up arrangements to provide livestock for agents in Darfur supplying livestock to the national export markets in Omdurman.⁶⁶¹ Nyala in southern Darfur became a major market town, and according to Morton, was as vibrant as any

⁶⁵⁸ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of Sudan*, p.205.

⁶⁵⁹ Leif Manger, "Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan," p. 7.

⁶⁶⁰ Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil, "The Dynamics of Customary Land Tenure and Natural Resource Management in Darfur," p. 19.

⁶⁶¹ Leif Manger, "Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan," p. 7

in Sudan.⁶⁶² As the old land tenure system eroded, land sales and leasing became more common in Darfur creating a number of co-existing forms of land tenure, so that by the later 1970s, Abdul-Jalil contends, there was no longer a single land tenure system in Darfur, but many.⁶⁶³ The old land system was disrupted by the Unregistered Land Act but as the evidence tends to suggest this was only a further impetus to the transformation of land ownership and of agricultural production that was already under way.

The establishment of the donor -funded Western Savannah Development Scheme in southern Darfur in 1978 and the Jebel Marra Development Scheme in 1980 led to the expansion of commercialized production over large areas of southern Darfur and in the Jebel Marra hinterland. The Jebel Marra initiative was the larger of the two, comprising a total area of 1.5 million *feddans* on the higher and lower slopes of Jebel Marra.⁶⁶⁴ The impact of the transformation of land tenure and the partial mechanization and commercialization of the traditional agricultural sector in central Sudan was threefold. First, it led to the stratification of the farming communities with more successful farmers increasing their holdings at the expense of less successful farmers. A class of rural proletariat emerged whose livelihoods relied on a mix of farming less arable *goz* land and seasonal wage labour. This extension of farming activities into new areas was a persistent trend following population growth but the speed and intensity of the expansion multiplied as a consequence of the

⁶⁶² James Morton, *The Poverty of Nations*, p. 80.

⁶⁶³ Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil, "The Dynamics of Customary Land Tenure and Natural Resource Management in Darfur," p. 21.

⁶⁶⁴ Abdalla Ahmed Abdalla, "Environmental Degradation and Conflict in Darfur Experiences and Development Options," *Environmental Degradation as a Cause of Conflict in Darfur*, Conference Proceedings, Khartoum, 2004, pp. 99-89.

commercialization of farming in the Jebel Marra. As farming extended into new areas conflicts between farmers and pastoralists over access to land began to intensify.⁶⁶⁵ Pastoralists found their traditional routes interrupted and their traditional pasture lands occupied by farmers with few other options. The worst clashes occurred in the wake of the Sahelian drought of 1984-85.

Second, more of the food production in the region was tied to the market. Commercial and semi-mechanized farms produced goods for external markets and not for local consumption which led to pressures on local food availability and on the price of food at the local markets. Reports pre-dating the Sahelian drought of 1984-85 indicate increasing levels of food insecurity in Darfur suggesting that even under normal conditions the process of change in Darfur was affecting living conditions.⁶⁶⁶ Third, as customary ownership and usufruct land tenure were replaced by private property rights farms were increasingly divided into individual holdings separated by fences (*zaraib*) which, though not intended to do so, prevented the movement of herds along the established migratory routes through the Jebel Marra.⁶⁶⁷ Consequently, clashes between farming communities and pastoralists escalated. In addition, there was a rise in the number of conflicts that were reported between pastoral groups who were now forced to compete for resources along the same migratory routes.

In contrast to the Jebel Marra Scheme which concentrated on agricultural production the Western Savannah Development Project aimed at developing ranches in southern Darfur. The Western Savannah Development Project initiated a program which settled

⁶⁶⁵ Yousif Takana, "The Politics of Local Boundaries and Conflict: The South Darfur Case," Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, Sudan Working Paper, 2008, p. 5.

⁶⁶⁶ Mark Duffield, "From Emergency to Social Security in Sudan," *Disasters*, Vol.14, Issue, 3, pp. 187-203. Also a point made by Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 199.

⁶⁶⁷ Sharif Harir, "Arab Belt" versus "African Belt", p. 179.

the cattle-herding Baggara on communally operated ranches. The communities were collectively responsible for fencing, reseeding, and for the protection of the herds. A local act was issued to regulate and control the use of these ranches, which included the payment of nominal fees for maintenance and services to the Western Savannah Development Corporation.⁶⁶⁸ In common with the Jebel Marra Scheme, the Western Savannah Scheme led to the commercialization of livestock production. The communal element of the scheme protected livelihoods in way that the Jebel Marra Scheme did not, and the southern parts of the Darfur region have experienced less instability and violence than the central and northern regions in recent years.⁶⁶⁹

However, by the mid 1980s disputes and conflicts were becoming more common. Explanations tend to focus on the convergence of the dismantling of native administration and tensions over dwindling natural resources. The argument runs that the traditional system of mediation was abolished at a time when increasing environmental pressure resulted in an increase in the number of inter-tribal disputes. Without the traditional system of tribal-mediation the disputes became deadly clashes resolved through the use of violence:

...and the actual dissolution of the system in 1970, lawlessness prevailed among the rural communities, particularly in Darfur. People took the law into their own hands and started using force for the settlement of disputes. To a large extent the proliferation of tribal and/or ethnic violent conflicts in the

⁶⁶⁸ Mahgoub G. Zaroug,, 'Country Pasture Profile: Sudan,' A Report for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2000, retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPC/doc/counprof/sudan/sudan.htm#3.3%20Major%20Agricultural%20Enterprises%20in%20Each%20Zone>

⁶⁶⁹ The exception, as with much of what is being addressed here is the period that covered the drought and famine of 1983-5. Also, on the whole the southern Rezeigat have remained neutral in the current clashes between the various competing forces.

Darfur region may well be attributed to the weakening and untimely dissolution of the system of native administration.⁶⁷⁰

There are a number of problems with taking this line as a number of analysts have done. While the native administration was dismantled the traditional elite remained important local actors and by the late 1970s were able to participate in local government. When Sudan returned to multi-party elections in 1986 the Darfur vote overwhelmingly favoured the Umma Party mainly because the traditional party machinery was largely intact, even after seventeen years of authoritarianism.⁶⁷¹ In fact, despite the efforts of the May Regime to transform Sudanese political relations the lack of any lasting change was a lasting legacy of the Nimeiri years.⁶⁷² Also, the view fails to take into account the other significant changes that occurred in the region. Even, when these views do address issues of the transformation of the local economy and land tenure, or desertification and pressures on the environment, or the problems associated with the spill-over affect of the war in Sudan's western neighbour Chad, there is an implicit assumption that those problems would have been ameliorated or even resolved if the government had left Native Administration intact. What this view fails to take into account is that under Nimeiri Darfur experienced a transformation of the local economy without the development of state institutions. As society evolved the state remained underdeveloped and unable to effectively manage the changes that were occurring or address the tensions that emerged from this period of change.

⁶⁷⁰ Adam Azzain Mohamed, "Indigenous Institutions and Practices Promoting Peace and/or Mitigating Conflicts: The Case of Southern Darfur of Western Sudan," *Environmental Degradation as a Cause of Conflict in Darfur*, Conference Proceedings, Khartoum, 2004, p.73.

⁶⁷¹ James Chiriyankandath, "*1986 Elections in the Sudan: Tradition, Ideology, Ethnicity: And Class?*" *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol.38, 1987, pp. 99.

⁶⁷² Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, makes this point in relation to institutional change but it is just as relevant to say Nimeiri's sixteen years in power failed to transform local political relations. Changes did occur but at a later date when the NIF government initiates far more profound changes, see chapter 8.

The political reforms ultimately failed to reconfigure the loyalties of the traditional elite which remained tied to the sectarian parties and not to the state. The Sudanese Socialist Union, as a political movement, proved in the end, unable to sustain the long-term mobilization of the traditional elite or the masses, necessary to propel the project of nation-building. As the resources available to the state ran low so did the funding for education, infrastructure, and economic development. As the state retreated from providing social goods to society in the late 1970s and 1980s the “Sudanization” of rural society slowed.⁶⁷³ As the state contracted the process of becoming Sudanese also contracted. But also, crucially, the outlines of the colonial state remained in place through traditional leaders, sectarianism and the centre-periphery relationship between the Sudanese estate and Darfur.

The cause of the problem can be said to lie with the institutional weakness of the State in Darfur. At time when the traditional sector was undergoing rapid change which resulted in a transformation of economic practices and the inter-communal relations across the region, the state was too emaciated to effectively intervene. Whereas the Sudanese State continued to overdevelop at the centre, it remained underdeveloped in the peripheries. The question is not one of whether a local council system or native administration was the better structure for dealing with local issues, including inter-tribal conflicts, but that native administration was a far more effective system than one that had ceased to exist at all. It is in the collapse of Nimeiri’s development state due to economic crisis, that the story of Darfur’s own crisis must be told.

⁶⁷³ Paul Doornbos, *On Becoming Sudanese*, Doornbos explores the transformation of identities in Darfur during the 1970s and argues that due to the expansion of state-sponsored education and the expansion of the state more broadly led to increasing numbers of urban and semi-urban people becoming Sudanese. This was not an Arabization, as such, but rather a Sudanization which meant that people identified with the dominant Sudanese identity.

7.3 Nimeiri's State-building Program: Breadbasket to Basket-case

Initially, the Nimeiri led government, declared openly that it was committed to breaking the bourgeoisie's hold on the political and economic control of Sudan. Close connections between the pan-Arabist military regime and the Sudanese Communist Party provided a clear ideological perspective for the new government. Just as important for the regime was the notion that to fix Sudan's numerous problems it was necessary to seek to resolve the underlying causes; a lack of national unity and economic underdevelopment.⁶⁷⁴ The nation and state-building platforms were central themes of the Nimeirist period that is until he favoured more cynical approaches to staying in power. In his first address to the nation after the coup, Major General Nimeiri explained to the people that the purpose of the May revolution was the:

...benefit of the our people, thereby leading our country into a new era, building its unity, augmenting its economic resources, formulating its social life along the road of socialist development.⁶⁷⁵

After securing victory over the Ansar in pitched battle in March of 1970 Nimeiri set about nationalizing the banking and trading companies under foreign control. The communist program of transforming Sudan into a socialist state seemed well under way. In 1970, the Sudanese government embarked on a five year development program outlined in the Five Year Development Plan (1970-1/1974-5). The initial program included wholesale nationalization of foreign assets.⁶⁷⁶ The nationalisation process completed in 1970 marked the end of Nimeiri's socialist project. Nimeiri's

⁶⁷⁴ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 266.

⁶⁷⁵ Major President Nimeiri, Sudan Government Preamble, 1969, quoted in Mukhtar al Assam, "Bureaucracy and Development in the Sudan" in Joseph G. Joffra (ed.), *Bureaucracy and Development in the Arab World*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989, p. 38.

⁶⁷⁶ Oluwadare Aguda, "The State and the Economy in the Sudan: From a Political Scientist's Point of View," *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 431-448 provides a useful analysis of the economic policies undertaken by the Nimeiri regime in those first three years in power.

alliance with the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) was swiftly repudiated after a coup attempt by the SCP was crushed in June 1971 with the aid of Libya and Egypt. Qaddafi's support for a fellow pan-Arab leader was crucial in the defeat of the Communist plot and heralded the emergence of a new player in regional politics.⁶⁷⁷ Qaddafi's regime in Libya would be a major influence on regional politics in the decades to come.

The purge of SCP members from the regime and the subsequent suppression of the communists marked Nimeiri's turn away from the Eastern Bloc and towards the "west".⁶⁷⁸ While Nimeiri's imperative in turning from the communists was principally a political move there was a clear economic dimension to his decision as well. The new government was faced with the enduring economic problems especially poor economic growth, increasing foreign debt and growing trade deficits. With communists arrested, in hiding or in exile, Nimeiri was now free to seek financial assistance from private capital, and the United States as well as from the supposedly independent multinational lending institutions.⁶⁷⁹ Sudan's foreign relations with the US, Britain and the Gulf States recovered with the turn away from the communist bloc opening lines of credit to the Sudan that were previously closed.⁶⁸⁰ Almost immediately, the US granted \$US18 million worth of credit and the IMF \$US40 million in loans.⁶⁸¹ The World Bank also assisted with loans for, 'priority and

⁶⁷⁷ Ronald Bruce St John, *Qaddafi's World Design: Libyan Foreign Policy, 1969-1987*, London: Saqi Books, 1987, p. 53 on Qaddafi's intervention to save Nimeiri, also provides a wider study of the oscillating relationship between Qaddafi and Nimeiri, Libya and Sudan.

⁶⁷⁸ In many ways Nimeiri's move from the Soviet sphere to the US mirrored the shift Sadat would make in the 1970s.

⁶⁷⁹ Norman O'Neill, 1988, p. 45

⁶⁸⁰ Hassan Gad Karim, "Sudanese Government Attitudes Towards Foreign Investment: Theory and Practice" in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: State, capital and transformation*, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1988, p. 43.

⁶⁸¹ Norman O'Neill and Jay O'Brien (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, p. 45.

infrastructural and agribusiness projects.’⁶⁸² The Sudan, under Nimeiri, was ready to embark on a state-building development drive but without quite knowing, as of 1973, just how momentous the program would become.

The turning point for the Sudan came with the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli War in October 1973. The ensuing oil embargo and the subsequent decision by OPEC to quadruple oil prices produced a bonanza for the oil rich Gulf States. With this new found oil wealth at their disposal Saudi Arabia and Kuwait sought regional investments in agricultural projects that would create returns, but also serve to reduce the Gulf States dependence on food imports from European and North American sources.⁶⁸³ By 1975, Sudan had become the focus of a systemic development program aimed at transforming the agricultural sector into the “breadbasket of the world”.⁶⁸⁴ The strategy is outlined in a Sudanese Government report from 1976:

...the neighboring Arab world looks to the Sudan as a focal point in the Arab economic integration plans, where the combination of financial resources of the Arab community, Western technology, and the agricultural resources of the Sudan could produce the food requirements of the community and agricultural raw materials for part of their industrialisation plan.⁶⁸⁵

A basic assumption of the Sudanese capacity for a huge increase in agricultural production was the belief that Sudanese land and labor resources were underutilized, with only 20 million *feddans*, of the 200 million *feddans* that were available, actually

⁶⁸² Jack G. Kaikati, “The Economy of *Sudan*: A Potential Breadbasket of the Arab World?” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 11, No.1, 1980, p. 103.

⁶⁸³ Ibid, p. 100.

⁶⁸⁴ In the mid-seventies it was common to refer to Sudan as the breadbasket of the Middle East.

⁶⁸⁵ Hassan Gad Karim, “Sudanese Government Attitudes Towards Foreign Investment: Theory and Practice,” p. 45.

under cultivation.⁶⁸⁶ Whether the immense amount of unused land was cultivable or as free as the agricultural and economic reports of the 1970s suggested has been disputed by Jay O'Brien who contends that, at the very least, much of the land in northern Sudan was crucial for the survival of the pastoralists and a part of their annual drive from north to south.⁶⁸⁷ In addition, O'Brien argues, that the quality of the land precluded it from regular agricultural production. But, as far as the government was concerned, at least in terms of O'Brien's first concern, with the enactment of the Unregistered Land Act in 1970, all unregistered land was government owned and therefore available for schemes such as those the Sudan embarked on, in the 1970s.

During the Nimeiri years the Gulf States played an increasingly important role in the Sudanese economy. Khartoum was made the centre of the Arab States economic drive into Africa. Not only were huge funds poured into developing Sudan, over £S1000 million in 1976-77 alone⁶⁸⁸, but also Khartoum was chosen as the site for the headquarters of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa.⁶⁸⁹ The growth of the Gulf economies opened opportunities for Sudanese workers and by 1979 there were approximately 300,000 Sudanese workers, including many skilled workers, located in the Gulf.⁶⁹⁰ Woodward, whose focus was on exposing the patron-client relations that have been at the very core of the political system in Sudan, argues that political machinations overtook the entire development program resulting in widespread corruption and:

⁶⁸⁶ Tim Niblock, "Sudan's Economic Nightmare" *MERIP Reports*, No.135, 1985, p. 16, also see N. O'Brien and Jay O'Neill, p. 16.

⁶⁸⁷ Jay O'Brien, "Sudan: An Arab Breadbasket?" *MERIP Reports*, No.99, 1981, p. 26.

⁶⁸⁸ Tim Niblock, "Sudan's Economic Nightmare," p. 16, Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 169, gives a figure of \$US2 billion of Gulf money invested in the Sudan in the 1970s.

⁶⁸⁹ The Bank's Establishment Agreement can be found at <http://www.badea.org/en/agreement.html>

⁶⁹⁰ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 168.

The importance of Gulf Arab states' money in the end lay less in its contribution to Sudan's economic development than in the resources it provided for the exercise of clientalistic politics.'⁶⁹¹

In addition to clientalism, centre-periphery disparities continued to shape the Sudanese experience of Nimeiri's state and nation-building program, which for the majority of the outlying regions of the country seemed to differ very little from previous periods. While there was definite growth in the industrial sector, in 1980 twenty per cent of GDP was derived from industrial production, it was disproportionately located in Khartoum.⁶⁹² Khartoum grew dramatically as the population almost doubled between 1973 and 1982, reaching 1,343,000 inhabitants according to the 1983 census.⁶⁹³ Khartoum also grew as a centre of industry and finance with 70 per cent of industrial and service jobs, 85 per cent of commercial companies and 80 per cent of banks located in the capital.⁶⁹⁴ As with the earlier history of colonial and post-colonial Sudan, the peripheries endured marginalization during Nimeiri's time in power. But as Niblock proposes the problems went further this time round because as the economy deteriorated the regions suffered doubly. Niblock argues that:

Effectively, the outlying parts of the country were starved not only of development funding but even of funds for recurrent expenditure. They (the outlying regions) experienced, therefore, all of the negative effects of Sudan's economic position (high inflation, shortages of essential products, etc.) and

⁶⁹¹ Ibid, p. 170.

⁶⁹² Jack G. Kaikati, "The Economy of the Sudan: A Potential Arab Breadbasket?" p. 110.

⁶⁹³ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 189. However, according to the census of 1983, the population of Sudan was 21.6 million meaning that the vast majority of Sudan, notwithstanding the exceptional growth of Khartoum, remained inhabitants of the regions.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 190.

none of the positive aspects (the influx of funds for selected development projects).⁶⁹⁵

There was one notable success that materialized from the expansion and mechanization of agricultural production in Sudan. Food productivity grew in the 1970s which was one of only two such successes in Africa in the 1970s. In a study conducted by J. Hinderink and J.J. Sterkenburg only two countries in Africa showed a substantial increase in food production per capita between 1961-1965 and 1976-1980.⁶⁹⁶ In fact, Sudanese food production outpaced population growth, which was unusual for underdeveloped economies in this period, and unique for Africa. At the same time that Sudanese food production increased, across the continent in West Africa, for example, food production fell by 25 per cent in the decade from 1975 to 1985.⁶⁹⁷ However, this did not mean greater food security for the Sudanese, who paradoxically faced increasing levels of food insecurity and malnutrition despite higher yields. By 1990, almost half of the Sudanese population according to a World Bank study suffered from chronic or transitory food insecurity.⁶⁹⁸ The major cause of the decline in food availability in Sudan was that more and more of the agricultural produce of Sudan was redirected to foreign markets to repay the mounting debt of the Sudanese state. Despite this increase in agricultural production, and the export of an increasingly larger and larger proportion of food produce, the Sudanese state plunged into a major economic crisis in the 1980s. Even with generous foreign assistance, and

⁶⁹⁵ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 287.

⁶⁹⁶ J. Hinderink and J. J. Sterkenburg, "Agricultural Policy and Production in Africa: The aims, the methods, and the means," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1983, pp. 1-23.

⁶⁹⁷ Lennart Olsson, "On the Causes of Famine: Drought, Desertification and Market Failure in the Sudan," *Ambio*, Vol. 22, No. 6, 1993, p. 395.

⁶⁹⁸ Quoted in Karl Wolmuth, "Alternative Economic Strategies for the Sudan" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt, and Raphael K. Badal (eds.), *Short-cut to decay: the case of the Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, p. 228.

the exceptional patience of creditors under the influence of the US, the Sudanese debt continued to escalate.

The “breadbasket” strategy not only failed to reverse the precarious economic situation but created further economic and political problems. Debt, inflation, rising poverty levels, and corruption irrevocably undermined Nimeiri’s political legitimacy. Unlike the leaders of the traditional parties, Nimeiri could not call on tradition or sectarian or tribal affiliations when the economic strategy faltered. The failure of the state-building exercise was to have an impact on the one great achievement of Nimeiri’s time in power: the north-south peace agreement. And in doing so, the combination of economic crisis and a deteriorating situation in the south would lead Nimeiri to embark on a regionalization policy that would have serious ramifications for Darfur.

7.4 The Unravelling of National Unity and the Disintegration of the Sudanese Economy

Nimeiri, always the pragmatist, at least in the initial years of his time in power, was able to conclude a peace deal with the south which lasted for eleven years and provided the stability the Sudanese had longed for since independence. Initially in coming to power in 1969, Nimeiri’s military background led him to continue with force as the strategy of choice for dealing with the south. But, as the military situation deteriorated, and the financial drain caused by the war worsened, a deal with the south became an imperative. A further factor that favoured a settlement with the south was the replacement of the appointees of the sectarian parties in government with highly-educated and secular group of technocrats who strongly supported the idea of national

unity.⁶⁹⁹ Another significant factor that played a part in bringing the war to an end was the formation of a unified southern movement. The strength that the south found in unity contrasted with the increasing disunity in the north and proved a major catalyst for bringing the Sudanese government to the negotiating table.

The consolidation of the rebel forces in the south in 1970/71 under the leadership of Joseph Lagu's Southern Sudanese Liberation Movement (SSLM) was a decisive moment in the history of the north-south conflict.⁷⁰⁰ The combined forces of the SSLM rapidly proved superior to the Sudanese Armed Forces in guerilla warfare, and in July 1971 Nimeiri commenced secret peace talks with the SSLM which resulted in the Addis Ababa Agreement, which was finalised on 27 February 1972. The Addis Ababa Agreement was a historic moment for the Sudan and Nimeiri basked in the limelight which followed, both in international and domestic circles. Internationally, Nimeiri was heralded as a peace-maker and the man who brought an end to a sixteen year conflict. At home, Nimeiri received accolades from many for whom the peace deal was seen a major victory for the very idea of the Sudanese state and nation, as exemplified by the words of this Sudanese writer in 1972:

With the restoration of peace and stability as their primary concern, both parties have attained a political, legal and administrative framework within which these regional can be fulfilled and the national interests and sovereignty best preserved.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁹ Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 275, Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, pp. 141-142.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁰¹ Yassin El-Ayouty, "Settlement of the Southern Sudanese Problem: Its Significance and Implications for the Future," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1972, p. 10.

The shift from a policy of confrontation to a policy that led to a complete peace settlement within two years has also to be seen in the context of the critical level of economic deterioration facing the Nimeiri regime in those first years in power. Regardless of the impetus behind the decision to sign the peace deal, the Addis Ababa Agreement brought a peace, which for the first time since independence, Sudan could construct a sense of nationalism. Nimeiri's achievement was as Salah al-Zein has put it, '...the first time, in the political history of the country, that Sudan's cultural diversity was publicly and politically recognized.'⁷⁰² However, the peace deal with the southern Sudan may not have necessarily changed attitudes in the north to what they perceived was the Arab and Islamic nature of Sudanese identity. From multiple sources, it can be discerned, that there remained a strong attachment for the majority of northern Sudanese, including the disempowered regional populace, to a Sudanese nation that was inherently Arab and Islamic in character.⁷⁰³ Nimeiri's peace with the south soon developed into a façade and in 1977 the stage was set for a resumption of the north-south tensions that pre-dated the Addis Ababa Agreement.

Despite, the 1970 law prohibiting all political parties in Sudan, the traditional parties remained, even in absentia, an authentic threat to the regime. The potency of that threat became apparent in 1976 when Nimeiri was almost toppled by the second coup in two years. The coup was launched from Libya and was a combined assault on the capital by members of the Ansar and the Muslim Brothers, and it was only averted

⁷⁰² Salah el-Zein, "Articulation of cultural Discourses and Political Dominance in Sudan," *Sudanese Alternative Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 3, retrieved from <http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Newsletters/sad2.html>

⁷⁰³ Dunstan M. Wai, *The Southern Sudan: The problem of national integration*, p. 107, provides evidence that, as far as the southern Sudanese were concerned, the northern Sudanese were racially homogenous, even if there was cultural and ethnic diversity, and that the northern and southern population were different. Other studies point to this fact as well.

with the support of the Egyptian military.⁷⁰⁴ The coup unsettled Nimeiri and reconciliation with Sadiq al-Mahdi and Hasan al-Turabi followed. Ahmed al-Mirghani the head of the Khatmiyya was unmoved by Nimeiri's dramatic reversal towards his northern opponents and maintained his distance, and the distance of the Unionist Party, from the Nimeiri regime.⁷⁰⁵ So, in 1977, a year after the coup, Nimeiri moved to repatriate the exiled sectarian leaders and rehabilitate the traditional parties in what was famously called "National Reconciliation". The coup of 1976 had shown Nimeiri how precarious his political position and reconciling with his political opponents, Nimeiri hoped, provided his regime with greater stability at a time when the economic situation was beginning to look less optimistic as funds from the Gulf had become less reliable.⁷⁰⁶ Also, the development drive was proving a disappointment and as a result the regime found itself starved of the financial resources it needed to maintain the bloated bureaucracy and the huge number of government retainers around the country.⁷⁰⁷ In this climate of impending economic collapse and rising political opposition, Nimeiri announced a major restructuring of government which was based on regional governments assuming many of the responsibilities formerly administered from Khartoum.

⁷⁰⁴ Ann Moseley Lesch, "Sudan's Foreign Policy", p. 48.

⁷⁰⁵ Ahmad al-Shafi, "Responses to Nimeiri's Policies: Some Observations on Social and Political Changes in northern Sudan," p. 208.

⁷⁰⁶ In 1977, Nimeiri supported Egypt's signing of the Camp David Accords, including a tour of Middle East states to explain Sadat's policy to enraged Arab leaders. In retaliation, Saudi Arab and Kuwait stopped funding of development projects and all aid to Sudan.

⁷⁰⁷ Mukhtar al Assam, "Bureaucracy and Development in the Sudan," p. 32, states that the Sudanese bureaucracy had grown from 23,000 employees in 1956 to 123,000 by 1975 and then to 300,000 employees by 1983. This does not account for the huge government infrastructure of the Sudanese Socialist Union with thousands of branches and state employees around the country.

In an article published in 1983, Mukhtar Alassam explained the regionalization policy as a brainchild of the First People's Local Government Conference held in 1978.⁷⁰⁸ Alassam defended the policy of regional devolution as a commitment on the part of the President to decentralize power so that '...the creation of these governments is designed to curtail centripetal forces by encouraging rural development and by building up services to the benefit of the regions.'⁷⁰⁹ Whether this was Nimeiri's rationale or not and there is a question over the economic and political benefits for Nimeiri in devolving power⁷¹⁰, the policy transferred the tensions that had developed between the regions and the central government into inter-regional problems that eventually proved destabilizing. As one commentator on the Sudanese economic situation in the 1980s remarked, regionalization policies proved counter-productive because '...the government simply did not possess the resources to implement them.'⁷¹¹ The rationale for regionalization was to shift the burden of the state to the regions but the regions had far fewer resources and less expertise and the result was a collapse of government in many parts of the country, including, but not only in Darfur.

Regionalization in Darfur was not as popular as Nimeiri had expected. Initially, this was not a result of any regional disfavour with the notion of devolving power to the regions but rather had to do with the choice of governor. Nimeiri appointed Al-Tayeb al-Mardi, a native of Kordofan, to the position of governor. Al-Mardi's appointment sparked off demonstrations in Darfur demanding the appointment of a native of

⁷⁰⁸ Mukhtar Alassam, "Regional Government in the Sudan," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.3, 1983, p. 111.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 120.

⁷¹⁰ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, pp. 154-155, Tim Niblock, *Class and Power in Sudan*, p. 287, Al Agab Ahmed al-Teraifi, "Regionalisation in the Sudan: Characteristics, Problems, Prospects" in Peter Woodward (ed.), *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 92-118.

⁷¹¹ Tim Niblock, "Sudan's Economic Nightmare," *MERIP Reports*, No. 135, 1985.

Darfur to the position. The demonstrations became more serious when the police and military were called in and 10-20 people were killed. On 19 January, Nimeiri revoked Al-Mardi's appointment but not the incident earned the local name of *intifada*. Nimeiri bowed to popular agitation and appointed Ahmad Diraige as governor.⁷¹²

When all was said and done, the new Regional Government of Darfur was a gussied up version of the Anglo-Egyptian provincial system of 1944, replete with a governor and advisory council. Thus "regionalization" was recentralization, with, as always, a proliferation of offices and explosion of expense.⁷¹³

Diraige faced a huge challenge when he came to power. Regional tensions were on the rise and within two years of taking office, Diraige had to confront a major environmental catastrophe and human tragedy in the making when the Sahelian drought ravaged the region. In addition, the Sudanese economy was in meltdown and with the state rapidly unravelling from budgetary pressures Diraige's task of dealing with the multiple issues became impossible without adequate resources or funding.⁷¹⁴ Sharif Harir describes the transfer of power and the tensions that resulted from the appointment of regional government in Darfur in some detail.⁷¹⁵ Overall, his view is that the policy was a disaster for Darfur because the politicians increasingly fell into the "ethnic trap" of mollifying '...the ethnic group to which one belonged at the

⁷¹² S. Harir, S. Hodnebo and T. Tvedt, "Sudan Chronology Since 1972" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt, and Raphael K. Badal, *Short Cut to Decay, the case of Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, p. 264 also a similar description of events appears in M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 225.

⁷¹³ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 224.

⁷¹⁴ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, p206 makes the point that as the drought hit in 1983 the regional government was powerless to intervene, because 'the Darfur regional government had practically no revenue.' The regional government was dependent on Khartoum for 90 per cent of its funding which remained unpaid in 1982-83.

⁷¹⁵ Sharif Harir, "Arab Belt" versus "African Belt", pp. 159-160.

expense of others or indulge in wholesale nepotism.’⁷¹⁶ Peter Woodward argues that regional governments contributed to the ‘politicization of ethnic identity’⁷¹⁷, a perspective shared by Martin Daly.⁷¹⁸ However, from another perspective the major cleavage in Darfur were not ethnic but along emerging socio-ethnic lines, as Paul Doornbos explains. Doornbos argues that in Darfur the relevant division that had appeared was not along ethnic lines but between the “Sudanized” and the proprietors of indigenous cultures.⁷¹⁹ Doornbos defines “Sudanisation” as,

...the process of conversion of ethnically diverse population groups living in the Sudanese periphery to the dominant and prestigious lifestyle of the central Nile valley region.⁷²⁰

Doornbos reports that a discernible trend of “Sudanisation” was evident in Darfur, especially in the urban areas, to the extent that the ‘...Sudanised increase numerically at the expense of other cultural identifications.’⁷²¹ Conversely, a similar tendency for indigenous cultures to strengthen in response, which is not an uncommon phenomenon, was also apparent. What Harir and Daly may have described was a division in Darfur between an increasingly “Sudanised” urban and semi-urban population and rural, especially nomadic, Darfurians. In other words, what may have seemed like ethnicization may, in fact, have been other processes of identity formation which were occurring due to rising tensions between the urban and rural populace, the rich and the poor, pro-government and anti-government factions, farmers and herders, and to reduce all these differences to ethnicity risks falling into

⁷¹⁶ Ibid, p. 160.

⁷¹⁷ Peter Woodward, *Sudan, 1898-1989*, p. 196.

⁷¹⁸ Martin Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 226.

⁷¹⁹ Paul Doornbos, “On Becoming Sudanese” in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation*, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd., 1988, pp. 100-101.

⁷²⁰ Ibid, p. 100.

⁷²¹ Ibid, p. 101.

the “ethnic trap”. While ethnicity plays a part, the complex reasons for the reformulation of ethnic identities are as important as the reasons for ethnic mobilization, and while sometimes the reasons converge, sometimes they do not. In the case of Darfur in the 1980s, the considerable changes to political and economic relations within the region, as well as between Darfur and the Sudanese Government were responsible for provoking a new set of actors and grievances that would play out in the last quarter of that decade.

The transferral of central government responsibilities to the regional governments occurred at a time when the state was collapsing under the pressures of a failing economy and a regime which had exhausted its mandate to govern. In effect, dissatisfaction, later hostility that should have been directed at the central government for the failure of the development project was aimed at the Darfur regional government which failed to address the challenges with which it was faced because it was economically incapacitated. Despite, the problems faced by the regional government upon taking office, events would only overtake Darfur in 1983 as famine gripped the region. The impact of the regionalization policy was undoubtedly felt in Darfur; however, it was in the south that the first signs of an impending disaster were to become evident.

The south had provided political support for Nimeiri in the aftermath of the ruthless suppression of the communist and workers parties who had constituted his earliest support base. Southern elites had been promised key positions in the government administration, while the mass of the southern people remained enthusiasts of Nimeiri praising his courage for bringing peace. The Addis Ababa Agreement was an

important political manoeuvre at a time when Nimeiri's opponents vastly outnumbered his supporters.

Numeiri's ability to hold onto power came to depend upon this Southern base of support as he had permanently alienated the Umma-led faction of the right through the Aba Island massacre and the left through the crackdown on the SCP and attendant rightward shift.⁷²²

Southern resentment toward the north remained a problem that the peace agreement was unable to completely erase. Southerners expected the gap in social welfare, education and employment opportunities to be addressed now that the south had become included as an equal partner in the Sudanese nation. Writing in 1973, only a year after the Addis Ababa agreement, Oluwadre Aguda evocatively set out the remaining grievance felt by southerners when he stated that,

For it would be difficult to find elsewhere in black Africa a population of about five million, occupying over a quarter of a million square miles, who 15 years after independence could boast of only two secondary schools, and neither a permanent secretary nor a director of a department in the public service.⁷²³

The neglect of the south continued and by the time that Nimeiri reconciled with the northern elite in 1977, the north-south agreement had become fragile. Numerous incidents intensified the distrust of the southerners towards Nimeiri.⁷²⁴ The

⁷²² Norman O'Neill, *Economy and Class in Sudan*, p. 48.

⁷²³ Oluwadre Aguda, "Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics", p. 196.

⁷²⁴ The Jonglei Dam development, Kosti oil refinery, the aborted attempt to redraw the boundary between the north and the south, national reconciliation with the Umma and Muslim Brothers, and a number of signs that Shar'ia Law was being considered by Nimeiri were just some of the most well known incidents.

announcement in 1983 of the enactment September Laws which installed Shari'a Law as the legal system for the entire Sudan is often recounted as the moment when the north-south peace arrangement was finally repudiated. But, Nimeiri's promise of national unity had ended much earlier, and by 1983 was already buried in the ruins of the Sudanese economy.

Southern politicians had become wary of Nimeiri and in December 1982 a tour of the south by the President was cut short by violent protests at Rumbek. Nimeiri returned to Khartoum with the knowledge that the south was no longer a dependable support base. Nimeiri then moved to weaken the unity of the south by announcing in May 1983 that he would divide the southern Sudan into three separate regions, and that each region would be headed by a governor appointed directly by the president. Later that month, soldiers stationed at Bor mutinied against a proposed move to the north which was followed by the establishment of a southern rebel army. The southern forces headed to the jungles and quickly organised into the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLM/A) under the leadership of Colonel Dr. John Garang de Mabior.⁷²⁵ War between the northern and southern Sudan had resumed and with a ferocity and brutality that exceeded the previous rounds of fighting. With the recommencement of the fighting, Nimeiri's only remaining achievement was lost.

The other pillar on which, it was earlier noted that Nimeiri had based the legitimacy of his regime, was the promise of economic development which had also shattered by the beginning of the 1980s. With Gulf oil concessions coming to an end the Sudanese economy just could not afford the cost of purchasing unsubsidized oil. Sudan's fuel

⁷²⁵ Philippa Scott, "The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Liberation Army (SPLA)," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 33, 1985, pp. 69-82 provides an excellent introduction to the SPLM/A.

bill rose from £550 million in 1978 to a staggering £5, 170 million in 1980.⁷²⁶ Gulf investments also fell dramatically, partly due to the tensions over the Camp David Accords and partly due to the fall in oil prices in the 1980s. With investment and aid from the Gulf States at a complete standstill, in 1981-82 total Arab aid to Sudan was \$26 million, and development funding only \$15 million⁷²⁷, the Sudanese economy entered a period of significant decline.

The IMF had, in 1978, stepped in to try and stabilize the Sudanese economy by promoting the devaluation of the Sudanese currency which was what the IMF perceived to be the most effective measure for resolving the spiralling debt and deficit problems. Despite, widespread opposition to the IMF plan from Sudanese economists and government officials alike, on 15 February 1978, the Minister of Finance announced a 25 per cent devaluation of the Sudanese pound.⁷²⁸ In return, the IMF offered Sudan a stand-by arrangement and other donors, including Saudi Arabia, offered Sudan generous loans and write-offs on Sudan's spiralling loan repayments. The result of the currency devaluation was a dramatic increase in the trade deficit from £23.7 million in 1978 to £83.7 million in 1979, a result which had been predicated by Sudanese economists.⁷²⁹ In effect, by 1979 the Sudan was only able to repay debt by additional borrowing sending debt levels up into the billions of dollars in the 1980s at which time it was widely acknowledged that Sudan's economy was in crisis.

⁷²⁶ Charles C. Gurdon, "The Economy of Sudan and recent Strains" in Peter Woodward, *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London, Routledge, 1991, p. 23.

⁷²⁷ Ibid.

⁷²⁸ Mohammed Nureldin Hussein, "The IMF and Economic Policy" in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation*, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd., 1988, pp. 64-65.

⁷²⁹ Ibid, p65.

The IMF was called in again, and the remedy they suggested for the Sudanese economic crisis was a package of reforms which included trade liberalization, privatization of national industries and corporations, austerity measures, and the removal of all restrictions on profit repatriation for foreign businesses.⁷³⁰ This program has been described by Tim Niblock as ‘...a framework from which there was no escape, short of Sudan’s reneging on its international debts.’⁷³¹ The impact of the IMF programme, not yet known as structural adjustment, was to further exacerbate the economic crisis and shift even harsher economic burdens onto the Sudanese population.⁷³² In 1986, the real value of the minimum wage in Sudan was only 16 per cent of what it had been in 1970, inflation was running at 20 per cent per annum and migration of Sudan’s professional and skilled workforce had risen from 45,000 in 1979 to an estimated one-quarter of a million workers by 1983.⁷³³ The first sign that the IMF imposed policies was generating a political backlash was when government subsidies on wheat, sugar and petrol were removed and the tax on tobacco was increased. Protests and strikes broke out across Khartoum, Omdurman and Gezira. Nimeiri called in the army and clashes between the protesters and the army led to the death of several people.⁷³⁴ Ultimately, it was one such austerity package in 1985 that led to the mass demonstrations and protests that toppled Nimeiri while he was on one of his regular trips to the US, where he was considered America’s most valuable friend in the Horn of Africa.⁷³⁵

⁷³⁰ John Prendergast, “Blood Money for Sudan: World Bank and IMF to the “Rescue”,” *Africa Today*, Vol. 36, No. 3/4, 1989, p. 43.

⁷³¹ Tim Niblock, “Sudan Economic Nightmare,” p. 18.

⁷³² The impact of structural adjustment programmes on developing economies is well recognized now with even the World Bank and IMF acknowledging the programmes were not as effective as they had anticipated. Joseph Stiglitz gives an economists account of the negative impact of SAPs in *Globalization and its Discontents*, London: W.W. Norton and Company Ltd., 2002.

⁷³³ James Morton, *The Poverty of Nation*, p. 217.

⁷³⁴ Norman O'Neill and Jay O'Brien (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan* p. 50.

⁷³⁵ Sudan under Nimeiri had become the second highest recipient of US military assistance in the Middle East and Africa after Egypt.

The collapse of the Sudanese economy in the 1980s left its mark on urban and rural Sudan alike. International factors also played their part in the depredations felt across the Sudan as declining international demand and prices for agricultural goods undercut the expansion of cash-crop production that had occurred in the 1970s. Figures given by Morton of declining sales of sugar, tea and other consumer goods in Darfur, he argues, is illustrative of the decline in living standards as the economic bubble of the 1970s burst.⁷³⁶ As the Sudanese economy contracted and the breadbasket strategy proved incapable of repaying the huge debts accrued by the Nimeiri regime, exports of agriculture products and livestock assumed a new significance for the Sudanese economy. By 1982, the servicing of the outstanding foreign debt had grown to be greater than total export earnings and the Sudanese economy produced very little, except for food that could be exported to raise revenues. This commitment to the export of food was to have a debilitating affect on the people of Sudan, and particularly the population of western Sudan, when a particularly severe famine hit the region in 1983.

The Sahelian drought was not the first experience of drought in Darfur and for Alex de Waal this particular drought only became the most severe event in living memory because of the political and economic environment of the early 1980s.⁷³⁷ In a number of ways, the government mishandling of the famine was illustrative of everything that was wrong with the Sudan. Food continued to find its way to export markets as tens of thousands of Sudanese died from starvation. In fact, food exports in 1985

⁷³⁶ James Morton, *The Poverty of Nations*, p. 88.

⁷³⁷ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*.

contributed 42.9 per cent of GDP in 1985, which was an increase from 1984.⁷³⁸ The government ignored the famine resisting domestic and international pleas to intervene. As the famine claimed more lives and the government continued to refuse Darfur food aid, Ahmad Diraige flew to Khartoum to personally plead the case for government assistance to help in relieving the growing distress. Nimeiri, according to some sources, reacted angrily and Diraige fled Sudan. But, as the people of the western Sudan starved, Nimeiri was more concerned with preserving his rule from urban opposition and southern rebels than with organising a relief effort to save his people from starvation.⁷³⁹ However, the most insensate move of all was Nimeiri's order to remove western Sudanese refugees from Khartoum and return them to the famine-ravaged regions from where they had fled. The Sudanese who had endured much during Nimeiri's sixteen years in power, in spite of everything else, found the removal of the refugees a shocking incident which further highlighted just how bankrupt the regime had become.

However, to lay the entire blame for the catastrophe at Nimeiri misses one crucial point, the regional government's powerlessness to intervene to alleviate the hunger.⁷⁴⁰ The decentralization policy undertaken by Nimeiri in 1980 should have allowed the regional government to act in defence of the population but without funds or the necessary resources Ahmad Diraige was reduced to seeking assistance from the central government whose focus was on the war in the south and increasing urban

⁷³⁸ T. O. Williams, *Impact of Livestock Pricing Policies on Meat and Milk Output in selected sub-Saharan African countries*. Addis Ababa: Working Paper 13, International Livestock Centre for Africa, April, 1990.

⁷³⁹ Unlike the southern Sudan where David Keen, *The Benefits of Famine: A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-1989*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994, for example found that the regime manufactured famine as a weapon of war the famine in Darfur occurred due to government neglect not intention. While this might be a fine line it is still an important distinction.

⁷⁴⁰ Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills*, pp. 205-206.

unrest in Khartoum. The drought ended in 1985 and in 1986 crop-yields returned to pre-drought levels, however, the impact of the drought had been felt by every community in Darfur in some way and the legacy of the drought was that food insecurity became a constant spectre in many parts of Darfur.⁷⁴¹ In addition, the northern pastoralists had lost the majority of their herds and faced an uncertain future. Just as importantly, for the people of Darfur, events had revealed that the state apparatus in Darfur was unable to effectively intercede when needed. If governments were powerless at crucial times of distress then other forms of collective organisation were clearly needed to fill the void. The rise in ethnic and tribal identities in the 1980s must also be seen in the context of government failure at this crucial moment of need.

The coup that ended Nimeiri's sixteen-year reign was a relief for many Sudanese. That the collapse of the Nimeiri regime should have occurred in the context of the perilous nature of the economic and political problems facing Sudan is hardly surprising. Drought ravaged the western Sudan, the war in the southern Sudan was intensifying, and the collapse of social services and governance in the regions were matched by high inflation, food shortages and rising unemployment in the urban centres. The task facing the new government was unenviable to say the least. But the new leaders were members of the same regime that oversaw the collapse of both the economy and the north-south peace arrangement. The leader of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement John Garang exasperated with the duplicity of the new government aptly labelled them "Nimeirism without Nimeiri" and Jay O'Brien described the transitional government of Commander-in-Chief General Siwar el-Dahab that replaced Nimeiri as '...a pro-Western coup, with Egyptian support, led by

⁷⁴¹ Mark Duffield, "Absolute Distress: Structural Causes of Hunger in Sudan," *Middle East Report*, No. 166, 1990, p.4.

top army officers who seek to re-establish the status quo as soon as possible.’⁷⁴²

Sudan had survived the Nimeiri years, but was entering the post-Nimeiri era with twin the same legacies that plagued the Sudan sixteen years earlier; national disunity and a severe economic crisis.

7.5 Sudan and the War for Chad

Other than the famine that caused great suffering in Darfur, the events surrounding the impact of the war for Chad for Darfur best illustrates the extent that the Sudanese state had become emasculated by the 1980s. That Darfur was drawn into the civil war in Chad is not surprising. That Darfur became a major theatre of the war is more so. Darfur and Chad share a boundary approximately 1300 kilometres in length. Historically, the two regions have been closely intertwined. In addition, a number of large ethno-cultural groups straddle the Sudan/Chad border, including the important constituency of the Zaghawa. Economic and cultural ties bind people in Darfur and Chad together as J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins describe:

Sudanese from Darfur, both cultivators and pastoralists, had settled there (Abeche), and during the French administration, town planning included quarters for new emigrant ethnic groups... Not surprisingly most of the residents of Abeche continued their close ties to Darfur in the Sudan while the pastoral Baggara in Chad continued to drive their cattle to the Sudan railhead at El Obeid in Kordofan.⁷⁴³

On a more formal level, the contacts between the Khartoum government and disaffected groups from northern Chad trace back to the 1960s. The “Arabs” of

⁷⁴² Norman O'Neill and Jay O'Brien (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, p. 53.

⁷⁴³ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Africa's The Thirty Year War: Libya, Chad, and the Sudan, 1963-1993*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999, p. 27.

northern Chad looked eastwards to Sudan and Cairo or to the Gulf States for education and employment opportunities unavailable to Arab speakers in Chad.⁷⁴⁴ In this way the integral links between the Arabs from Chad and the riverain Sudanese became more than merely symbolic.

Additionally, the Cold War and Libyan intervention in Chad played a crucial part in internationalizing the conflict. In August 1981, Libya with Soviet approval signed a tripartite agreement with Yemen, and another of Sudan's hostile neighbours, the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia.⁷⁴⁵ This treaty, in the opinion of William D. Brewer, gave Libya's intervention in Chad, 'importance in the wider global context,' especially as far as the US was concerned.⁷⁴⁶ As the war in Chad began to intensify in late 1981, Nimeiri was able to utilize the US concerns regarding Libya's relationship with the Soviets to 'impress on Secretary Haig...the immediacy of the Libyan threat and the consequent need for more, and faster, US support.'⁷⁴⁷ The aid came, and Sudan was rescued by the US and the IMF from certain economic collapse because it sat astride two Soviet allies, and was considered an important ally in the struggle against communist expansion in Africa.

Gaddafi's ambitions to penetrate deep into Africa were facilitated by the increase in oil revenues Libya enjoyed after 1973. After suffering a setback to his control of

⁷⁴⁴ Burr and Collins, p. 62, describe the accommodation of the rebels from Chad in Khartoum in terms usually limited for honoured guests, '...In Spring 1967 El Hajj Isaaka led a more formal FROLINAT delegation, which was greeted with all the ceremony usually reserved for a diplomatic mission from a sovereign state.'

⁷⁴⁵ Robert G. Patman, *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 269, also states that the it was reported in *Pravda* was an important alliance of anti-imperialist forces. Oye Ogunbadejo, "Qaddafi's North African designs," *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1983, pp.166-167 presents a different view arguing that the Soviet response was lukewarm and the US caught in the Cold War paradigm envisaged a Libyan-Soviet alliance where it did not exist.

⁷⁴⁶ William D. Brewer, "The Libyan-Sudanese 'Crisis' of 1981: Danger for Darfur and Dilemma for the United States," *Middle East Journal*, Vol.36, No.2, 1982, p. 206.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 211.

Chad, Gaddafi intensified his efforts to recapture Libya's southern neighbour. Nimeiri's initial reaction to the Libyan escalation, as argued by Brewer, was to move Sudanese reinforcements into Darfur during September 1981 to prevent further Libyan attacks on Sudan.⁷⁴⁸ The state intervened to prevent a Libyan advance into Darfur. While this action protected Darfur, the motivation behind Nimeiri's decision was more likely to have been strategic: to earn further credit with the US.⁷⁴⁹ By 1982, Sudan was a major recipient of US military aid and financial assistance, and was considered a central piece in the US struggle against communism in Africa.⁷⁵⁰

1983 was a turning point for Darfur. The Sahelian drought was causing hardship to the region and just when the Sudanese military presence was most needed to stop the further encroachment of Chadian rebels and Libyans into Darfur the war in the southern Sudan re-erupted. Nimeiri was forced to transfer all available military to the south to combat the SPLM insurgency. This move left Darfur largely unprotected and the spill-over from the war intensified as a result. In the wake of the overthrow of Nimeiri, the Transitional Military Council (TMC) immediately set about attempting to persuade Arab and Western countries to provide military and financial aid for the continuing civil war against the SPLM. The efforts were a dismal failure as one government after another politely rebuffed the new rulers of Sudan.⁷⁵¹ In desperation, the TMC sent Saddiq al-Mahdi on a mission to seek assistance from al-Mahdi's friend and former ally, the Libyan President Gaddafi. Gaddafi was very ready to assist his former guest and the provision of Libyan weapons and financial assistance was hastily

⁷⁴⁸ William D. Brewer, "The Libyan-Sudanese 'Crisis,'" p. 212.

⁷⁴⁹ The Council of Foreign Affairs reports that from 1980 Sudan became the sixth largest recipient of US military aid, over \$100 million in 1982 according to Oye Ogunbadejo, "Qaddafi's North African designs", p. 165.

⁷⁵⁰ Jeffrey Alan Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn: U.S. security policy in Ethiopia and Somalia, 1953-1991*, Univ of Pittsburgh Press, 1991, pp. 231-232,

⁷⁵¹ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Africa's Thirty Year War*, p. 197.

organised and dispatched to Sudan. In addition, Libyan assistance to the SPLM ended and Gaddafi welcomed Sudanese guest workers by creating a “special” status for them to work in Libya without being subjected to the normal regulations and restrictions. The Sudanese matched Gaddafi’s generosity as the TMC, ‘terminated the flow of arms to Hissen Habre, closed the frontier, and opened another chapter in the strange relations between Khartoum and Tripoli’.⁷⁵²

7.6 Libya in Darfur: The Abrogation of Responsibility by the Sudanese State

The Libyan-Sudanese alliance swung events against the people of Darfur. Under the TMC, and then following elections in 1986 under the Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, Gaddafi was allowed to wage his war against the pro-western Hissene Habre with a free-hand in Darfur. The imprimatur given to Gaddafi by the Sudanese Government to arm and train militia’s to fight against Chad’s military prefigured its own strategy of the wider militarisation of society. In effect, the limited Sudanese sovereignty in western Darfur was completely abrogated, at one time or another, to either Libyan or pro-Libyan forces.

Under pressure from the US and NATO, Gaddafi had become aware of the range of forces allied against him in Chad, he feared the possible international and regional ramifications of continuing to intervene directly in Chad. With this potential threat in mind, Gaddafi turned to tribal militias, which effectively meant arming and mobilising the disaffected and desperate nomads of the Sahara. This became the cornerstone of Gaddafi’s strategy for fighting the war in Chad, but was only one of a range of tactics centred on Darfur. Qaddafi founded the *da’wa islamiya* which had

⁷⁵² Ibid.

since 1973 been heavily active in Sudan in promoting the concept of an Islamic and Arab renewal as part of an historic mission to extend Islam and Arab culture throughout Africa.⁷⁵³ This was the first of a series of efforts by Gaddafi to extend his influence into Africa, and Darfur was a region where the *da'wa islamiya* was very active.⁷⁵⁴ The creation of the Islamic Legion to fight the war in Chad was Gaddafi's next move. The Islamic Legions were, as Roland Marchal calls them, 'crude African mercenaries,'⁷⁵⁵ drawn from northern Chad, Darfur, Libya and other parts of the Sahel.⁷⁵⁶ In 1980, a force of the Islamic Legions, five thousand in number crossed into Chad and occupied the capital N'djamena before being forced to evacuate in January 1981 and relocating into north-eastern Darfur.⁷⁵⁷ Nimeiri was able to remove the Islamic Legion in 1981 and prevent the Libyans from securing permanent bases in Darfur. This would change within a few years with the Islamic Legion permanently stationed in Darfur from 1985 onwards.

In 1985, when the TMC failed to solicit further military aid for the war in the southern Sudan from western and conservative Arab states, they turned to Gaddafi. General Osman Abdullah the Sudanese Minister of Defence signed a military protocol with Libya that ensured Libyan aid for Khartoum in its war against the SPLM in southern

⁷⁵³ J. Millard Burr and R.O. Collins, *Alms for Jihad: Charity and Terrorism in the Islamic World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 111. Further, the authors state that in 1980 the organization mysteriously moved its headquarters to Khartoum in what seemed to have been a severing of ties with Qaddafi.

⁷⁵⁴ J. Millard Burr and R.O. Collins, *Africa's Thirty Year War*, p. 113, as many as 132 offices in sub-Saharan Africa within a decade.

⁷⁵⁵ Roland Marchal, "The Unseen Regional Implications of the Crisis in Darfur" in Alex de Waal, *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 179.

⁷⁵⁶ Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991*, University of Nebraska Press, p. 369 briefly outlines Gaddafi's use of the Islamic Legions in Uganda in 1978 to forestall the Tanzanian invasion aimed at toppling Ugandan dictator Idi Amin.

⁷⁵⁷ William D. Brewer, "The Libyan-Sudanese 'Crisis'," p. 211.

Sudan.⁷⁵⁸ In return, Gaddafi was able to count on Sudanese support in the war for Chad. Libya pushed further into Darfur. With the Sudanese Government turning a blind eye, the Libyan presence in Darfur became more transparent as Libyan soldiers and intelligence officers moved freely in El Fasher, Kutum and Nyala and all other principal towns of Darfur. The Libyan military, according to Burr and Collins, were able to use the drought and famine in Darfur as cover for,

...“humanitarian missions” to roam freely through-out the vast expanse of northern Darfur beyond Kutum where Islamic Legion units were being prepared to reinforce Acheikh’s contingent at Fada.⁷⁵⁹

In 1986, for example, reports were filed of a 350 truck convoy moved food aid from the Libyan province of al-Kufra to the Darfuri capital El Fasher. This shipment was one of many regular convoys of food aid to arrive in El Fasher according to John Prendergast.⁷⁶⁰ Considering the Sudanese government had, by and large, ignored the plight of the people of Darfur is it any wonder that many answered the Libyan call to arms.

In 1986, Sadiq al-Mahdi became prime minister for a second time. Gaddafi made immediate overtures to al-Mahdi for the integration of western Sudan and Libya. The Sudanese government was still in need of Libyan financial and military assistance which prevented al-Mahdi from openly defying his erstwhile ally, and eventually in

⁷⁵⁸ Ann Moseley Lesch, “Sudan’s Foreign Policy: In Search of Arms, Aid, and Allies” in John Obert Voll, *Sudan: state and society in crisis*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁵⁹ J. Millard Burr and R.O. Collins, *Africa’s Thirty Year War*, p. 215.

⁷⁶⁰ John Prendergast, *The Struggle for Sudan’s soul: political and agrarian roots of war and famine*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Concern, 1995, p. 32.

1988 al-Mahdi agreed to an integration pact.⁷⁶¹ Darfur was now seen by Gaddafi as part of Libya. In 1990, Sudan's newly installed military government signed a formal charter of integration with Libya. Once the charter had come into affect Sudanese officials including the governor of Darfur, Major General Abu al-Qasim Ibrahim formally and publicly supported the Libyan war effort, and offered assistance to the pro-Libyan forces of Idris Deby, despite evidence that the war was causing death and destruction across the Darfur region.⁷⁶²

Not only was the government allowing the Libyans to operate with impunity in Darfur but successive Sudanese governments traded the “sovereignty” over Darfur to the Libyans, at one time or another, for military and economic aid. The economic problems faced by Khartoum and the urgency of the war effort in the south made the trade-off with Libya seem necessary. While Saddiq al-Mahdi publicly presented his concerns that the security situation in Darfur was in crisis, his government was tied to the alliance with Libya and any Sudanese Government interference in Libya's war effort threatened the continuation of Libyan economic and military support for the war against the south. Al-Mahdi attempted to circumvent this problem by creating tribal militias in Darfur as a loyal Mahdist fighting force, principally to fight against the SPLM. But this strategy soon backfired as the tribal militias confronted by the might of the SPLM turned to easier targets, namely the sedentary farming villages in Darfur and the repercussions were devastating.⁷⁶³ Now Darfur was faced with foreign forces fighting a war for control of another country across their territory, tribal

⁷⁶¹ Geoffrey Leslie Simons, *Libya: the Struggle for Survival*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993, pp. 296-297.

⁷⁶² J. Millard Burr and R.O. Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan al-Turabi and the Islamist state, 1989-2000*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, p. 35.

⁷⁶³ M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, “Tribal Militias: The Genesis of National Disintegration” in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt, and Raphael K. Badal (eds.), *Short-cut to decay: the case of the Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, p. 196

militias armed by the Sudanese government seeking to capture land and loot from communities within Darfur, and random violence and looting from bandits roaming the countryside. It was clear that only government intervention could curb the violence. However, the government remained absent from events in Darfur which led to the situation deteriorating badly, and by the end of the 1980s, the situation in Darfur was so bad that the region was referred to in Sudanese circles as the “wild west”.

The negative impact of the conflict in Chad and the unwillingness of the government to intervene led to the formation in 1988 of a multi-ethnic body of representatives from Darfur who were situated in Khartoum known as the National Council for the Salvation of Darfur (NCSD). The NCSD convened a meeting at the University of Khartoum in February 1988 in an attempt to place the crisis in Darfur on the national agenda. The meeting at the University of Khartoum was followed by a mass protest through the streets of Khartoum on 12 March 1988, which made its way to the Council of Ministers, where a petition was presented demanding the restoration of civil order in the province and the expulsion of all foreign elements. The NCSD protest was successful in raising public awareness of the disastrous situation in Darfur and that the Sudanese Government was largely responsible for the crisis.⁷⁶⁴

The problems in Darfur symbolised the immensity of the inadequacies of the al-Mahdi government. Economic problems were rife; the civil war in the south had resulted in huge casualties and despite the high number of death there was no evidence of any progress in defeating the insurgency in the south. In addition, the

⁷⁶⁴ Kamal Osman Salih, “The Sudan, 1985-9: The Fading Democracy,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2, Jun., 1990.

Sudan's international reputation was under serious scrutiny from the US, Europe and the United Nations as numerous reports of human rights abuses surfaced. As the human rights became too great for international actors to ignore, aid and foreign investment dried up which only added to the perilous economic situation in Sudan.⁷⁶⁵ By 1989, the Sudan had been abandoned by the majority of countries around the world, with the exception of Libya which remained a loyal supporter of the Khartoum government. In international isolation, and facing what seemed like an unwinnable war in the South, the public awareness of the problems overtaking Darfur only served to magnify the feeling of despair and anger against the al-Mahdi government. Al-Mahdi reacted to the widespread criticism and promised to return order to Darfur. However, before he could act, another successful military coup, the third in thirty-years of independence, brought down the government and ushered in what is now generally regarded as the darkest period in Sudan's short history.

7.7 The Legacies of the Libyan presence in Darfur

The Sudanese sanctioned penetration of Darfur by Libya in the period between 1985 and 1990 had serious implications which have only become apparent to most analysts since 2003. However, a decade before the conflict in Darfur erupted, M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir warned of the danger to Darfur from the militarization of society that had occurred from the combined affect of the flood of arms into the region, a government strategy of arming tribal militias, and from the remnants of Libya's Islamic Legions who remained in Darfur with their arms and

⁷⁶⁵ Mark Duffield and John Prendergast, "Sovereignty and Intervention after the Cold War: Lessons from the Emergency Relief Desk," *Middle East Report*, No. 187/188, 1994, pp. 9-15.

with no war to fight.⁷⁶⁶ It is with these last two factors that Libyan Arabism seems to have permeated.

With a strong foothold in Darfur, Gaddafi was able to infuse his Legions and militias with a racist ideology. Gaddafi's Arabism was based on the belief in this historic right and duty of the Arab nation to extend the message of civilization to the world and had been formulated as the Third Universal Theory.⁷⁶⁷ An intrinsic element of Gaddafi's pan-Arab ideology is the concept of Arab supremacy which he used to inspire the disaffected Arab nomads of Chad and Darfur to assist in the Libyan campaign to extend Arab dominion into sub-Saharan Africa.⁷⁶⁸ Julie Flint and Alex de Waal describe the emergence of a small violent group of racially motivated Arab supremacists in Darfur in 1983 known as the *tajamu al arabi* (Arab Gathering).⁷⁶⁹ The expansion of this small group, according to Abdullah El-Tom occurred when the Islamic Legions and other Gaddafi inspired Arab supremacists were permitted to operate from Darfur.⁷⁷⁰ The Arab supremacist racism of the statements of the Arab Gathering, as reported by El Tom and also by Flint and de Waal, are at odds with the Arabism of the riverain Sudanese elite, even if El Tom perceives them as identical.

⁷⁶⁶ Both these authors have written a number of articles on these issues, M.A. Mohammed Salih, "New Wine in Old Bottles: tribal militias and the Sudanese state," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 16, No. 45, 1989, pp. 168 – 174, also M. A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, "Tribal Militias: The Genesis of National Disintegration" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt and Raphael K. Badal (eds.), *Short-cut to decay: the case of the Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, pp. 186-203, Sharif Harir, "Militarization of Conflict, Displacement and the Legitimacy of the State: A Case from Dar Fur, Western Sudan" in Terje Tvedt (ed), *Conflicts in the Horn of Africa: Human and Ecological Consequences of Warfare*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1992, pp. 14-26.

⁷⁶⁷ Ronald Bruce St John, *Qaddafi's World Design: Libyan Foreign Policy, 1969-1987*, London: Saqi Books, p. 29.

⁷⁶⁸ Jerome Tubiana, "The Chad-Sudan Proxy War and the 'Darfurization' of Chad: Myths and Realities," *Small Arms Survey*, HSBA Working Paper, 2006, p. 20.

⁷⁶⁹ Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A new history of a long war*, pp. 45-46.

⁷⁷⁰ Abdullah El Tom, "The Arab Congregation and the Ideology of Genocide in Darfur, Sudan," retrieved from http://aeltom.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=38

The racism apparent in the documents purportedly written by the Arab Gathering, referred to by El Tom and Flint and de Waal in their respective studies of Darfur, differs from the racial discourse that was conveyed by Khartoum in the 1980s. That there was an unambiguous racist element to Khartoum's war against the southern Sudanese is clearly articulated in studies of the north-south civil war by Francis M. Deng, Ann Moseley Lesch, J.M. Jok, and a number of others.⁷⁷¹ However, the riverain Sudanese racial discourse differed from that espoused by the Arab Gathering in at least one important way. The difference can be found in the way that riverain Sudanese Arabism has always been a cultural identity. The war in the southern Sudan has always been intended as a way to convert southern Sudanese to Arabism and to Islam.⁷⁷² The Arabism of the Arab Gathering, also espoused by Gaddafi, was absolutist and based on inflexible racial distinctions. The aim of the Arab Gathering was not assimilation of the non-Arabs to Arabism but their removal from Darfur.

Race had emerged as a factor in the conflicts in Darfur, as Harir illustrates in his presentation of the statements of the parties involved in the reconciliation conference in Darfur in 1989.⁷⁷³ However, only one of the two parties, the Arab coalition, referred to racial differences, the Fur delegation called on the Arabs to desist from 'dividing people of Dar Fur region into "Arabs" against "Blacks" [Zurga, Arabic] with superiority attributed to the former.'⁷⁷⁴ That the government of Sudan was unwilling at this stage to buy into this form of racist discourse against the Fur cannot be ignored. The Fur were an important constituency of the Umma Party, they

⁷⁷¹ Francis M. Deng, *War of Visions*, Ann Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, J.M. Jok, *War and Slavery in Sudan*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

⁷⁷² This element in the Arabism of the riverain Sudanese is well-rehearsed and needs no going over here.

⁷⁷³ Sharif Harir, "Arab Belt" versus "African Belt", pp.145-147.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid, p147.

provided large numbers of recruits for the military campaign in the southern Sudan, and economically contributed to the export revenues of the state when the debt and deficits of the Sudan were running completely out of control. Even when the NIF came to power in 1989, the Fur were considered an important Islamic core of the project to Islamize the state.⁷⁷⁵

7.8 Conclusion

If race was introduced to Darfur in this period what can we say about ethnicity? Ethnic or tribal identities remained an active component throughout this period. The regional identities that shaped political discourse in Darfur, in first post-independence period, and in the first ten years of the Nimeiri era, did not see an expunging of ethnicity but only its censorship and the public denial of its existence. Ethnicity in Africa has proven to be, as Timothy Shaw has described it, a “resilient paradigm”.⁷⁷⁶ The colonial invention of tribes and ethnic groups continued to shape identities in the post-colonial era as long as native administration and tribal *dars* structured social and economic life in regional Sudan. The abolition of native administration led to an increase in tribal disputes but the evidence from the 1970s is that there was a level of acculturation of regional Sudanese to the dominant riverain identity. As the state was forced to contract and eventually retreated from Darfur in the face of economic decay, the so-called ‘traditional’ tribal structures and relations re-emerged to fill the void. The problem was not with the reforms to native administration, but that the local government system created to replace tribalism were under-resourced and in the end government appointments were unable to compete with tribal elites. As one system

⁷⁷⁵ R. S. O’Fahey, “Islam and Ethnicity in the Sudan.” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, 1996, pp. 258-267

⁷⁷⁶ Timothy Shaw, “Ethnicity as the *Resilient Paradigm* for Africa: From the 1960s to the 1980s.” *Development and Change*, Vol. 17, 1986, pp. 587-605.

unravelling, another returned to fill the void. However, the challenges that the region faced were beyond the capabilities of tribal elites to resolve. Weak state infrastructure only exacerbated problems in Darfur.

The decision to arm tribal militias was a direct result of the dire situation the Sudanese government faced with a huge debt crisis and with a war in the south that was proving beyond the capability of the Sudanese military to control, as Salih and Harir explain:

A weak state striving to survive underdevelopment and unprecedented economic crises, has misconceived tribal militias as an inexpensive defence force.⁷⁷⁷

The aim here is not to dismiss race as a factor in conflict in Darfur, but to place the local factors within a national framework, and to argue that the violence and chaos that Darfur experienced in the 1980s was avoidable. As the Sudanese state retreated from responsibilities to protect Darfur by maintaining law and order, and by failing to retain the monopoly of violence in the region, Darfur became ungovernable. Most problematic, of all, was the decision taken by successive Sudanese governments to cede Darfur to the Libyans so the region could be used as a staging point for armed forces loyal to Gaddafi to launch operations into Chad.

Another decision taken by the Sudanese government in this period that has reverberated was the militarization of civil society. Doing so unleashed forces that the weak state was unable to contain. While violence was unchecked, and in the case of

⁷⁷⁷ M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, "Tribal Militias: The Genesis of National Disintegration," p.188.

the tribal militias officially sanctioned, even more routine matters were beyond the capacity of the state to deal with. Key concerns for the people of Darfur such as banditry and the increasing disputes between communities over a range of issues such as migration, access to land and the use of water, and the distribution of food remained unsettled, and responsible for creating the conditions for inter-communal conflict in Darfur. It was this absence of the state that proved so disastrous, and the legacies of the failure of the Sudanese state would reverberate into the 1990s and lay the foundations for the more troubling events of the next period.

Chapter Eight -

The NIF and Darfur: The Islamist State Project and the Revolt of Darfur

8.1 Introduction

This thesis has explored the contradictions and tensions which have plagued the colonial and post-colonial Sudanese state. It was the colonial construction of an inherently weak and unstable state which engendered the persistent failures of Sudanese politics that culminated in 1989 in the coup that brought the National Salvation Government (later the National Islamic Front) to power. Up to this point in time, the Sudanese state had been many things: clientalistic, patrimonial, unstable, turbulent, and in the peripheries it had largely been the “absent” state. Events since 1989, when the National Islamic Front (NIF) came to power, though, were different. The NIF transformed the Sudanese state into one that was based on predation, responsible for plundering the wealth of the country, repressing civil society, imposing a narrow intolerant and Islamist dogmatism on every facet of state and society, and alienating Sudan’s Arab and African neighbours and the US. Since 1989, the Sudanese state waged a war against its own people and for at least a decade against neighbouring states as well.

The most tangible example of this was the ongoing war in the southern Sudan, which re-commenced in 1983 well before the NIF actually came to power. The southern Sudan was not a periphery of the Sudanese state but extraneous to it. The wars the north has fought against the south have been fought to impose the Sudanese state on the southern Sudan. In the end, al-Bashir’s overtures to the leader of the SPLA/SPLM

John Garang came from a realization that only by letting the south go, could the regime continue to hold onto the north. The south, then, escaped the domination of the NIF. The northern Sudan has not been so fortunate. Domination of the urban centres of the country was ruthlessly carried out by the NIF leaders and cadres in the first few years after the regime came to power. The army, and civil service were methodically purged of any dissidents and civil society completely subjugated, or in Ann Moseley Lesch's words, the NIF destroyed civil society in Sudan.⁷⁷⁸

In the peripheries, where the state has always been weaker, the NIF has fought a continuing battle to subjugate the west and the east. The NIF succeeded in plundering and subduing the Nuba Mountains and the Red Sea Hills Province through the use of force in the 1990s. Darfur has been a more difficult proposition for the NIF. Historically, as Burr and Collins argue:

At no time in the last two hundred years has the central government of the Sudan- neither nineteenth-century Turks nor twentieth century British and certainly not the independent Sudanese- actually governed Darfur...Officials from the periphery with scattered symbolic posts in the countryside and a garrison and governor in the traditional provincial capitals, but at no time have they rigorously administered, effectively controlled, or demonstrated the usual characteristics associated with governance, good or bad.⁷⁷⁹

The NIF though made every effort to change this historical pattern.

⁷⁷⁸ Ann Moseley Lesch, "The Destruction of Civil Society in Sudan" in Augustus Richard Norton (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2001, pp.153-191.

⁷⁷⁹ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Darfur: The Long Road to Disaster*, p. 284.

Initially, the regime was too weak to wage its struggle for domination of Sudan on all fronts equally. The war against the SPLA and the subjugation of Khartoum took priority, and in any event, the Fur and the Zaghawa proved important recruiting areas for the ongoing war in the south. The regime's perspective on Darfur was ambiguous anyway as the events following the failed attempt by the SPLA/SPLM to establish a cell in the Fur heartland in 1992 illustrate. Additionally, the Muslim Brothers had been active in the Darfur region since the 1960s which resulted in a number of western Sudanese members of the NIF.⁷⁸⁰ In 1995, the NIF made a move to consolidate its rule in Darfur by manipulating the tribal system and installing NIF members as tribal leaders. This resulted in an upsurge of resentment against the government especially in Dar Masalit in 1998. In many ways, the Masalit uprising was a precursor of things to come in Darfur. As the NIF state forced its rule on Darfur it created opposition and in a similar ways to events in the Nuba and in the eastern Sudan amongst the Beja, this opposition armed itself and rebelled.

Two other factors remain to be discussed. The first is the role of the *janjawiid* and the racism and religious intolerance that has been at the forefront of many representations of the conflict in Darfur. Only one statement needs to be made in relation to this: the *janjawiid* and the racist and religious intolerance of the conflict are means in this struggle and not explanations. A more important and ambiguous component is the role of Hasan al-Turabi, the one-time leader of the NIF and architect of the Islamic republic. In 1999, a split in the ruling party resulted in an internal-party coup that ousted al-Turabi. Al-Turabi's power base was in the western Sudan and since the year 2000 he has been involved in manipulating the Islamist sentiment in Darfur to support

⁷⁸⁰ IN the 1986 election the NIF won all four seats in Darfur for the graduate's congress. See James L. Chiriyankandath, "1986 elections in the Sudan," p. 99.

an overthrow of the government. The forceful nature of the government response to the Darfur insurgency was partially out of fear that al-Turabi was behind the anti-government uprising, but more so, the brutality of the response was a result, as Alex de Waal has described, of ‘the routine cruelty of a security cabal, its humanity withered by years in power...’⁷⁸¹

Finally, a further warning that the current conflict in Darfur is both qualitatively, and quantitatively, different from the ethnic and tribal clashes that occurred in the 1980s. The violent ethnic-cum-racial strife that gripped Darfur in the late 1980s resulted from state neglect and mounting inter-ethnic tensions over natural resources. The violence since 2003 that has gripped Darfur has the state at the very centre of the conflict and ultimately it is a struggle for the control of the state in western Sudan. The SLA and JEM have taken their cue from the SPLA/M whose great victory was to escape the predatory state. The centre-periphery dimension of Sudanese politics has altered dramatically since 1989, when the grievance of the people of Darfur revolved mainly around government neglect and the underdevelopment of the state. Since 1989, in one way or another, the people of Darfur have been subjected to the predations of a state intent on plundering Darfur’s resources and subjugating its people. Today’s war in Darfur is not a repeat, rerun, or escalation of earlier conflicts but a conflict over the character, structure and future of the Sudanese state.

⁷⁸¹ Alex de Waal, “Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap,” *London Review of Books*, 5 August, 2004, http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n15/waal01_.html

8.2 War by Proxy in Sudan: The Militarisation of Sudanese Society

The militarisation of Sudanese civil society remains the most symbolic characteristic of the weakness of the Sudanese state and as Alex de Waal argues that militias in Sudan ‘...have in places become even more powerful than the armed forces with the result that the power of the central government can no longer extend to these areas.’⁷⁸²

It was also in the weakness of the state that the conditions arose that led to the formation of the militia strategy.

The Sudanese tribal militias grew out of the north-south conflict when a unit of the SPLA attacked the village of Gardud in south Kordofan populated by the Misseriya semi-nomads of the Baggara tribe.⁷⁸³ In the aftermath of the attack, as Jago Salmon explains,

...a government delegation to the area led by Minister of Defence Major General Burma Fadlallah Nasir was presented with a choice by native administration leaders: either provide security for the Arab Baggara communities of South Darfur and South Kordofan, or these communities would request such guarantees from the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and de facto join the rebellion. Unable to redeploy the demoralized and overstretched military from the South, the delegation made a decision—

⁷⁸² Alex de Waal, “Some Comments on Militias in Contemporary Sudan” in M.W. Daly and A. Sakainga, *Civil War in the Sudan*, London: British Academic Press, 1993, p. 142.

⁷⁸³ M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, “Tribal Militias,” p. 185, suggest that several versions of events have been reported. Whether the SPLA was involved or not is the major controversy, whereas the government and the residents of Gardud blame the SPLA there is evidence that the perpetrators were Dinka renegades retaliating to an earlier cattle raid by Baggara thieves. Importantly, the government believed it to be the SPLA and this prompted the initiation of the militia strategy.

without the authorization of the national Constituent Assembly— to arm the Baggara.⁷⁸⁴

Often, especially since the crisis in Darfur became international news, there has been a tendency to view the government and militias as sole aggressors. Without wanting to absolve either the Government of Sudan or the *Murahaheen* (Sudanese Arabic: tribal militias) of atrocities, the background conditions in which tribal militias developed was a chaotic and violent state of war. Salih and Harir describe the insecurity and insanity of the war in southern Kordofan and southern Darfur in the middle of the 1980s even for the Baggara who ‘feared attacks by the Nuba or renegade SPLA/SPLM fighters.’⁷⁸⁵ The inability of the state to protect its allies provided the context for the expansion of the militia strategy by the al-Mahdi government, and militias were also utilized by the SPLM and tribal groups in the southern Sudan, which resulted in an institutionalization of the militarization of civil society in Sudan.

Working in the government’s favour was the destitution and desperation of a number of the semi-nomadic pastoralists in southern Darfur and southern Kordofan. The severe drought and famine of the 1980s had destroyed the herds of many western Sudanese pastoral groups and left many of them without the means for survival. Impoverished and without animals or the money to restock their herds, many groups had few alternatives, if any, to rebuild their pastoral lifestyles. The government offered them an opportunity by raiding the Dinka and their cattle with impunity. As the Sudanese state was in economic turmoil, the tribal militias served as an

⁷⁸⁴ Jago Salmon, “A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces,” *Small Arms Survey*, HSBA Working Paper 10, 2007, p. 12, retrieved from

http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/sudan/Sudan_pdf/SWP%2010%20PDF.pdf

⁷⁸⁵ M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, “Tribal Militias,” p. 196.

inexpensive form of fighting the war, or in terms used by Alex de Waal to describe the use of the *janjawiid* militias over a decade later, the use of tribal militias was “counter-insurgency on the cheap”.⁷⁸⁶

So reliant was the government on the tribal militias that Sadiq al-Mahdi sponsored a parliamentary motion called the Popular Defence Forces Bill to formalize the militias as an official arm of the military. The Bill was resoundingly defeated in a parliamentary vote.⁷⁸⁷ Al-Mahdi, also had other motives for expanding the use of tribal militias. Tribal militias, he hoped, would act as a possible safeguard against a military coup, as he told the military in 1989.⁷⁸⁸ The danger of a military takeover was a genuine risk, as events in 1989 would demonstrate. But al-Mahdi’s democratic government was too tenuous to be saved by tribal militias, and when an Islamist core of the army led by Omar al-Bashir staged a coup on June 30, 1989, al-Mahdi was powerless to stop them from taking power.

Once in power, Omar al-Bashir, head of the Revolutionary Command Council of National Salvation, legalized tribal militias by passing the Popular Defence Act. The Act stipulated that the purpose of the Popular Defence Force (PDF) was to,

⁷⁸⁶ Alex de Waal, “Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap,” *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 31, No. 102, 2004, pp. 716-725.

⁷⁸⁷ Jago Salmon, “A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces,” p. 13.

⁷⁸⁸ Mansour Khalid, *The Government They Deserve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan's Political Economy*, London: Kegan Paul, 1990, p. 357, also quoted in M.A. Mohammed Salih and Sharif Harir, “Tribal Militias”, p. 186.

...train citizens in military and civil capabilities, to raise security awareness and military discipline among them, in order to act as a support force to the other regular ones on request.⁷⁸⁹

Cadres of the National Islamic Front (NIF) also joined the PDF. Once the thin veneer obscuring the NIF character of the new government was removed, the PDF became a major instrument in the new regime's effort to Islamize society.⁷⁹⁰ And, according to Mahmud El Zain, it was through the tribal unit, which under the NIF took on a special significance, that the NIF pursued its domination of society.⁷⁹¹

El Zain's study of Sudan in the 1990s is an important contribution for understanding the role that the tribe plays in contemporary Sudanese politics. El Zain's historical narrative of the tribe, as embedded by the colonial regime when it was invested with special "traditional" legitimacy to counter modernizing and nationalist forces in Sudanese society, and the subsequent resistance of the tribal structure to the efforts of successive post-colonial governments, notably the May regime, to overturn the tribal logic and displace the tribal leaders, is logically argued.⁷⁹² In extending this approach to the implications of the convergence of the tribal system, the tribal militias, and the NIF, El Zain departs from most of the analyses of tribal violence in Sudan. The government's endorsement and support of tribal militias, El Zain argues, sanctified the tribe as an important political organization within the state and the tribal militias as an extension of the state. The state endeavoured to bring the tribal militias under the control of the state by formally recognizing their existence and placing them under

⁷⁸⁹ Government of Sudan, 1989, Article 5, quoted in Jago Salmon, "A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces," p. 14.

⁷⁹⁰ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism, and Politics in Sudan*, p. 210.

⁷⁹¹ Mahmud El Zain, "Tribe and Religion in the Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol.23. No.70, 1996, pp. 523-529.

⁷⁹² Ibid, pp. 525-526.

the command, however loosely, of the army.⁷⁹³ With tribal militias under the control of the state it was a natural extension of this policy to institutionalize the tribe in the same way and thus,

In giving special consideration to tribal structures, the state was obliged to intervene in the selection of tribal leaders in order to secure collaboration. As in the colonial past, leaders who are not cooperative are dismissed.⁷⁹⁴

Once institutionalized, “tribes” were lionized by the new regime and the state shifted its focus ‘...from its former role of providing services and benefits, to re-ordering and embellishing the ‘tribal’ as a representation of the glorious past. In this it is assisted by tribal elites anxious to retrieve power and prestige...’⁷⁹⁵ However, the traditional elites had survived previous efforts to marginalize them and their power, in some cases, would force the Islamist state to confront them in a violent showdown as that which occurred in Dar Masalit in 1996.

8.3 The Rise of Political Islam in Sudan: The NIF in Power

The coup that brought the NIF to power in 1989 was twenty years in the making. The architect of events was undoubtedly Hasan al-Turabi, who Alex de Waal and A.H. Abdel Salam refer to as the ‘Islamist Lenin’⁷⁹⁶, whose efforts to thoroughly Islamize the Sudanese state commenced in 1964 when he returned from the Sorbonne with a doctorate in constitutional law. Turabi’s erudition or skill as a politician has never been in question, with a number of scholars crediting Turabi with the success of the Islamic movement in Sudan. Turabi is also recognized as one of the most prominent

⁷⁹³ Ibid, p. 528.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ Alex de Waal and A.H. Abdel Salam, “Islamism, State Power, and *Jihad*, in Sudan” in Alex de Waal (ed.), *Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa*, London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 2004, p. 83.

Islamic intellectuals anywhere in the world. Turabi's reputation, political acumen and power made him a dangerous adversary of the Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, when the latter endorsed a peace agreement between the SPLM and the Khatmiyya, and announced that he would repeal the September Laws on 1 July.⁷⁹⁷ It was due to the timing of the coup that there was much scepticism amongst the Sudanese when Hasan al-Turabi and his lieutenant 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha were imprisoned by the military leaders. It was widely accepted, even with al-Turabi in prison, that he was the mastermind of the coup that brought down the government of his brother-in-law Sadiq al-Mahdi.

The NIF was an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan*) and was formed in 1985 to broaden the political appeal of Islamism. Despite, the name change the NIF has remained inextricably tied to the Muslim Brotherhood. The long preparation of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood for capturing power had entailed the design of a military strategy well before the events of 1989.⁷⁹⁸ The PDF was not the first venture into a militarized Islamism for the Sudanese Muslim Brothers. Gabriel Warburg describes the formation of a secret organization (*al-nizam al-sirra*) in 1972 to train Muslim Brothers for the eventual seizure of the state.⁷⁹⁹ Accordingly, Warburg explains:

⁷⁹⁷ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan*, pp. 205-206 explains the motives of the NIF leader in organizing a coup to sabotage the impending peace agreement between the GoS and the SPLM in 1988/1989.

⁷⁹⁸ In 1959, under the leadership of al-Rashid al-Tahir, the Muslim Brothers were involved in an unsuccessful coup against the regime headed by President Abboud.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid, p207.

‘[M]embers of the secret organization received military security, propaganda, intelligence and other training within these camps, led by expert *mujahidin*, who had participated in the Iranian, Lebanese, Libyan, or Afghani *jiḥād*.⁸⁰⁰

But until the moment for military action arrived, al-Turabi was content to exploit the prevailing political conditions, even if it meant allying with the authoritarian Nimeiri in 1978, when he was first appointed as secretary of information and foreign relations before accepting the post of attorney-general. In 1978, when the Muslim Brotherhood endorsed Nimeiri’s offer of National Reconciliation, the movement was in disarray. Nimeiri’s repression of the Muslim Brotherhood was harsh, and the majority of the prominent Muslim Brothers in Sudan, El-Affendi explains, ‘who had escaped death or imprisonment was either in hiding or exile.’⁸⁰¹ The financial state of the movement was equally weak and only the continued support from members who had fled to the oil rich Gulf States furnished the clandestine movement with the money it needed to survive.⁸⁰² The decision to accept Nimeiri’s offer of National Reconciliation, not only saved the movement but provided the political support for the Muslim Brothers to develop into a powerful force in Sudanese politics.

Mohammed Zahid and Michael Medley contend that the alliance between Nimeiri’s secular Socialist Party and al-Turabi’s Muslim Brotherhood was bizarre. On closer inspection, they argue, the partnership was strategically important for both of the parties as Nimeiri’s rapidly weak political position and unpopularity was becoming dangerous and, as noted, the situation for the Muslim Brothers had become

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Abdelwahab El-Affendi, *Turabi’s Revolution: Islam and Power in Sudan*, London, Grey Seal Books, 1991, p. 114.

⁸⁰² Ibid.

untenable.⁸⁰³ International factors assisted al-Turabi in making the alliance a success as the oil boom led to a spread of ‘Islamic controlled banks, companies, newspapers and voluntary organizations...’ establishing branches in Sudan.⁸⁰⁴ It was the simultaneous access to political positions within the ruling party, and ability to utilize the influence of the Islamic economic institutions, El-Affendi remarks, which transformed the Muslim Brothers into a major force in Sudanese politics.⁸⁰⁵

In this period, there also was a geographical expansion of the Muslim Brotherhood into western Sudan. The Muslim Brothers had established a foothold in Darfur in the 1960s⁸⁰⁶ and in the 1970s there had been a growth in the number of Muslim Brothers in Darfur as more of Darfur’s students migrated to Khartoum to enrol in tertiary education where, Mohamed Salih asserts the ‘...NIF cells in Khartoum University were dominated by students from Darfur...’⁸⁰⁷ According to Salih, on graduating many of them went on to hold prominent positions in regional government.⁸⁰⁸ The success of the Muslim Brothers in recruiting support from Darfur, Gabriel Warburg suggests, can be partially explained in relation to the shared millenarian belief of the Mahdists and the Muslim Brothers in the notion that the establishment of an Islamic state would hasten the arrival of the future Mahdi.⁸⁰⁹ Sharing this belief doesn’t negate the support for the Umma Party and thus doesn’t explain the shift from the Umma Party to the NIF amongst the educated elite characterised by the success of the

⁸⁰³ Mohammed Zahid and Michael Medley, ‘Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Sudan,’ *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol 110, 2006, p. 697.

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁵ Abdelwahab, El-Affendi, *Turabi’s Revolution*, pp.116-117.

⁸⁰⁶ Kamal el-Din, “Islam and Islamism in Darfur” in Alex de Waal (ed.), *War and Peace in Sudan*, p. 100, explains how in the 1960s early electoral success translated into a belief that ‘...deep-rooted Islamic orientation, Darfur could shift its political allegiances in their favour...’

⁸⁰⁷ M.A. Mohamed Salih, “Understanding the Conflict in Darfur,” p. 7.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Gabriel Warburd, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan*, p. 196.

NIF in winning all four graduate's seats in Darfur in the 1986 elections.⁸¹⁰ What it does suggest, though, is that the NIF program, at the very least, was not contradictory to the basic premise of Mahdism, and the similarities opened the way for the NIF to offer the people of Darfur an alternative political program. Kamal el-Din explains the success of the NIF in Darfur as the promise of an inclusive state:

Hassan al Turabi and his deputy, Ali al Haj Mohamed, had appealed to Darfurians' historic piety and their discontent with the established parties, and promised that all Muslims, regardless of their color, could achieve emancipation through an Islamic revolution.⁸¹¹

The people of Darfur were being offered the promise that Islamists offered Muslims in many other parts of the world, that is, a promise that Islam could transcend the poverty, corruption, political instability and discrimination that afflicted the Sudanese post-colonial state. And, for many in Darfur, the opportunity to participate in that Islamic revolution was their only hope of remedying the marginalization, poverty and injustice they perceived all around them. For the first time since the conquest of the Keira Sultanate, the people of Darfur were being offered a political project that they could believe was genuinely inclusive. The tragedy of Islamism for Darfur was that, this inclusion was as illusory as the regeneration of the state that the Islamist movement promised.

In 1983, as Darfur was being influenced by greater Muslim Brotherhood activity, President Nimeiri made an unexpected decision to enforce *Shari'a* law. For the Muslim Brotherhood this was a watershed moment in their struggle to Islamize the

⁸¹⁰ James L. Chiriyankandath, "1986 elections in the Sudan," p. 99.

⁸¹¹ Ahmed Kamal el-Din, "Islam and Islamism in Darfur" in. Alex de Waal (ed.), *War and Peace in Darfur*, p. 105.

state. Even though the Muslim Brothers were not consulted on the move they still saw it as a victory. However, Nimeiri's move was not designed to fulfil the Islamists mission. Rather, it was planned to strengthen his own Islamic credentials at a time when he was increasingly vulnerable to an internal challenge. Nimeiri's loyalty to the Muslim Brothers was as strategic as theirs was to him, and when Nimeiri's house of cards started to crash down in March 1985, it was the Muslim Brothers on whom he turned. The Muslim Brothers survived and in that same month the National Islamic Front was formed, which was the final metamorphosis the movement would take before taking power.

During the third parliamentary period, it was al-Turabi's adept political leadership which led to a strong vote for the National Islamic Front in Khartoum in the 1986 elections. James L. Chiriyankandath's examination of the 1986 election results for the National Islamic Front concluded that:

The fact that most of the constituencies it won were clustered- in Khartoum, the Gezira and along the Nile in the Northern region- also indicates an effective deployment of resources. Another factor that helped the Front was its popularity among sections of the armed forces, gained during the Numeiri years and through having championed the military in the war against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement.⁸¹²

The Muslim Brothers had worked diligently to infiltrate the armed forces and, in terms of the success of the infiltration, Warburg explains, four of the five members of the military ruling council that ruled Sudan after 1989 attended courses on Islamic

⁸¹² James L. Chiriyankandath's, '1986 Elections in the Sudan,' p. 100.

ideology.⁸¹³ Support amongst the military was an important factor in providing the means by which to secure power in 1989 when the time was propitious. Amid political turmoil caused by urban dissatisfaction with the deteriorating economic situation and military anger mounting with what was deemed to be the mismanagement of the war in the southern Sudan, Sadiq al-Mahdi's civilian government was toppled by a coup led by Brigadier Omar al-Bashir. The success of the NIF-backed generals was not a sign of the strength of the Islamic movement in Sudan, but rather was symbolic of the weakness of Sudanese politics. Examples, from Maghrebi neighbours Algeria and Egypt where strong Islamic movements have been defeated, in the case of Algeria, or incorporated into the ruling party, as in the case of Egypt, illustrate the success of the coup was as much a result of the weakness of the Sudanese state.

The continued sectarian rivalry of the two major parties sabotaged all political efforts to address the worsening economic situation, the intensification of the violence in the southern Sudan, southern Kordofan and the turmoil in Darfur, were the three reasons that the military junta gave to justify their actions in the days and weeks following the coup.⁸¹⁴ The populace had lost all confidence in the political parties and as there was no strong secular elite in Sudan, the Islamists had few opponents within civil society to resist them. Political instability, the weakness of the state, and economic turmoil were as responsible, on balance, for the success of the coup as any other factor, including the strength of the National Islamic Front.

⁸¹³ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan*, p. 189.

⁸¹⁴ Peter Bechtold, "More Turbulence in the Sudan: A New Politics this Time" in John O. Voll (ed.), *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991, p.16.

8.4 Continuing Economic Crisis in Sudan: International Political Economy of a Pariah State

When the NIF came to power, the economic conditions had deteriorated to the point where the Sudanese war effort and the economy relied, almost totally, on foreign aid for sustenance. Recognition of this fact by the new leaders played a large part in the initial duplicity of the regime which presented itself to other Arab states as another of the long-line of Arab nationalist military dictatorships to prevent complete isolation from potential Arab donors. However, the coup that brought the Revolutionary Command Council to power did little to assuage the principal international actors of Sudan's potential for rehabilitation into the international community, even if the initial response from all interested parties, especially Egypt, were sanguine. As the regime exposed its underlying ideology through its actions and statements fears mounted in neighbouring countries that they may have been more to the regime than first observed.

A profound change to the international system in 1989-90 also had an impact on the leverage Sudan could muster as an important geo-strategic ally or foe. With the end of the Cold War, the lone surviving superpower was no longer in need of an ally in the region to counter communist forces. In addition, the formation of a military dictatorship at the very moment that the forces of democracy were supposed to have triumphed was untimely, especially in the eyes of the US.⁸¹⁵ As it turned out, the new Sudanese government had no interest in securing US support. But, the US, for its part, was still involved in delivering humanitarian assistance to the southern Sudan through Operation Lifeline Sudan, which was the largest humanitarian operation in the world

⁸¹⁵ Peter Woodward, *US Foreign Policy and the Horn of Africa*, London: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006. p. 43

in 1989.⁸¹⁶ The first and only aid requests from the Sudanese Government were made to Arab states, with little regard for whether they were radical or conservative in their outlook. Most Arab states refused Sudanese solicitations for arms but offered some aid to assist the regime meet urgent needs.⁸¹⁷ The exceptions were Libya and Iraq.

Libya maintained its close relationship with the Sudan, even if Gaddafi's long-time but estranged friend, Sadiq al-Mahdi, had been the victim of the coup that brought the new government to power. A significant amount of Libyan oil arrived in Khartoum in August 1989 and the Sudanese regime made no effort to preclude Gaddafi's ambitions in Chad by mentioning Libyan depredations in Darfur. In fact, the deal between al-Mahdi and Gaddafi continued with the new government; Sudan would receive Libyan arms and oil, and Gaddafi would have 'a free hand in Sudan's western frontier where his Islamic Legion and Libyan troops were supporting Idris Deby's activities in Darfur and his efforts to overthrow the government of President Hissene Habre in Chad.'⁸¹⁸ With Deby's victory over Habre, Gaddafi had little interest in Darfur and even less interest in continuing his friendly relationship with the Sudanese regime. In November 1991, according to Burr and Collins, all Libyan oil shipments to Sudan were terminated and then Gaddafi annulled the Libya-Sudan integration pact signed a year earlier.⁸¹⁹ The relationship started to sour when Gaddafi demanded that the Sudanese government repay the loans that had been made to the Sudan from the time that al-Bashir came to power. The final break came in 1992 when Gaddafi became alarmed by the shelter Khartoum was offering to Islamist groups, including those that sought the overthrow of Gaddafi. By 1994, when Gaddafi broke diplomatic relations

⁸¹⁶ Peter Woodward, *US Foreign Policy and the Horn of Africa*, p. 43.

⁸¹⁷ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan*, pp. 25-36.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁸¹⁹ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Darfur: The Long Road to Disaster*, p. 271.

with the NIF, the Sudanese Government had even managed to alienate one of the most isolated states in international politics. Unlike, the relationship with Libya, the Sudan-Iraq relationship was short-lived. Iraq, offered both arms and oil to Sudan until the invasion of Kuwait, and then, as Ann Mosely Lesch argues, '[T]he tie with Iraq proved a liability rather than an asset.'⁸²⁰

The decision by Hasan al-Turabi to publicly support Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait was a defining moment in determining the direction the regime was to take. The first casualty of the Sudanese sponsorship of Iraq was the US-Sudan relationship which was hardly beneficial to either party by 1990 anyway. However, the US shift away from the regime provided the context for the IMF decision, in December 1990, to issue a Declaration of Non-Cooperation, which acted as a warning that expulsion would proceed if appropriate steps were not taken to repay arrears or consent to further economic restructuring.⁸²¹ Two years later the Sudan had become the largest debtor to the World Bank and the IMF with \$US21 billion outstanding which led to further IMF and World action against the Sudan. In 1993, the IMF suspended Sudan's voting rights and this was followed shortly after by a World Bank decision to suspend Sudan's right to make withdrawals.⁸²² The Sudanese economy had reached a nadir, even by its poor record.

While the NIF inherited an economy already in crisis, a number of decisions it made led to catastrophe. The support for Saddam's invasion of Kuwait was just one of those ill-fated decisions taken by the Sudanese Government that resulted in further

⁸²⁰ Ann Moseley Lesch, "Sudan's Foreign Policy: In Search of Aid, Arms and Allies" in John O. Voll (ed.), *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991, p. 63.

⁸²¹ Mohamed H. Fadlalla, *Short History of Sudan*, Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc, 2004, p. 126.

⁸²² "IMF Lifts Suspension of Sudan's Voting and Related Rights," IMF Press Release No. 00/46, 2000, retrieved from <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2000/pr0046.htm>

economic turmoil. The Saudi's and Kuwaiti's immediately turned off the oil lines to Sudan and the important aid that the regime was receiving stopped. To make matters worse Sudanese workers were expelled *en masse* from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in reprisal. It was this action, as much as any other in this period, that really inflicted economic disaster on the Sudanese. Upwards of 200,000 Sudanese workers were expelled from the Gulf States, which had the affect, according to a World Bank study, of denying the Sudanese economy approximately \$US 400 million per annum.⁸²³ This was followed by the expulsion of tens of thousands of Sudanese workers from Libya in 1995 after Libyan Islamists linked to Khartoum launched an attack on the government.⁸²⁴ Sudan's support for Islamic extremists and international *jihadists*, such as Osama bin Laden, had left Sudan regionally and internationally isolated which only served to exacerbate the economic crisis that the country was already facing.

The cost of the ongoing civil war in the southern Sudan added another layer of desolation to Sudan's economic and political situation in the 1990s. The war had come to cost \$US 3 million a day by 1993, not to mention the huge human and environmental cost of the conflict.⁸²⁵ The famine in Sudan in 1990-91 was considered by numerous humanitarian agencies as crisis.⁸²⁶ The government response was to deny the existence of any famine while continuing to export food. In 1991, for

⁸²³ "Migrant Labor Remittances in Africa: Reducing Obstacles to Developmental Contributions" Africa Region Working Paper Series, No. 64 November 2003, retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp64.pdf> While this is a total of all remittances the study also reveal a huge drop in remittances from 1990 to 1991 from approximately \$US 400 million to a figure below \$US20 million.

⁸²⁴ Europa Publications Staff, *The Middle East and North Africa 2003*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 769.

⁸²⁵ P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of Sudan*, p193, also see Ann Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, pp. 93-94.

⁸²⁶ Maresh Patel, "An Examination of the 1990-91 Famine in Sudan," *Disasters*, Vol.18, 1994, pp.313-31.

example, almost 500,000 tonnes of grain was sold to the European Community and Saudi Arabia.⁸²⁷ According to Burr and Collins, it was this policy of exporting large amounts of food at a time of food insecurity that led to the famine of 1990-91.⁸²⁸ The response of the government to regional requests for food aid was similar to Nimeiri's denial of a problem, a few years earlier. However, this famine was different; it affected the urban population to a far greater extent than earlier famines with food shortages and severe malnutrition reported in Khartoum. According to Karl Wolmuth, in 1990, nine million people in the northern Sudan, which amounted to a third of the population, suffered from chronic hunger, severe food insecurity, or transitory food insecurity.⁸²⁹

The shortages of food only compounded the severity of the situation in the capital. Inflation had reached 300 per cent in 1991, wages had fallen below the sustenance level, as the cost of food rose and real wages fell. In Sudan, there were four to six million refugees, of which a million had migrated to Khartoum's sprawling shantytowns. Spending on social welfare had crashed from the heyday of the Nimeiri period. For example, health spending had fallen by 60 per cent from the 1985 expenditure.⁸³⁰ In many parts of northern Sudan the Muslim Brotherhood had filled the void left by the absence of the state, including what amounted to strong social welfare presence in Darfur.⁸³¹

⁸²⁷ *Food and Power in Sudan: A Critique of Humanitarianism*, African Rights 1997.

⁸²⁸ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Requiem for the Sudan: war, drought, and disaster relief on the Nile*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995, p. 274.

⁸²⁹ Karl Wolmuth, "Alternative Economic Strategies for the Sudan" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt and Raphael K. Badal, *Short-Cut to Decay: the Case of the Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, p. 228.

⁸³⁰ Ibid.

⁸³¹ Mohammed Zahid and Michael Medley, "Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Sudan," p. 700.

In 1998, debt reached US\$23billion without any significant increase in revenues. International investors were no longer interested in investing their capital in Sudan. Unemployment continued to rise. Social welfare programs had practically ceased to exist. In this context, the Islamist project was not doomed to fail but faced an enormous challenge if it was to transform the Sudan. Economic crises had plagued successive Sudanese governments, some definitely of their own making, but always with a soft base on which to build. The NIF contributed to the collapse of the economy as they mismanaged both foreign relations and domestic issues. However, what the NIF inherited from their predecessors was an economy in crisis and under immense pressure from the IMF and World Bank to implement the harshest form of structural changes to the economy. Numerous other example of structural adjustment proved it was no panacea for the problems faced by underdeveloped economies. The international factors played their part in the collapse of the Sudanese economy which Michael Kevane and Leslie Grey argue can be said to represent, ‘...the inevitable outcome of processes of disarticulation and dependence of peripheral incorporation into the global market economy.’⁸³² With this dire economic situation, a war in the south which again was proving beyond the state’s capacity to win, social conditions in decay and with security and public order also deteriorating rapidly, the Sudan was rapidly coming to resemble a “failed state”.

8.5 *Almashrou Alhadari Al-Islami* (The Islamic Project for Renewal): Power and Repression in Sudan

The Revolutionary Command Council faced a disunited and weak opposition upon taking power. Despite this, within weeks of the coup, the regime commenced a

⁸³² Michael Kevane and Leslie Grey, “Local Politics in the Time of Turabi’s Revolution” Gender, Class and Ethnicity in Western Sudan,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol.65, No.2, 1995, p. 274.

program of purging the state of any unsympathetic elements. At a time of impending economic and military crisis the decision to clear the bureaucracy, government, and army of known secularists created further turmoil in the economy. The extensive purge of the army resulted in the arrest or dismissal of 40 per cent of the officer corps.⁸³³ With the army in disarray a series of catastrophic military defeats at the hands of the SPLA ensued which left the regime in a tenuous situation.⁸³⁴ Public sentiment seemed to be turning against the regime and this only heightened the repression in the capital. Hundreds of police were dismissed and as the NIF revealed itself as the initiator of the coup, it established its own internal security service consisting of the Revolutionary Security Guards, Guardians of Morality and Advocates of Good, and the People's Police.⁸³⁵ Al-Bashir's incendiary speech made to NIF supporters at rally held on 3 December 1989 indicated what lengths the regime was willing to take to secure the Islamist revolution:

I vow here before you to purge from our ranks the renegades, the hirelings, enemies of the people and the armed forces ... Anyone who betrays this nation does not deserve the honor of living ... The responsibility is really a collective one. You have authority, and are its enforcers.⁸³⁶

Al-Bashir had prepared the ground for purging any suspected opponents when he introduced a decree that gave him the power to terminate the employment of any

⁸³³ Peter Woodward, *US Foreign Policy and the Horn of Africa*, p. 39. Jago Salmon, "A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces," p16 says that the number of officers dismissed had reached 1,500 by 1993, leaving the military utterly demoralized.

⁸³⁴ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan*, p. 29, The overrunning of the garrison town of Kurmuk in Blue Nile Province in October 1989 was a disaster for the military and led to a call from the regime for a *jihad* to save the north from the SPLA.

⁸³⁵ Ann Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, p. 136-137.

⁸³⁶ S.A. Mohammad, "Fundamentalist" Military Junta Drives Sudan to Catastrophe," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, August/September 1991, p. 48.

government employee.⁸³⁷ The repression of suspected opponents continued as the NIF increasingly occupied the vacated positions of power in the bureaucracy, army, and in the wider civil service. The purges, according to one long-time observer of Sudanese politics, were driven by an ideological purposefulness and ruthlessness which he considered a departure even for the Sudan.⁸³⁸ In a prescient statement made in 1990, on what was to come, he added:

The previous tradition of reluctant acceptance of those with different beliefs, ethnic background, and life-styles has been replaced by intolerance for all dissenters.⁸³⁹

The NIF's seizure of the commanding heights of the economy had been prepared by the privileges awarded Islamic banking by Nimeiri.⁸⁴⁰ The Faisal Islamic Bank, in particular, worked closely with the Muslim Brotherhood to expand the financial and business capabilities of like-minded Islamists, much of their original wealth came from remittances from the hundreds of thousands of Sudanese working abroad with the majority in Saudi Arabia. According to Gabriel Warburg, by 1989, the NIF had amassed a huge economic machinery, with \$US 800 million of financial and corporate assets under their control.⁸⁴¹ Abdullahi A. Ghallab's study of the NIF illustrates the extent that the economic imperatives of the party's elite, a group El-Affendi designates the "super-party", who determined the character of the movement in the 1980s and would shape the regime when in power.⁸⁴²

⁸³⁷ Ann Moseley Lesch, "The Destruction of Civil Society in the Sudan" in Richard Augustus Norton (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2001, p. 170.

⁸³⁸ Peter Bechtold, "More Turbulence in Sudan," p. 54.

⁸³⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁰ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Alms for Jihad*, p. 108, Nimeiri allowed the Faisal Islamic Bank to operate with an exemption from taxes on assets, profits, wages and pensions.

⁸⁴¹ Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan*, p. 212.

⁸⁴² Abdullahi A. Gallab, *The First Islamist Republic*, p. 80.

Once in power the NIF set about extending control over the economy. In 1990, the Civil Transactions Act was amended and all customary title was finally abolished which allowed the regime to expropriate land.⁸⁴³ The privatization of state resources followed, ostensibly to propel the economy, but as a way for NIF leaders to plunder the assets of the state.⁸⁴⁴ The architect of the scheme, ‘Abd al-Rahim Hamid, who was appointed minister of finance and economy in 1990, signified to many in Sudan, as Abbashar Jamal suggests, that, ‘...the authority of the state in economic matters has become subservient to the interests of the Muslim Brethren.’⁸⁴⁵ A point that is supported by Abdel Gadir who argues that ‘[T]he Salvation revolution was the era that witnessed the complete fusion between the Islamist empowered businessmen and the State.’⁸⁴⁶ The Islamist promise of change had indeed transformed the state, not into the egalitarian and just society the Islamist leadership promised the rank and file, but into a project which enriched a small group of Islamist and military leaders. Ghallab’s analysis of the NIF in power illustrates the extent that the Islamist project had deformed, through access to power, into a system designed to plunder Sudanese state and society.⁸⁴⁷

Another area of the state and civil society that the NIF were intent on dominating was the education sector. The Islamists had strong foundations for control of Sudan’s

⁸⁴³ Martha Saavedra, “Ethnicity, Resources and the Central State: Politics in the Nuba Mountains, 1950 to the 1990s” in Endre Stiansen and Michael Kevane (eds.), *Kordofan Invaded: peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke, Brill, 1998, p. 251.

⁸⁴⁴ Alex de Waal and A.H. Abdel Salam, “Islamism, State Power and *Jihad* in Sudan”, p. 85.

⁸⁴⁵ Abbashar Jamal, “Funding Fundamentalism: The Political Economy of an Islamist State,” *Middle East Report*, No. 172, 1991, p.17.

⁸⁴⁶ Abdel Gadir, 2006, quoted in Ibrahim Elnur, *Contested Sudan: The Political Economy of War and Reconstruction*, London: Taylor & Francis, 2009, p. 76.

⁸⁴⁷ Abdullahi A. Gallab, *The First Islamist Republic*, p. 80, he further states that the logic of accumulation which had brought the NIF leaders to power was a significant factor in shaping the party as the people responsible for the ‘wild accumulation of wealth’ became the invisible power behind the throne.

universities with a loyal following amongst both the academic and student bodies, which had been built since the days of Turabi's attendance at Khartoum University in the 1950s.⁸⁴⁸ The pluralism of university life though had continued to survive the Nimeiri period and once again flourished during the brief interlude between dictatorships in the late 1980s. This all changed as the NIF intervened at every opportunity to ensure its supporters remained in complete control of faculty and student organizations. The control of student politics remained a central element of government policy and when a university demonstrated, or students attempted to challenge the domination of the NIF, the government acted swiftly as in the case of the Ahilya University in Omdurman in 1996 where, as Human Rights Watch reported:

...the triumph of antigovernment students in student elections in mid-1996 led to more violent clashes between student groups. Although pro-NIF student supporters and NIF militias attacked and destroyed university buildings during these clashes, none were detained and instead the government used this as a pretext to close Ahliya University permanently.⁸⁴⁹

Al-Turabi viewed the transformation of education as one of the critical areas from which to erect the authentic Islamic state and this is why it remained a central sphere of interest for state control. In effect, universities and schools became tools of the NIF party. Bashir appointed himself chancellor of every university in Sudan and ten vice-chancellors were summarily dismissed and replaced by NIF apparatchiks.⁸⁵⁰ The university curricula were amended, or replaced altogether, to adhere to the NIF demands that the tertiary education sector reproduced the dogmatism of the ruling

⁸⁴⁸ Abdalwahab El-Affendi, *Turabi's Revolution*, p. 89.

⁸⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Watch World Report 1997 - Sudan*, 1 January 1997, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8b214.html>

⁸⁵⁰ Ann Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, pp. 143-145.

party. In schools, a similar process occurred. For a country such as the Sudan which had enjoyed a relatively liberal and dynamic intellectual heritage the tyranny imposed by the NIF on education was illustrative that the new regime contained a more sinister outlook than previous Sudanese governments.

The NIF interference in public life also affected the independence of the press. On the first day of the 1989 coup, an outright ban on all nongovernmental publications was decreed. Constitutional Decree No. 2 stated that,

All licenses and permits issued to nongovernmental journalistic establishments and publications are cancelled until a new license is issued by an authoritative organization.⁸⁵¹

Independent newspapers were closed and printing presses confiscated or destroyed and journalists who refused to accept the rules of the new regime were arrested or forced into exile. Torture and re-education were regular punishments that members of the press faced in an effort by the NIF dictatorship to destroy the fourth estate.⁸⁵² The attempt by the NIF to control information flows extended beyond the press and media as Sudan's mosques and religious leaders became targets of government censorship. In particular, the NIF went about systematically closing and confiscating mosques known to have loyalties to the Umma Party. Religious functionaries opposed to the orthodox Islam imposed by the NIF were detained or killed and replaced by NIF loyalists. Constitutional Decree No. 2 also banned free association: '[A]ll political parties and groups are to be disbanded, and it is illegal for them to be established or to

⁸⁵¹ Behind the Red Line: Political Repression in Sudan New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996, p142.

⁸⁵² A.H. Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal, *The Phoenix State: Civil Society and the Future of Sudan*, Lawrenceville, N.J.: The Red Sea Press Inc., p. 34.

remain active.⁸⁵³ The same decree also banned all trade unions and federations and confiscated their funds and properties, and cancelled all licenses issued to non-religious institutions and societies.

Civil society was under sustained attack by the NIF. Any form of dissent was treated with maximum severity. Sudan was widely regarded by human rights advocates as one of the most abusive regime in the world. The Sudanese Lawyers Committee in December 1996 described the NIF government in these disturbing terms:

The first years of the regime were characterized by gross human rights violations ... such as extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, torture, unfair trial procedures and repressive security measures. The situation has not remained static, however, and these brutal governmental tactics have largely given way to more subtle methods of social control such as restrictions on the right to freedom of expression, opinion, religion, association and movement. The Sudanese government has criminalized political and ideological dissent, engages a multi-faceted security apparatus, and has installed a system of rewards and punishments based on adherence to governmental policies and observance of government-approved Islamic practices. Though less conspicuous than mass arrests and summary executions, these control mechanisms are equally debilitating to the fundamental freedoms of Sudanese citizens.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵³ Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Watch World Report 1997 - Sudan*, 1 January 1997, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8b214.html>

⁸⁵⁴ "Islamization,, Legal Reform and Human Rights in Sudan," New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1996.

The actions of the NIF in silencing dissension and destroying opposition in Khartoum was both uncompromising and brutal, and it needed to be, because after all, the NIF came to power with a clear and inflexible strategy to take control of Sudanese state and society by imposing Islamic Law, and as R.S. O’Fahey explains through a range of means including,

...the establishment of armed militias both in the cities and countryside, purges of academics, lawyers and journalists, and most importantly, the creation of financial institutions and trading monopolies that are increasingly independent of outside funding.⁸⁵⁵

The level of repression and domination in the capital was unprecedented; the situation in rest of the Sudan was equally distressing. H.A. Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal argue that by the end of the 1990s the NIF had largely imposed its domination on the central organs of the state and on the urban populace of central Sudan.⁸⁵⁶ However, the situation in Sudan’s peripheries remained more complex.

8.6 NIF Repression in the Peripheries: Sowing the Seeds of War in Darfur

In a number of ways, the two government counter-insurgency campaigns in western Sudan in the 1990s is more relevant to an understanding of the conflict in Darfur than the ethnic-tribal clashes that occurred between the Fur and nomadic Arabs in the late 1980s. The clashes of the 1980s can be explained as the consequence of the collapse of the state in Darfur, through marginalization and ethnic-tribal conflict, and tensions

⁸⁵⁵ R.S. O’Fahey, “Islam and Ethnicity in the Sudan,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, Fasc.3, 1996, p. 264.

⁸⁵⁶ A.H. Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal, *The Phoenix State: Civil Society and the Future of Sudan*, p. 34.

over land and water. The rise of the NIF is a disjuncture for Darfur and the inside-outside metaphor employed earlier no longer suffices as the Islamist state, unlike predecessors, was intent not only on exploiting Sudan's peripheries, but on subjugating and dominating all parts of the country. The Nuba Mountains would be the first casualty of this undertaking.

In 1992, the Nuba Mountains became Sudan's newest killing fields as government soldiers, units of the PDF, and tribal militias cooperated in attacks on the SPLA/SPLM affiliated Nuba of Kordofan. The events that followed have received far too little international attention for the amount of suffering that the Nuba people endured. Violence in the Nuba Mountains escalated with the creation of the *Murahaliin* militias in the 1980s regularly attacking Nuba villages, with impunity in the beginning and the complicity of the government from 1989 onwards. In 1992, a *fatwa* against the Nuba was issued that provided the religious justification to massacre civilians and destroy the insurgency. The *fatwa* stated,

An insurgent who was previously a Muslim is now an apostate; and a non-Muslim is a non-believer standing as a bulwark against the spread of Islam, and Islam has granted the freedom of killing both of them.⁸⁵⁷

The Nuba were massacred, faced forced deportation and dispossession of their lands, rape and imprisonment, in a campaign not only to punish and subjugate but to destroy

⁸⁵⁷ Roger Dean, "Rethinking the Civil War in the Sudan," *Civil Wars*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2000, pp. 71-91, provides a full quotation of the *fatwa*: 'The rebels in the south Kordofan and southern Sudan started their rebellion against the State and declared war against the Muslims. Their main aims are: killing the Muslims, desecrating mosques, burning and defiling the Koran, and raping Muslim women. In so doing, they are encouraged by the enemies of Islam and Muslims: these foes are the Zionists, the Christians and the arrogant people who provide them with provisions and arms. Therefore, 'An insurgent who was previously a Muslim is now an apostate; and a non-Muslim is a non-believer standing as a bulwark against the spread of Islam, and Islam has granted the freedom of killing both of them.' The fatwa was signed by six sheikhs Musa Abdel Majid, Mushava Juma, Muhammad Saleh Abdel Bagi, Qurashi Muhammad al-Nur, Nayer Ahmed al-Habib, and Ishmael al-Said Abdallah.

the identity of the Nuba altogether.⁸⁵⁸ The methodology of counter-insurgency undertaken by the government in the Nuba Mountains was starting to emerge as a trait of the new government:

In October 1993 First Lieutenant Khalid Abdel Karim Salih, who was in charge of security in Kordofan from May 1992 to February 1993, announced that during a seven-month period the army and PDF had killed 60,000–70,000 Nuba.⁸⁵⁹

The testimony given to Sudan Human Rights Voice by a former member of the Sudanese Armed Forces portrays the grim reality that the violence against Nuba civilians was perpetrated by the government intent on clearing the land of its inhabitants.⁸⁶⁰ Ann Moseley Lesch argues that an important economic dimension emerged in the Nuba Mountains which adds another layer of, what Alex de Waal describes as “greed”, to the government strategy in the Nuba Mountains. She adds,

There was also an important economic component to the government actions, since the government facilitated the creation of large-scale mechanized farms by Nile Valley Arab entrepreneurs and retired military officers on land from which the indigenous peoples had been displaced.⁸⁶¹

Mass killings and forced relocation of hundreds of thousands of people and expropriating their land is one method that the NIF government has employed to impose itself onto Sudan’s peripheries. The NIF had other methods of ensuring dominance over Darfur which involved less overt violence, even as it would prove

⁸⁵⁸ Alex de Waal, “Creating Devastation and Calling it Islam: The War for the Nuba, Sudan,” *SAIS Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2001, pp. 117-132.

⁸⁵⁹ Flint quoted in Salmon, p. 19.

⁸⁶⁰ Testimony of 1st Lt. Khalid Abd al-Karim Salih, 1996, Sudanese Human Rights Watch.

⁸⁶¹ Ann Moseley Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities*, p. 162.

equally confrontational, and predatory. Ghallab's study of the NIF, as noted earlier, is precisely critical of the abuses of power that the regime has perpetrated since coming to power and of the means by which power has been consolidated, which he argues,

...is to be found in the strategy employed by the Islamist regime within the first and second republics to appoint governors, senior employees, and even tribal leaders as a way of expanding the state machinery in the center and the regions and empowering a class of the Islamist elite through whom the regime could control all aspects of life.⁸⁶²

The conflict that erupted in Dar Masalit in the 1990s was a response to exactly this strategy of expanding the state machinery against the wishes of the wider population. Dar Masalit was one of the last outposts of unreformed native administration, and a bastion of the Umma Party.⁸⁶³ In the 1980s, Chadian Arab nomads settled in Dar Masalit to escape war and drought, and by the end of the decade they had come to constitute a significant minority of the population, possibly according to Flint and de Waal as much as one-third. Also, Flint and de Waal describe the impact of such a large influx of people into the region led to tensions over land and political representation.⁸⁶⁴ In Dar Masalit, Mahmood Mamdani's notion of settler and native may have stronger resonance than in other parts of Darfur where the distinction is less apparent.⁸⁶⁵ As part of a larger reorganization of the political structure of Darfur undertaken by the Minister of Federal Affairs 'Ali al-Hajj in 1994, Dar Masalit was

⁸⁶² Abdullahi A. Ghallab, *The First Islamist Republic*, p. 151.

⁸⁶³ Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, pp. 57-58 describe Dar Masalit more in terms of Native Administration in India than Sudan, with a Sultan acting as a ruler with all the trappings of an independent and absolute ruler who is subservient to the state.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid, pp. 56-58.

⁸⁶⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*, also see the response to Mamdani's work by R.S. O'Fahey titled, "O'Fahey Responds to Mamdani," retrieved from <http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/darfur/2009/05/18/ofahey-responds-to-mamdani/>

divided into thirteen⁸⁶⁶ emirates, each presided over by an ‘amir appointed by the provincial governor. The decision to award eight of the emirates to either riverain Arabs or the recent Arab arrivals from Chad incensed the Masalit, who rightly saw this as a government effort to disempower their leaders. In particular, the Sultanate was now in danger of being occupied by an Arab, especially since under the reformed system the Sultan was elected by the ‘amirs. But behind this was also a fear amongst the Masalit that the changes were designed to alter the political and economic relations of the region in favour of the herders. Mahgoub El-Tigani Mahmoud, describes the resentment that swelled in Dar Masalit following the political reforms along exactly these lines:

The Massalit exemplify the resentment among Darfurian Africans toward the Muslim Brotherhood and the emirate system....The Massalit feel that they are the ones targeted by this policy, which aims at Balkanizing their territory and giving away large portions of land to migrant Arab tribes. This is the real cause of the violent conflict, which recently erupted between the Massalit and the Arab tribes in their area ...⁸⁶⁷

The appointment of a Masalit governor Ibrahim Yahya was a government attempt to restore order to Dar Masalit and pacify the region. His task was made more difficult by the opposition he faced from the provincial governor and the heads of the security organs of state, including the president himself.⁸⁶⁸ Flint and de Waal relate that when

⁸⁶⁶ There is contradictory information given in the literature over whether the number is eight, Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, p. 58, or 13 as recorded by Mahgoub El-Tigani Mahmoud, “Inside Darfur: Ethnic Genocide by a Governance Crisis,” p. 6. Thirteen seems more likely since M.W. Daly, *Darfur’s Sorrow*, p. 262 and a private Sudanese source have presented thirteen as the figure.

⁸⁶⁷ Mahgoub El-Tigani Mahmoud, “Inside Darfur: Ethnic Genocide by a Governance Crisis,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia Africa and the Middle East*, 2004; Vol. 24, No. 3, p.6.

⁸⁶⁸ Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, p. 63.

violence erupted again in 1999, the president intervened and dispatched his deputy chief of staff for operations, and retired general Mohamed Ahmad al-Din.⁸⁶⁹ What followed in Dar Masalit was the joint military-militia destruction of Masalit villages by applying a scorched-earth policy of clearing the land of people and their means of livelihood. These tactics were very reminiscent of what had occurred in the Nuba Mountains in 1992. Human Rights Watch filed a lengthy report on the events in Dar Masalit in 1994, which in part stated that:

The Sudanese government claimed that the Masalit were fifth column of the Sudan's People Liberation Army... and sealed off Dar Masalit. Reportedly the Arab militias then killed more than 1,000 Masalit. The government set up special courts to try leaders of the clashes, sentencing fourteen people to death, and sponsored a tribal reconciliation conference [which] concluded that 292 Masalit and seven Arabs were dead; 2,673 houses burned down; and large numbers of livestock looted, with Masalit suffering most. The Arabs refused to pay compensation. About 29,500 fearful Masalit refugees remained in Chad, where the Arab militia reportedly came to kill eighty Masalit refugees in mid-1999.⁸⁷⁰

The policy of altering the sub-provincial boundaries in 1994 also affected the position held by the Fur in local and regional politics. Darfur was partitioned into three separate states, which by design, divided the Fur in three. The result was that the Fur became minorities in each of the three sub-regional states. To add to the provocation, appointments to positions of authority in the government of Darfur were given to NIF loyalists, many of whom were either riverain Arabs or from Darfur's Arabs, even

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 62.

⁸⁷⁰ "Darfur Destroyed: Ethnic cleansing by Government and Militia Forces in Western Sudan," Report of the Human Rights Watch, 2004, retrieved from <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/sudan0504/>

though many Fur were members of the NIF. Either way, as in Dar Masalit, government sympathies were no longer with the Fur. The reason for this had more to do with the emerging struggle between al-Bashir and al-Turabi for control of the NIF, than with the disloyalty of the Fur or Arab-non-Arab relations in Darfur.

Events such as those that just described that occurred in Dar Masalit in 1999, and the eruption of the civil war across Darfur since 2003, have been perceived as occurring along an Arab and African fault line. Race and ethnicity or tribe, have been present in Sudan since independence, but as this thesis had tried to show, race and ethnicity or tribe, have been shaped by the political and economic power structures that emerged in Darfur's relationship with the Sudanese state. In Sudan, there has always been an element of racial, religious and ethnic prejudice from the riverain Arabs towards the south, who they perceived inferior for not being Arab or Muslim, and towards the non-riverain northerners who they perceived as unsophisticated in their Arabicity and knowledge of Islam. In post-colonial Sudan, the institutionalization of Arab racism towards the south was a reflection of the northern Sudan's efforts to impose control over the southerners. The extension of this form of racism to the northern Sudan, which developed in the 1990s, can be said to be related to the struggle that the NIF state initiated to impose its power over Darfur. The racism in Darfur is real but tells us very little about why an Islamist state turned on Darfur's Muslims, whether black or Arab, when that same state was playing host to Islamists from Somalia, Uganda, Ethiopia, and other so-called Black Africans.⁸⁷¹

⁸⁷¹ NIF intelligence and cadres were involved with the Somalia Islamist movement at the time the NIF was targeting the Masalit in western Sudan. Inter-Arab violence and repression of riverain Arab dissidents has been ongoing since the NIF came to power. Race is as tactical a reason for state-directed violence as geography, religion, ethnicity, and ideology. Whilst most analysts question the Arab and African dichotomy they still tend to be led into viewing the problems through the Arab and non-Arab/African lens.

8.7 The Fracturing of the NIF- Is Darfur a Front in the inter-party conflict?

In 1999, the NIF split after a short and bloodless internal struggle between Omar al-Bashir and Hasan al-Turabi. Turabi had survived the political cut and thrust of Sudanese politics for over thirty years but events in December 1999 overtook him. His fall from power ended the Islamist aspirations and al-Bashir's victory was seen by many in the country as the old guard affirming their power. With al-Turabi's fall from power also destroyed the aspirations of many from Darfur that the years of marginalization of the region were about to come to end. Racial and ethnic differences did not exist in Islam they were told by the NIF because, '...Islamists...do not recognize any plurality in Islam or Islamism, instead insisting that in any disagreement, one party must be deviating from Islam.'⁸⁷² The belief in the undifferentiated *umma* was a part of the reason that the people of Darfur found the message of the Islamists attractive.

The Islamist movement had promised many things when it came to power. In particular, Islamism held out hope to the Darfuri elite that the Sudanese state and benefits would be equally theirs as well. A decade on and few changes had occurred. The inter-communal violence of the 1990s was intermittent and not on the scale of the preceding decade. The drought of 1990-91 was as severe as that experienced in 1983-85 which escalated tensions in the region. However, there was no repeat of the upsurge of conflict that was responsible for thousands of deaths, pillaging and theft of animals. For one thing, the war in Chad had concluded and Libyan adventurism no

⁸⁷² A H Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal, "Islamism State Power and Jihad in Sudan," p. 78.

longer impacted on Darfur as it did in the 1980s. As one Fur resident of Kebkabiya told Karen Willemse the rule of law imposed by the Islamists is not popular but it was necessary to keep order.⁸⁷³ The Islamists were seen as necessary for recreating a more acceptable moral order in Darfur. But as well, the people of Darfur were devout Muslims and accepted almost all of the fundamental elements of the Islamist project as articulated by the NIF.

But, the Muslims of Darfur, whilst accepted by many Sudanese as pious, were also considered to be heterodox in many of the beliefs. The reason for this can be accounted for in the different process of Islamization that occurred in Darfur than that which led to the spread of Islam amongst the Nilotic peoples of Sudan.⁸⁷⁴ Islam in Darfur only became an issue when Darfur came into conflict with the state in the days following the overthrow of al-Turabi from the ruling cabal of the NIF, which is where Abdullahi A. Ghallab has suggested the causes of the civil war in Darfur can be located.⁸⁷⁵ A position shared by A.H Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal, who argue that,

When Sudan's Islamist movement split in 1999/2000 it did so along ethnic lines, with many of the 'westerners' staying with Turabi and the riverain Arab elite aligning with Bashir.⁸⁷⁶

Unfortunately, for the people of Sudan, Ahmed Kamal El-Din argues, '...the promise of a color-blind Islamism turned out to be sham.'⁸⁷⁷ One NIF member from Darfur realized much earlier that the Islamist leaders from Khartoum were equally inclined to

⁸⁷³ Karen Willemse, *One Foot in Heaven*.

⁸⁷⁴ See, R. S. O'Fahey, "Islam and Ethnicity in the Sudan".

⁸⁷⁵ Abdullahi A. Ghallab, *The First Islamic Republic*, p. 151.

⁸⁷⁶ A H Abdel Salam and Alex de Waal, "Islamism State Power and Jihad in Sudan," p. 99.

⁸⁷⁷ Ahmed Kamal el-Din, "Islam and Islamism in Darfur" in. Alex de Waal (ed.), *War and Peace in Darfur*, p. 105.

monopolize power and exclude non-riverain Arabs from power. Daud Bolad's story of defection from the Islamists after facing years of discrimination within the NIF has become mythologized by the coalition of activists, academics, politicians and media that have coalesced as the representatives of the Save the Darfur campaign. The tragic death of Daud Bolad fits neatly into the framework of Sudan as an Arab racist state which has infiltrated the Save the Darfur campaign in the US, as Mahmood Mamdani illustrates.⁸⁷⁸ Equally important for the narrative of Darfur is the symbolism of the Daud Bolad story for understanding the attachment of Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa to the Islamist project of renewal, as well as the sense of despair at the failure of another project for state and nation-building project for the Sudan. What is an equally important, and often overlooked element of the Daad Bolad story is that there was no defection to the SPLM/A by non-Arab tribes in Darfur in 1992, and that the Bolad tragedy was only one such unsuccessful effort made to convince the Fur to join the SPLM/A. All evidence points to the attachment of the non-Arabs to the Islamist project at the time of Daud Bolad's failed effort to initiate an uprising in Darfur.

With al-Turabi's demise the failure of the Islamist project to remake Sudan became increasingly obvious throughout the Sudan and not just in Darfur. There was a sense amongst many Sudanese that the military cabal that had overthrown al-Turabi were never committed Islamists at all but opportunists who, as one Sudanese intellectual in the US has written.⁸⁷⁹ Abdelwahab El-Affendi the author of a sympathetic work on the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood wrote in the days after the al-Turabi was toppled that the Islamic experiment was over in failure. For El-Affendi, al-Turabi's demise

⁸⁷⁸ See Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors*.

⁸⁷⁹ Dr. Mohamed S. Hassan, "Political Islam Versus the Society in Sudan; How the Islamic Project for Renewal Failed," A paper presented to the Sudanese Studies Society meeting, Santa Clara University, May 28-30, 2004.

was the sign that the military had assumed power over civilians and the tenuous alliance between the barracks and the mosque was over.⁸⁸⁰

The split had immediate ramifications in terms of the structure and personnel of the Islamist state. Al-Turabi had supporters and some of them were in influential positions in regional government and in the PDF. The PDF had evolved since the heady days of the coup when the notion of a spontaneous Islamist army or *mujahidin* would sweep away the enemies of Islam. The Afghan experience of the 1980s was not to be repeated in Sudan under the NIF, regardless of how hard the Islamists tried to replicate the *jihad* against the Soviets, in the way that they conducted the war in the southern Sudan.⁸⁸¹ The PDF were a huge failure. Casualty rates were much higher than in the regular army with thousands of poorly trained and badly armed youth sent to their deaths in senseless attacks on SPLA strongholds reminiscent of the slaughter on the Western Front during World War One.⁸⁸² Burr and Collins refer to the PDF as little more than ‘...a rabble in arms, volunteers, used by the Sudan army in its southern civil war as cannon fodder...’⁸⁸³ By 1997, the PDF were in decline with too few recruits and a long list of military failures. With little faith in the capability of the PDF to have any influence on the war in the south the government shifted its focus back to the regular army.⁸⁸⁴ The regular army was then authorised from 1997 to supervise the PDF bringing the civil militias under the direct control of the president.⁸⁸⁵ The transition from the PDF strategy in 1997 towards the military

⁸⁸⁰ Abdelwahab El-Affendi, “The Sudanese experiment and the Crisis of the Contemporary Islamist Movement: Lessons and Significance,” *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 29 December, 1999.

⁸⁸¹ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan*, During the 1990s when the Arab *mujahidin* who had joined Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri in Sudan many of them were billeted out to the PDF training camps to instruct the new recruits in fighting *jihad*.

⁸⁸² Jago Salmon, “A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces,” p. 19.

⁸⁸³ J. Millard Burr and Robert O. Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan*, p18.

⁸⁸⁴ Jago Salmon, “A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces,” p.19.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 20.

symbolized the shifting power relations within the ruling party. The president was positioning himself to move against al-Turabi when a power-struggle developed. The PDF would re-emerge after al-Turabi's fall, but without the *jihadist* ideology or the legitimacy it formerly carried, and Jago Salmon's study of the PDF concludes that in regards to the PDF,

'[M]ost Sudanese today perceive the PDF as a political rather than religious project and, moreover, as a project that contradicts the tolerant and diverse Islamic currents that constitute Sudanese religious life.'⁸⁸⁶

The shift in the Sudanese attitude towards the PDF is symbolic of a more fundamental shift in the way the Sudanese have come to see the state since al-Turabi was removed from power. The Islamist project was an illusion summed up eloquently in the publication of the *Black Book* (*kitab al-aswad*) in 2000. The *Black Book* explained the domination of the Sudan by the riverain Arab, which was a fact well known to all Sudanese. Where the *Black Book* differed somewhat, according to Martin Daly, is that for the authors of the *Black Book*

...domination of government institutions by riverain Arabs was not the result simply of their higher education but of their nepotism and indeed organization of the government to serve their own interests. In other words, the *Black Book*, made a coherent case for the conscious underdevelopment of Darfur...⁸⁸⁷

With the publication of the *Black Book* agitation against al-Bashir and the National Congress intensified in Darfur, and other parts of Sudan, with riots in El Fasher in June 2000. A government statement on the cause of the riot read: 'Leadership in the

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 23.

⁸⁸⁷ M.W. Daly, *Darfur's Sorrow*, p. 276.

North Darfur State legislative council, known for their loyalty to the People's Congress, have instigated the riots.'⁸⁸⁸ Al-Bashir acted immediately to purge the party and it was in this act of the Islamist state turning on itself that proved the catalyst for the formation of the Darfur Liberation Front, which emerged as the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) in 2003. The other anti-government group to emerge from Darfur at this time was the Justice and Equality movement, with deeper roots in the Muslim Brotherhood and close links to al-Turabi. At this time, while the battle-lines had yet to be drawn, there was a disquieting sense that al-Bashir and his regime were preparing to face an al-Turabi led putsch from Darfur.

Al-Bashir had taken further precautions against a possible al-Turabi seizure of power by closing the regional offices of the NIF and dismissing all senior regional government officials and personally appointing their replacements. The National Executive was purged of al-Turabi loyalists and the Islamist state intensified the internal struggle. The power struggle between the military-led faction of the NIF and the civilian Islamists pervaded the entire northern reaches of the state as a realignment of state power proceeded to displace al-Turabists and dislocate existing relationships. The description that Julie Flint and Alex de Waal provide of the formation of the *janjawiid* and the militarisation of Darfur by the government in the post-2000 period reads very much like a state preparing for war.⁸⁸⁹ In the background of Flint and de Waal's portrayal of events, there is a very strong sense that the Sudanese state was disintegrating and that the power structure was in a state of flux. Opposing forces were realigning and the state was at war with itself. In this sense, the war in Darfur begins much earlier than the rebel attacks in 2003.

⁸⁸⁸ "One Killed in Riots," *Panafrican News Agency* September 15, 2000.

⁸⁸⁹ Julie Flint and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, pp. 16-70.

Furthermore, in a very important sense, the war for Darfur was a result of the removal of Darfur's traditional elite from the Islamist state in which they were invested. Al-Turabi's Islamist state in Darfur was based on affiliations with the Muslim Brotherhood, as noted above, a movement that had established itself in Darfur in the 1960s and expanded in the decades that followed. For al-Bashir to effectively impose his regime's dominance over Darfur, the al-Turabist inclined state apparatus had to be dismantled and replaced. The dismissal of Darfur's civilian leadership and the closure of the NIF's party offices was effectively the dismantling of traditional leadership in Darfur. In this sense, the state remained weak in Darfur, a state thinly painted over the layer of traditional elites on who the NIF state had relied for maintaining control over the region.

In the 1980s, the Sudanese state's coercive power was used to subjugate the south, in 1992 the same coercive power of the state was turned on the Nuba, and in 1999 on the Masalit. When the realignment of political forces in Darfur, after al-Turabi's fall, failed to deliver control of Darfur to the National Congress Party of Omar al-Bashir, then the coercive power of the state was turned against Darfur, and in a major sense, also against itself.

8.8 Conclusion

The state had always been weak in Darfur and had only functioned with the acquiescence of the traditional tribal elite who after 1994 were integrated into the NIF. After a decade of state-building in which the Islamists had imposed their will on the centre and in peripheries where they met resistance the task of subjugating the northern Sudan seemed complete.

However, the ruling party was wrought by internal tensions and in 1999 the civilian Islamist-military alliance splintered. The NIF state fragmented and the military turned on their former Islamist allies. The fall of the once all-powerful al-Turabi from power symbolized to the Sudanese the failure of the Islamist project of renewal and dissatisfaction. Without the façade of the Islamist project al-Bashir was just another Sudanese dictator. For the marginalized groups of Darfur who had found hope in the Islamist political program, al-Bashir was not only another Sudanese dictator but another riverain Arab military dictator. What the western Sudanese saw was the brutal, exclusionary, predatory nature of the state. In the publication of the *Black Book*, Darfur's Islamists articulated what they perceived to be the racist and nepotistic character of Sudanese politics. Racial, ethnic, religious differences resurfaced as the perceived egalitarian *umma* splintered along centre-periphery lines. Anger against the reformulated regime was not restricted to Darfur but surfaced across the northern Sudan but it was in Darfur where the intensity of the failure of the Islamist state was most palpable. Unlike the events of the 1980s where the state failed to protect its citizens the war in Darfur since 2003 has been a war for control of the state, and wars of this type in Africa have always proved the most intractable and brutal of all wars. Wars of this type are generally also the result of the collapse of the post-colonial African state.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion -

The Crisis of the Post-colonial State

9.1: Does Darfur have a Future in the Sudan?

In 2006, the most eminent scholar of pre-colonial Darfur wrote an article asking the question of whether Darfur had a future in the Sudan.⁸⁹⁰ It was a timely question to ask in the wake of the brutal counter-insurgency and humanitarian crisis that has occurred since the outbreak of the war for Darfur three years earlier. In his examination of the Darfur's future in the Sudan, O'Fahey began by interrogating the past, as you would expect a good historian to do. O'Fahey explained that Darfur has had a shorter relationship with the riverain Sudan than the south. In other words, using a measure of time, Darfur is less Sudanese than even the southern Sudan. However, Darfur is also intrinsically intertwined with the Sudan in a way the south is not. The southern Sudan has always fought for distance and autonomy from Khartoum. The same cannot be said for Darfur, at least since the British colonial state conquered Darfur and forced it into the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium as the western border of British Sudan.

In terms of British colonialism, Darfur's only significance was that it did not fall into the hands of other European, or indigenous powers, and threaten the main-game, which was control of the Nile. In the forty-years of British rule in Darfur, the British treated the region as if it no intrinsic value and no qualities which could be integrated into the development of the British colonial state in Sudan. Margery Perham visited Darfur in 1938 and her views on Darfur, while they are her views, do express

⁸⁹⁰ R.S. O'Fahey, "Does Darfur Have a Future in the Sudan," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 27 2006, pp. 27-41.

something about the British colonial attitude. Perham taught and wrote extensively on Africa as a Reader in colonial administration in Africa, at Nuffield College, Oxford University in the first half of the twentieth century. She was a widely cited authority on Africa. Her teaching shaped the views of thousands of Britons who may or may not have been involved in the colonial service. As a consequence of her reputation in the academy and influence over the production of knowledge relating to Africa her views are reflective of the wider colonial attitude toward Darfur. Perham wrote in 1938 on visiting Darfur these following comments:

We are in a great-wide basin, ringed by the peaks of pointed or domed rock. It all seems so un-African that I seemed so surprised, and perhaps, also disgusted, to meet negroes in this Paradise. For whatever I might feel about negroes, they are not romantic. Their appearance and their general servile character must always from this point of view, put them in a category apart from Red Indians, Polynesians, or Arabs.⁸⁹¹

In many ways, Perham's comments here are reflective of the British colonial attitude to Africa and of Africans in the Sudan. That the Sudanese attitude towards Sudanese Africans has been marked by a similar dismissal of any African achievements is not a result of British racism in Sudan, but certainly the British attitude helps to contextualize the post-independence northern Sudanese tendency towards Arab superiority over those they perceived, or the colonial state had labelled, as Africans.

The pre-colonial state of Darfur was erased from the colonial blueprint of the Sudan and also from the historiography of the Sudan because, O'Fahey remarks,

⁸⁹¹ Margery Perham, "Uganda-Sudan diaries" *Perham papers*, 1938, quoted in William Roger Louis, *Ends of British imperialism: the scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization : collected essays*, London: I.B.Tauris, 2006 quoted in p. 529.

Nowhere to the best of my knowledge, did McMichael or others of the Sudan Political Service, the British administrative *cadre* that ran the Sudan, ever face up to the reality that state-formation was the work of non-Arabs.⁸⁹²

However, the British also demonstrated how difficult the task of identifying people along racial lines was in Darfur when they drew the line dividing northern Arab Sudan from southern African Sudan. Darfur was included in the northern Sudan because as Muslims the people of Darfur were more Arab than African. In making this distinction the British were acknowledging that the Arab and non-Arab distinction in the northern Sudan was not based on racial difference but on the degree of Arabization that had occurred over the preceding centuries. The British were only able to perceive these differences in racial terms, once again proving how dominant the racial episteme was in the British construction of Empire, and of home.

The colonial state erected an internal barrier that prevented Darfur from being Sudanese from the very beginning. Institutional segregation followed as the colonial government's policy was to hold Darfur's natives in the embrace of traditionalism as a way of preventing the spread of the influence of the riverain Arabs, in case the Arabs infected Darfur with the malignancy of nationalism. This not only prevented Darfur from participating in the expansion of Sudan's modern political movements, it also created a dichotomy of modern and traditional in the Sudan which is still evident in the prejudices the riverain Arabs hold towards, what they perceive to be the less sophisticated western Sudanese. The third consequence of the policy of segregation was that the assimilation and penetration necessary for nation-building to proceed was hindered and the Sudan emerged from colonialism as a number of separate regions

⁸⁹² R.S. O'Fahey, "Does Darfur Have a Future in the Sudan, pp. 32-33.

held together by a brief history of Anglo-Egyptian control and a flimsy state infrastructure that consisted of an overdeveloped central Sudan and very underdeveloped peripheries. This relationship between a homogenous and developed centre and the heterogeneous and underdeveloped peripheries would be a continual barrier to nation-building in the northern Sudan in the post-colonial era.

If upon entering independence, the Sudanese nation was weak, the state was, arguably, even weaker. Administration in Darfur consisted of a scattering of British colonial officials, and a tribal hierarchy which was utilized when available or imposed when it was not. In either case, it was cloaked in the legitimacy of tradition and publicly referred to as respecting indigenous culture and privately as the most effective and the least expensive system for controlling the natives. But in doing so, it created tribes where there were none, the Fur were not a tribe but the dominant identity of the people who had assimilated, or been forced to assimilate, into the Keira domain. The same was true of the Masalit and of the smaller Sultanates along the Sudan-Chad border, a border that was also a colonial invention. As a part of the colonial dispossession of African history, nations and ethnic groups in Darfur were demoted to tribal units, so as to satisfy the colonial desire for a sense of mission, and as a way of controlling the colonial landscape. When scholars use the phrase ‘deep tribal division’ they are referring to a process that occurred less than a century ago, under the aegis of the civilizing mission. The pre-colonial Darfur had been involved in a process of state-building that had involved to centuries of de-tribalizing its subjects. Native administration reversed this process. It is astonishing how many people search for pre-colonial clues for the conflict in Darfur, rather than in the colonial and post-colonial dynamics of the Sudanese state.

The Sudanese state emerged from colonialism weak and beset by rivalries between the major political parties, between the centre and the northern peripheries, and between the north and south. Economic underdevelopment, political instability, and the ongoing north-south conflict prevented the normal pattern of state-building that other states followed during the first generation of independence. The Sudanese had to wait until the 1970s before they had a government which was dedicated to the development project. The development state of Ja'afar Nimeiri implemented the important state-building projects required of post-colonial elites for the first half of his sixteen-years in power. Nimeiri's regime lacked ideological purpose as, Tim Niblock has argued, weakening the effectiveness of the attempted transformation of the Sudanese state. The development state adapted to the structural modalities of the Sudanese state, clientalism, centralization, authoritarianism, rather than the Sudanese state adapting to the developing model. The result was a failure to effectively reform and develop the Sudan. The development state withered and with it the legitimacy of the Nimeiri regime.

Nimeiri's other reforms also failed. Native administration and customary land laws were relics of the colonial system and, at least in terms of land practices was being broken down anyway by the forces of modernization, as James Morton has argued. Morton's analysis of the changes to Darfur's economy provides a foundation for understanding both the local conflicts that undermined the interdependence of the different communities in Darfur and the tensions that emerged between the state and Darfur in this period. The conflict between Darfur and the state, in particular, was a conflict between riverain Arab conservatism and the reformism of Darfur's elite.

Understanding the Darfur conflict from this perspective opens a number of possibilities for resolution that are not available by viewing events through the prism of static identities. Arab and African identities in Darfur, as they exist today, have been shaped by the struggle between Darfur and the Sudanese state which declares those who support the state to be Arabs and those who do not to be Africans. The question then, is not whether Darfur has a future in the Sudan, but whether the Sudan itself has a future?

9.2 What can be learnt from the Conflict for Darfur?

The question of whether Sudan has a future is a question that analysts of many “failed” states in Africa are forced to address. Darfur’s conflict is an example of the wider and equally complex issue of the crisis of the post-colonial state in Africa. The Sudan, as many, many observers have stated, is a state in permanent crisis. Lurching from crisis to crisis, only barely surviving by being brought back from the brink of collapse on a number of occasions. Robert Rotberg’s assessment of the weak Sudanese state unlikely to collapse for as long as oil revenues continue to support the regime is depressing, but realistic.⁸⁹³ This is true, Rotberg also argues, for many of Africa’s perennially weak and failing states which rely on exporting resources such as oil and diamonds. The question, then, is what can be learnt from analysing the Darfur crisis in terms of the crisis of the African state?

Perceiving African conflicts as the result of contemporary problems is a useful place to start. Astonishment with the tendency to search for causes of the conflict in pre-

⁸⁹³ Robert I. Rotberg, “Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators” in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *State Failure and State Weakness in the Age of Terror*, Brookings Institution Press, 2003, p. 13.

colonial history was expressed above. Equally astonishing is the search for colonial answers for the problems in Darfur. Propositions such as reinstating tribal leaders, utilising tribal reconciliation, and reallocating lands to tribal units have been put forward as potential ways of resolving the conflict. Land is a major issue, but the people of Darfur do not want to be dragged backwards, in fact the rebellion in Darfur was all about access to the modern state and a place in the global economy.⁸⁹⁴

Pastoralists ceased being camel-nomads in the 1980s and today rear sheep for export markets. Farmers are no longer subsistence producers; they grow cash-crops and food that they export. The conflict between nomadic groups and farmers in the 1980s over access to land and water was the result of the commodification of production and the competition for profit. Depictions of Darfur caught in some time-less traditional past, whether intentioned or not, are not so dissimilar from earlier colonial prejudices. Resolving the conflict in Darfur is only possible by dealing with the underlying problems of the Sudanese state and addressing the instability of Sudanese politics.

The importance of future research into the prospects of the post-colonial state cannot be underestimated even if they are outside the scope of this study. Numerous areas of research enquiry emerge from placing the conflict in Darfur within the prism of the crisis of the African state. In particular, Africa's search for political stability and economic development requires an intensive analysis of the nature of the African post-colonial state, including assessing the potential for redrawing political

⁸⁹⁴ M.A. Mohamad Salih, *Understanding the Conflict in Darfur*, p25. makes the important point that the land issue is complex and cannot just be seen in terms of Arab seizures of African land but as a historical problem deeply intertwined with the changes to government and ideology in Darfur over the preceding century.

boundaries at all levels.⁸⁹⁵ Redrawing the political map of Africa will not resolve the African crisis but the current weakness of a number of Africa's largest states, such as Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia clearly make some reappraisal of geographical boundaries necessary. However, at a domestic level, Sudan's internal structure has also proven ineffective for building national integration and for distributing resources throughout the country suggesting that the regional framework also requires critical rethinking.⁸⁹⁶ Even if the Sudan survives the current crisis, Darfur as a discrete region may not.

The future political composition of Sudan not only requires a rethinking of provincial divisions and regional relations with the centre but also a more developed articulation of national identity that is based on inclusion and a nation-building project that recognises the rich cultural diversity of the Sudanese people.⁸⁹⁷ The role of the state will remain integral to any nation-building project in Sudan, and elsewhere in Africa, and as such the future prospects of the state as a locus of power in the contemporary international system is a key consideration of any attempt to frame solutions for the crisis in Darfur and in the Sudan.

⁸⁹⁵ A recently published edited collection, Hassan, Salah M. and Carina E. Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009, presents a number of essays that focus on the question of reforming both the architecture of the state and the dominant representation of Sudanese national identity.

⁸⁹⁶ The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005) stipulated power and resource sharing between the north and south Sudan. While this peace process has been applauded in many circles and has been called a template for negotiations between parties involved in the Darfur conflict there are problems with regional settlements that have been almost completely overlooked by advocates of the CPA. Principally, in terms of nation-building, the CPA further entrenches the tendency to view the north-south as separate entities and as far as institution building goes, there is every chance that as the north-south develop separate institutions the division between the regions will increase and in time any hope of integrating the south into a Sudanese national framework will completely evaporate.

⁸⁹⁷ The Sudan adopted a constitution which drew heavily from the CPA principle of the respect and legal equality of people from every cultural and religious background. While this is a vital symbolic step, only a few more optimistic commentators would argue that this step was sufficient for overcoming the inequalities and cultural prejudices which has afflicted the Sudan.

So, rather than looking backwards, any effort to resolve African crises requires a more progressive outlook because the causes of contemporary conflicts in Africa are located in contemporary problems. As this thesis has tried to suggest, history is crucial for understanding the present, but not for explaining it. The war in Darfur has its roots in the creation of the colonial state, and its causes are in the immediate problems of state collapse and regime preservation. The war for Darfur is a new war, the result of the splintering of the NIF and the collapse of the Islamist state which left Darfur's place in the Sudan uncertain. With all due respect to the eminent scholars who have published important studies of Darfur over the last five years, there is no long road to disaster in Darfur, and no history of destruction and genocide in Darfur, and no history of a long war in Darfur. But unless, the crisis of the Sudanese state can be resolved, then the gloomy reality is that the Darfur's struggle may indeed become a long tragedy.

Glossary of Arabic Terms

<i>abbala</i>	camel herders
<i>abd</i> pl. <i>abid</i>	Slave
<i>amir</i>	Prince: also used to refer to tribal leaders
<i>ansar</i>	helpers of the Prophet, used in Sudan to describe the loyal followers of the Mahdi, and more recently the followers of the Mahdi's descendants
<i>awlad al-Bilad</i>	children of the country
<i>Baggara</i>	cattle herders located in Darfur and Kordofan, comprising numerous sub-groups including the Rezeigat and Ereigat
<i>Bazinger</i>	an army of well-trained slave soldiers armed with firearms
<i>bilad al-Sudan</i>	the land of the blacks
<i>dar</i>	homeland, territory of, such as <i>dar al-Islam</i> (land or kingdom of Islam), Darfur (land of kingdom of the Fur)
<i>darb al-arba'in</i>	literally the "forty days road" which caravans traversed from Darfur to Egypt
<i>da'wa Islamiya</i>	commonly understood amongst Muslims as charitable missionary organisations, in Darfur an organisation established by Gaddafi to spread Libyan influence in Africa
<i>dura</i>	a variety of sorghum which is a staple crop of the Sahel
<i>faki</i> , pl. <i>faqura'</i>	Religious or Holy man of Islam
<i>fashir</i>	Fur for Sultans camp or capital such as El Fasher the capital of Darfur
<i>fatwa</i>	legal ruling by an Islamic scholar
<i>feddans</i>	measure of land equivalent to 1.038 acres
<i>fellahin</i>	peasant or agricultural worker in Arab countries, esp. in Egypt
<i>ferman</i>	a command issued by the Ottoman Sultan in his capacity as Caliph

<i>fursan</i>	horseman, in the context used refers to armed and mounted raiders or soldiers
<i>goz</i>	see qoz
<i>hakura</i>	a system of usufruct land title in Darfur originating in the period of the Sultanate
<i>jamal or jammal</i>	camel herders located in northern Darfur
<i>janjawiid</i>	ghost riders or demon riders, from <i>jinn</i> (ghost, demon) and <i>jawad</i> (horse), has become the common name for pro-government tribal militias in Darfur
<i>jellaba</i>	term used in Sudan to describe traders/merchants from the riverain region
<i>khalifa</i>	the successor of the Mahdi, originally used to describe successors of the Prophet
<i>khedive</i>	from Persian for lord, was a one of a line of governors and monarchs who ruled Egypt and Sudan from 1805 to 1914
<i>Mahdi</i>	inspired or anointed one: Islamic holy man who paves the way for the return of Christ and the end of time, believed with appears to defeat the anti-Christ and restore Islamic justice to the world. In the Sudanese context, has become a reference to Mohammed Ahmed al-Mahdi.
<i>maqdam</i>	Administrator or arbitrator of disputes, minor aristocrat during the period of the Keira Sultanate
<i>murahaleen</i>	a generic term for tribal militias in Darfur, but more recently a term for the government sponsored militias engaged in the war in the south in the 1980s and responsible for exacerbating tensions in Darfur
<i>mufti</i>	Islamic scholar and interpreter of religious laws
<i>mudir</i>	Egyptian Provincial Governor
<i>nazir</i>	Rulers of nomadic tribes
<i>omda</i>	Middle ranking tribal leader
<i>qadi</i>	Tribe of the Prophet Mohamed
<i>qoreish</i>	judge of Islamic law
<i>qoz or goz</i>	sandy area

<i>shari'a</i>	Islamic law
<i>shartay</i>	in Darfur equivalent of an aristocrat or member of the landed gentry, under the Condominium tribal chief
<i>shaykh</i>	Arab for chief
<i>sirdar</i>	commander in the Egyptian army
<i>soudan</i>	The French name given to the Sudan, which stretched from Mali to present day Sudan
<i>sufi</i>	Muslim sage or shaman
<i>suqs</i>	marketplace
<i>tariqa</i>	<i>Sufi</i> order
<i>ulama</i>	learned men of Islam
<i>umma</i>	community of believers in Islam, <i>Umma</i> : also the name of political party affiliated with the Mahdist movement
<i>wadi</i>	seasonal river, important area of water supply during the wet season
<i>zariba</i>	an enclosed area, commonly used to refer to fenced farms in Darfur that prevented pastoralists from watering and feeding their livestock
<i>zurqa</i>	western Sudanese term for Blacks

Bibliography

Monographs and Edited Books

Abdin, Hasan, *Early Sudanese Nationalism, 1919-1925*, Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1985.

‘Abdel Rahim, Muddathir, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan: A study in constitutional and political development, 1899-1956*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Adas, Michael, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989.

Amin, Samir, *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*, London: Zed Books, 1990.

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London: Verso, 2006.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony, *In My Father’s House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Asad, Talal, *The Kabbabish Arabs: Power, Authority, Consent in a Nomadic Tribe*, London: C. Hurst and Co., 1970.

Austen, Ralph, *African Economic History*, London: Zed Press, 1987

Ayittey, B., *Indigenous African Institutions*, New York: Transnational Publishers, 1991.

Balandier, Georges, *The Sociology of Black Africa: Social Dynamics in Central Africa*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.

Balibar, Etienne and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, London: Verso, 1995.

Barnett, Tony and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: The Gezira scheme and agricultural transition*, London: Routledge, 1991.

Barrett-Brown, Michael, *Africa’s Choices: After thirty years of the World Bank*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996.

Bates, Darrell, *The Fashoda Incident of 1898: Encounter on the Nile*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984

Bayart, Jean-Francois, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, London: Longman, 1993.

Berman, Bruce and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*, London: James Currey Limited, 1992.

Berman, Bruce, Will Kymlicka, Eyoh Dickson (eds.) *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, London: James Currey Ltd, 2003.

Beshir, Mohamed Omer, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, London: Rex Collins Ltd., 1974.

Betts, Raymond F., *Decolonization*, London: Routledge, 1998.

Brewer, Anthony, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Survey*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.

Browne, William G., *Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria from the year 1792 to 1798*, London: Elibron Classics, 2005.

Burr, J. Millard and Robert O. Collins, *Requiem for the Sudan: war, drought, and disaster relief on the Nile*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995.

Burr, J.M. Millard and Robert O. Collins, *Africa's The Thirty Year War: Libya, Chad, and the Sudan, 1963-1993*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999.

Burr, J.M. and R.O. Collins, *Darfur: The Long Road to Disaster*, Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006.

Burr, J. Millard and R.O. Collins, *Alms for Jihad: Charity and Terrorism in the Islamic World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Castells, Manuel, *The End of Millennium*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Limited, 1996.

Chabal, Patrick, *Power in Africa: An Essay in Political Interpretation*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Chabal, Patrick and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as political instrument*, Oxford: James Currey, 1999.

Chazan, Naomi, Peter Lewis, Robert A. Mortimer, Donald Rothchild and Stephen John Stedman, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 1999.

Churchill, Winston S., *The River War*, first edition, Vol. II, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899.

Churchill, W. S. S., *The River War: An Account of the Reconquest of the Sudan*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4943>

Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Collins, Robert O. and Robert L. Tignor, *Egypt and Sudan*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1967.

Connor, Walker, *Ethnonationalism: A Quest for Understanding*, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1994.

Cooper, Frederick, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Cooper, Frederick and Randall Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Cooper, Frederick, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Cunnison, Ian, *Baggara Arabs: Power and the Lineage in a Sudanese Nomad Tribe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Curtin, Philip D., *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964.

Daly, M.W., *Imperial Sudan: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1934-1956*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Daly, M.W., *The Sirdar: Sir Reginald Wingate and the British Empire in the Middle East*, DIANE Publishing, 1997.

Daly, M. W., *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1898-1934*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Daly, M. W., *Darfur's Sorrow: A History of Destruction and Genocide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Davidson, Basil, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, New York: Three Rivers Press, 1992.

Deng, Francis Mading, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in Sudan*, Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1995.

De Waal, Alex, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 1997.

Du Bois, W. E. B., *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1896.

Dunn, John P., *Khedive Ismail's Armies*, Milton Park: Routledge, 2005.

El-Affendi, Abdelwahab, *Turabi's Revolution: Islam and Power in Sudan*, London, Grey Seal Books, 1991.

- Elnur, Ibrahim, *Contested Sudan: The Political Economy of War and Reconstruction*, London: Taylor and Francis, 2009.
- Fadlalla, Mohamed H., *Short History of Sudan*, Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc, 2004, p126.
- Fanon, Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press, 1967.
- Fieldhouse, D. K., *The West and the Third World: trade, colonialism, dependence and development*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.
- Flint, Julie and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, London: Zed Books, 2008.
- Gallab, Abdullahi A., *The First Islamist Republic*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.
- Graeme J. Gill, *The Nature and Development of the Modern State*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Griffiths, Iuean L.L., *The African Inheritance*, London: Routledge, 1995.
- Furedi, Frank, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism*, London: I.B Taurus and Co., 1994.
- Halliday, Fred, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and Ideology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Hameso, S., *Ethnicity in Africa: Towards a Positive Approach*, Lincoln, NE: iUniversity Press, 2007.
- Harir S., and T. Tvedt (eds.), *Sudan: Shortcut to Decay*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainsitutet, 1994.
- Hassan, Salah M. and Carina E. Ray (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009.
- Hegel, G.W. F., *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Jibree, New York: Dover, 1956
- Hentsch, Thierry, translated by Fred A. Reed, *Imagining the Middle East*, Montreal, Quebec: Black Rose Books, 1992.
- Herbst, Jeffrey, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Herold, J., Christopher *Bonaparte in Egypt*, London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962.
- Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Hobsbawm, Eric. J., *Age of Extremes: A history of the world, 1914-1991*, London: Michael Joseph, 1994.

Holt, Peter Malcolm, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881-189: A study of its origins*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.

Holt P.M. and M.W Daly, *A History of the Sudan: from the coming of Islam to the Present Day*, London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1988.

Holy, L., *Neighbours and Kinsmen. A Study of the Berti People of Darfur*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974.

Holy, Ladislav, *Religion and Custom in a Muslim Society: The Berti of Sudan*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Hourani, Albert, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1991.

Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997.

Hunwick, John O. and Eve Troutt Powell, *The African Diaspora in the Mediterranean Lands of Islam*, Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2002.

Hussein, Mohammed Nureldin, "The IMF and Economic Policy" in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation*, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd., 1988, pp55-72.

Isichei, Elizabeth, *A History of African Societies to 1870*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Insoll, Timothy, *The Archaeology of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Jackson, Robert H., *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Jok, Jok Madut, *Sudan: Race, religion, and Violence*, Oxford, One World Publications, 2007.

Kamenka, Eugene, (ed.), *The Portable Karl Marx*, New York: Penguin Books, 1983.

Kaptein, Lidwien and Jay Spaulding, *After the Millennium: Diplomatic Correspondence from Wadai and Dar Fur on the Eve of Colonial Conquest, 1885-1916*, East Lansing: Michigan State University African Studies Center, 1988.

Keen, David, *The Benefits of Famine: A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-1989*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Khalid, Mansour, *Nimeiri and the Revolution of Dis-May*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1985.

Khalid, Mansour, *The Government They Deserve: The role of the elite in Sudan's political evolution*, London: Kegan Paul, 1990.

Kursany, Ibrahim, *The Dynamics and Limits of Capitalist Development in Sudanese agriculture*, Khartoum: Development Studies and Research Centre, Khartoum University, 1982.

Kyle, Keith, *Suez: Britain's End of Empire in the Middle East*, London: I.B. Taurus and Co. Ltd., 2003.

Lapidus, Ira M., *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Lawson, Stephanie, *Culture and Context in World Politics*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Lefebvre, Jeffrey Alan, *Arms for the Horn: U.S. security policy in Ethiopia and Somalia, 1953-1991*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991.

Lesch, Ann Mosely, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Leys, Colin, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, Oxford: James Currey Ltd., 1996.

Louis, William Roger, *Ends of British Imperialism: the scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization: collected essays*, London: I.B.Tauris, 2006

Lockman, Zachary, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Long, David E., Bernard Reich and Mark Gasiorowski, *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, fifth edition, Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 2007.

Loomba, Ania, *Colonialism/Post-colonialism: A New Critical Idiom*, London: Routledge, 1998.

Lugard, Lord, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, London: Frank Cass, 1965.

Mahmoud, Fatima Babiker, *The Sudanese Bourgeoisie: Vanguard of Development?*, London: Zed Books, 1984.

Mamdani, Mahmood, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, London: James Currey Ltd, 1996.

Mamdani, Mahmood, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*, New York, Pantheon Books, 2009.

Martin, B.G., *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Mayer, Ruth, *Artificial Africa, Colonial Images in the Times of Globalisation*, London: University Press of New England, 2002.

Mazrui, Ali A., and Michael Tidy, *Nationalism and New States in Africa*, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1984.

Mazrui, Ali Al'Amin, Ricardo René Laremont and Tracia Seghatolisami, *Africinity redefined*, Trenton, New Jersey, Africa World Press, 2002.

Metcalf, Thomas, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Area, 1860- 1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Miles, Robert, *Racism After Race Relations*, London: Routledge, 1993.

Mill, J.S., *Considerations on Representative Government*, Bibliobazaar, 2007.

Morton, James, *The Poverty of Nations: The Aid Dilemma and the Heart of Africa*, London: I.B Taurus Publishers, 1996.

Mazower, Mark, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin Books, 1998.

Mohammed, Ibrahim Musa, *The Archaeology of Central Darfur (Sudan) in the First Millennium A.D.*, Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology, 1986.

Mudimbe, V. Y., *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*, Indiana University Press, 1988.

Nachtigal, Gustav, *Sahara and Sudan: IV, Wadal and Darfur*, translated from the original German with a new introduction and notes by Allan G. B. Fisher and Humphrey J. Fisher., London: C. Hurst and Co., 1971.

O'Fahey, R.S and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan*, London: Methuen, 1974.

O'Fahey, R. S. *State and Society in Dar Fur*, London: C. Hurst and Co. Publishers, 1980.

O'Fahey, R.S., and Abu Salim, *Land in Dar Fur. Charters and Related Documents from the Dar Fur Sultanate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

O'Fahey, R.S., *Enigmatic Saint: Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990.

O'Fahey, R.S., *Arabic Literature of Africa: The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c.1900*, Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill 1997.

O'Fahey, R.S., *The Darfur Sultanate: A History*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Olukoshi, Adebayo O. and Liisa Laasko (eds.), *Challenges to the Nation-State in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996.

Ossabu-Kle, Daniel T., *Compatible Cultural Democracy: The Key to Development in Africa*, Ontario: Broadview Press Ltd., 2000.

Owen, Roger, *Lord Cromer: Victorian Imperialist, Edwardian Proconsul*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Pakenham, Thomas, *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876-1912*, London: Avon Books, 1992.

Patman, Robert G., *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Pollack, Kenneth M., *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991*, Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004.

Prendergast, John, *The struggle for Sudan's soul: political and agrarian roots of war and famine*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Concern, 1995.

Prunier, Gerard, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*. London: Hurst and Company, 2005.

Rist, Gilbert, *The History of Development: from western origins to global faith*, London: Zed Books, 2002.

Robinson, David, *Muslim Societies in African History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Rodney, Walter, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981.

Ruay, Deng D. Akol, *The Politics of Two Sudans: The South and the North 1821-1969*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1994.

Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1979.

Said, Edward, *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1993.

Salam, A.H. Abdel and Alex de Waal, *The Phoenix State: Civil Society and the Future of Sudan*, Lawrenceville, N.J.: The Red Sea Press Inc., 2001.

Salih, M.A. Mohamed and John Markakis (eds.), *Ethnicity and the State in Eastern Africa*, Uppsala: Nordiska Africainstitutet, 1998.

Salih, M. A. Mohamed, "Understanding the Conflict in Darfur," Occasional Paper, Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, 2005.

Sandbrook, Richard, *The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation*, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Schraeder, Peter J., *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Sidahmed, Abdel Salam *Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Sikainga, Ahmad Alawad, *Slaves into Workers: emancipation and labor in Colonial Sudan*, Houston: University of Texas Press, 1996.

Simons, Geoffrey Leslie, *Libya: the Struggle for Survival*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993.

Sharkey, Heather Jane, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism, and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Spiers, Edward M., *Sudan: the reconquest reappraised*, London: Routledge, 1998.

Stiglitz, Joseph, *Globalization and its Discontents*, London: W.W. Norton and Company Ltd., 2002.

St John, Ronald Bruce, *Qaddafi's World Design: Libyan Foreign Policy, 1969-1987*, London: Saqi Books, 1987.

Sundquist, Eric J., (ed.), *The Oxford W.E.B. Du Bois reader*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Theobald, A.B., *'Ali Dinar; Last Sultan of Darfur, 1896-1916*, London: Longmans, Green, 1965.

Triminghain, J. S., *Islam in the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1949.

Tully, Dennis, *Culture and Context in Sudan: The Process of Market Incorporation in Dar Masalit*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1998.

Van de Walle, Nicholas, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Voll, John O. (ed.) *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Warburg, Gabriel, *Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: The case of the Sudan*, London: Routledge, 1978.

Warburg, Gabriel R., *Egypt and the Sudan*, London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1985.

Warburg, Gabriel R., *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley*, London: C. Hurst and Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 1992.

Warburg, Gabriel, *Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan since the Mahdiyya*, London: Hurst and Company, 2003.

Weber, Eugene, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.

West, Michael Oliver, *The Rise of an African Middle Class*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Wheeler, Roxanne, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth Century British Culture*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

Williams, Eric, *Capitalism and Slavery: with a new introduction by Colin A. Palmer*, University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

Willemse, Karen, *One Foot in Heaven: Narratives on Gender and Islam in Darfur, West Sudan*, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2007.

Wilmsen, Edwin N. and Patrick McAllister, (eds.), *The Politics of Difference: ethnic premises in a world of power*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Wolf, Eric R., *Europe and the Peoples Without History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

Woodward, Peter, *Sudan 1898-1989: The Unstable State*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder Colorado, 1990.

Woodward, Peter, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, London: I. B. Taurus, 2003.

Woodward, Peter, *US Foreign Policy and the Horn of Africa*, London: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006.

Young, M. Crawford, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Young, Robert C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2001.

Book Chapters

'Abd al-Rahim, Muddathir, "Arabism, Africanism and Self—Identification in the Sudan" in Dunstan M. Wai, *The Southern Sudan: The problem of national integration*, London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1973, pp. 29-46.

Abdul-Jalil, Musa Adam, "The Dynamics of Ethnic Identification in Northern Darfur, Sudan: A Situational Approach," in Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Sudan: Ethnicity and National Cohesion*, Bayreuth African Studies Series, 1984.

Abubakar, Dauda, "The Authoritarian State and Human Rights Violation in Postcolonial Africa: A case study of Nigeria" in Apollo Rwomire, *Social Problems in Africa: new visions*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2001, pp. 72-91.

Abu Shouk, Ahmed Ibrahim, "Kordofan: From Tribes to Nazirates" in Endre Stiansen and Michael Kevane (eds.), *Kordofan Invaded: peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke, Brill NV., 1998, pp. 120-144.

Adas, Michael, "Contested Hegemony: the Great War and the Afro-Asian assault on the civilizing mission ideology" in Prasenjit Duara (ed.), *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Ten*, London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 78-100.

Al-Shafi, Ahmad, "Responses to Nimeiri's Policies: Some observations on social and political changes in northern Sudan" in Peter Woodward, *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 144-159.

Al-Teraifi, Al Agab Ahmed, "Regionalisation in the Sudan: Characteristics, Problems, Prospects" in Peter Woodward (ed.), *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 92-118.

Ayittey, George B.N., "Why Structural Adjustment Failed in Africa" in John Baffoe-Bonnie and Mohammed Khayum (eds.), *Contemporary Economic Issues in Developing Countries*, Westport, Ct: Praeger Publishing Group, 2003, pp. 167-186.

Barth, Frederick, "Economic Spheres in Darfur" in Raymond Firth, (ed.), *Themes in Economic Anthropology*, London: Tavistock Publications Ltd., 1967, pp. 159-165.

Bechtold, Peter, "More Turbulence in Sudan" in John O. Voll, *Sudan: state and society in crisis*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991, pp. 1-23.

Boone, Catherine, "States and Ruling Classes in Post-Colonial Africa: The Enduring Contradictions of Power", in Joel Migdal, Kohli Athul and Vivienne Shue, (eds.), *State Power and Social Forces*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 108-142.

Boudreaux, Karol C., "Property Rights and Resource Conflict in Sudan" *Realizing Property Rights*, in Hernando de Soto and Francis Cheneval (eds.), Berne, Switzerland: Ruffer & Rub, 2006, http://works.bepress.com/karol_boudreaux/4

Brett, Teddy, "Colonialism and Capitalism" in Chris Allen and Gavin Williams (eds.) *Sociology of Developing Societies: Sub-Saharan Africa*, London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982, pp.

Callaghy, Thomas M., "Africa and the World Political Economy: Still Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place" in John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics: Post Cold War Challenges*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995, pp. 41-68.

Collins, Robert O., "Introduction", in Robert O. Collins and Francis M. Deng, *The British in the Sudan, 1898-1956: The Sweetness and the Sorrow*, London: Macmillan, 1984, pp. 1-14.

Comaroff, John L., "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an age of Revolution" in Edwin N. Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, (eds.) *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World Of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 162-182.

Cornwell, Richard, "The Collapse of the African State" in Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason (eds.), *Peace, Profit, Plunder: The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1999, pp. 60-80.

Cooper, Frederick and Randall Packard, "Introduction" in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 1-45.

Cooper, Frederick, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept" in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 64-92.

Cooper, Frederick, "Conflict and Connection: Rethinking African colonial history", in Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and Peter Gran, (eds.), *History After the Three Worlds: Post-Eurocentric Historiographies*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000, pp. 157-190.

Daly, Martin W., "The British Occupation" in M. W. Daly and Carl F. Petry, *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Volume 2: Modern Egypt from 1517 until the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 240-251.

De Waal, Alex, "Some Comments on Militias in Contemporary Sudan" in M.W. Daly and A. Sakainga, *Civil War in the Sudan*, London: British Academic Press, 1993, pp. 142-175.

De Waal Alex and A.H. Abdel Salam, "Islamism, State Power and Jihad in Sudan", in Alex de Waal, (eds.), *Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Indiana University Press, 2004, pp. 71-113.

Diraige, Ahmad Ibrahim, "Position Statement" in Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed and Gunnar Sorbo (eds.), *Management of the Crisis in the Sudan*, Proceedings of the Bergen Forum, 23-24 February, 1989.

Dirks, Nicholas B., "Introduction" in Nicholas B. Dirks, (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture*, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1997, p1-26.

Dirlik, Arik, "Is There History after Eurocentricism?" in Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and Peter Gran, eds., *History After the Three Worlds: Post-Eurocentric Historiographies*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000, pp. 25-48.

Dixon, Chris and Michael J. Heffernan, "Introduction" in Chris Dixon and Michael J. Heffernan (eds.), *Colonialism and Development in the Contemporary World*, London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1991, pp. 1-21.

Doornbos, Martin, "On Becoming Sudanese" in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim (eds.), *Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation*, London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1988, pp. 99-120.

Duigan, Peter and L.H Gann, "Economic Achievements of the Colonizers: An Assessment," in Peter Duigan and L.H Gann, (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa: 1870-1969*, Volume 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, pp. 673-696.

Dykestra, Darrell, "The French Occupation of Egypt" in M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 113-138.

El-Din, Kamal, "Islam and Islamism in Darfur" in Alex de Waal (ed.), *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007, pp. 92-112.

El Tom, Abdullahi Osman, "Implications of the 1983-1985 Famine on the Rural Sahel of Sudan" in Mohamed Abdel Rahim Mohamed Salih, *Agrarian Change in the Central Rainlands, Sudan*, Uppsala: Nordiska Africainstitutet, 1987, pp. 149-158.

Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, excerpt in Martin Bulmer and John Solomos, (eds.), *Racism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 117-118.

Frederickson, George, "Social Origins of American Racism" in Martin Bulmer and John Solomos (eds.), *Racism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 70-81.

Goldberg, David Theo, "Liberalism's Limits: Carlyle and Mill on the "Negro Question" in Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott eds., *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002, Chapter 10, pp. 195-204.

Gurdon, Charles C., "The Economy of Sudan and recent Strains" in Peter Woodward, *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London, Routledge, 1991, pp. 18-33.

Haaland, G., "Nomadization as an Economic Career among Sedentaries in the Sudan Savanna Belt" in I. Cunnison and W. James (eds.), *Essays in Sudan Ethnography*. London: C Hurst & Company, 1972, pp. 149-172.

Halliday, Fred, 'Transnational Paranoia and International Relations: The Case of the 'West versus Islam' in Stephanie Lawson (ed.), *The New Agenda for International Relations*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002, pp. 37-53.

Harir, Sharif, "Militarization of Conflict, Displacement and the Legitimacy of the State: A Case from Dar Fur, Western Sudan" in Terje Tvedt (ed), *Conflicts in the Horn of Africa: Human and Ecological Consequences of Warfare*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1992, pp.14-26.

Harir, Sharif, "Recycling the Past in Sudan" in S. Harir, and T. Tvedt (eds.), *Sudan: Shortcut to Decay*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainsitutet, 1994, pp. 10-68.

Harir, Sharif, "The 'Arab belt' versus the 'African belt': ethnic and political strife in Darfur and its cultural and regional factors" in S. Harir and T. Tvedt (eds.), *Sudan: Shortcut to Decay*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainsitutet, 1994, pp. 144-185.

Harir, S., S. Hodnebo and T. Tvedt, "Sudan Chronology Since 1972" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt, and Raphael K. Badal, *Short Cut to Decay: The case of Sudan*, Nordic Africainstitutet, 1994, pp. 259-274.

Ibrahim, Hasasn Ahmed, "The Egyptian Empire, 1805-1886", in M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp.198-216.

Kurita, Yoshiko, "The Social Bases of Regional Movements in Sudan, 1960s-1980s" in Katsuyoshi Fukui and John Markakis (eds.), *Ethnicity and Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, London: James Currey Publishers, 1994, pp. 202-216.

Karim, Hassan Gad, "Sudanese Government Attitudes Towards Foreign Investment: Theory and Practice" in Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, *Sudan: State, Capital and transformation*, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1988, pp. 37-54.

Kunz, Diane B., "The Emergence of the United States as a Middle Eastern Power: 1956-1958," in William Roger Louis and Roger Own (eds.), *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958*, London" I.B. Taurus Press, 2002, pp. 77-100.

Larémont, Ricardo René,"Borders, States and Nationalism," in Ricardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism and the African State*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, pp. 1-43.

La Rue, G.M., "Land and Social Stratification in the Darfur Region of the Sudan: The Hakura System" in Clive Dewey, (ed.), *The State and the Market: Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Third World*, London: Sangam Books, 1988, pp. 24-44.

Lesch, Ann Mosley, "Sudan's Foreign Policy: In search of aid, arms and allies" in John O. Voll, (ed.), *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, Bloomington, Indiana: University of Indiana Press, 1991, pp. 43-70.

Lesch, Ann Mosely, "The Destruction of Civil Society in Sudan" in Augustus Richard Norton, *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2001, pp. 153-191.

Lewis, Bernard, "From *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry*" in Kevin Reilly, Stephen Kaufman and Angela Bodino, *Racism: A Global Reader*, New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 2003, pp. 52-58.

Louis, William Roger and Ronald Robinson, "Empire Preserv'd: How the Americans put anti-communism before anti-imperialism," in Prasenjit Duara, (ed.), *Decolonization: Perspectives from Then and Now*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 152-161.

Mahmoud, Muhammad, "Sufism and Islamism in the Sudan" in David Westerlund and Eva Evers Rosander, (eds.), *African Islam and Islam in Africa: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, London: C. Hurst and Co., 1997, pp. 162-192.

Manger, Leif, "On Becoming Muslim: The Construction of Identities among the Lafofa of the Sudan", in Leif Manger (ed.), *Muslim Diversity: Local Islam in Global Contexts*, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1999, pp. 224-243.

Manger, Leif, "The Nature of the State and the Problem of a National Identity in the Sudan" in G. Sørbo and S. Pausewang (eds) *Prospects for Peace, Security and Human Rights in Africa's Horn*, Bergen: Fagbokforlaget 2004.

Manger, Leif, "Reflections on War and State and the Sudan" in Bruce Kapferer, (ed.), *State, Sovereignty, War: Civil Violence in Emerging Global Realities*, New York: Berghhan Books, 2004, pp. 75-88.

Marchal, Roland, "The Unseen Regional Implications of the Crisis in Darfur" in Alex de Waal, *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Martin, William G., "The World Economy and the African State, in Ricardo René Larémont (ed.), *Borders, Nationalism and the African State*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, pp. 277-314.

Mazrui, Ali A., "The Black Arabs in Comparative Perspective: The Political Sociology of Race Mixture" in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.), *The Southern Sudan: The problem of national integration*, London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1973, pp. 48-82.

Nalder, L. F., "The Two Sudans: Some Aspects of the South," in J.A. Hamilton (ed.), *The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium from Within*, London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1935.

O'Fahey, R.S., "Religion and Trade in the Kayra Sultanate of Dar Fur" in Yusuf Fadl Hasan (ed.), *Sudan in Africa*, Khartoum: Institute of African and Asian Studies, 1985, pp. 87-97.

O'Fahey, R.S., "Islamic Hegemonies in the Sudan" in Louis Brenner (ed.), *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, pp. 21-35.

O'Brien, Jay and Norman O'Neill, "Uneven Development and Class Formation", in Jay O'Brien and Norman O'Neill (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd., 1988.

O'Neill, Norman, "Class and Politics in the Modern History of Sudan," in Norman O'Neill and Jay O'Brien (eds.), *Economy and Class in Sudan*, Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company Ltd, 1988.

Reichmuth, Stefan, "Murtada al Zabidi (1732-91) and the Africans: Islamic discourse and the scholarly networks in the late eighteenth century" in Scott Steven Reese (ed.), *The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004, pp.121-153.

Rotberg, Robert I., "The Failure and Collapse of the Nation-State: Breakdown, prevention, repair" in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail; Causes and Consequences*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004, pp. 1-50.

Rycx, Jean Francois, "The Islamisation of Law as a Political Stake in Sudan" in Peter Woodward (ed.), *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 139-143.

Saavedra, Martha, "Ethnicity, Resources and the Central State: Politics in the Nuba Mountains, 1950 to the 1990s" in Endre Stiansen and Michael Kevane (eds.), *Kordofan Invaded: peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa*, Leiden: Koninklijke, Brill NV., 1998, pp. 223-253.

Salih, M. A. Mohamed, "Political Narratives and Identity Formation in Post-1989 Sudan", in M. A. Mohamed Salih, and J. Markakis (eds.), *Ethnicity and the State in Eastern Africa*, Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1998, pp72-85.

Sluggett, Peter, "The Pan-Arab Movement: The influence of Cairo and Moscow," in William Roger Louis and Roger Owen (eds.), *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958*, London" I.B. Taurus Press, 2002, pp. 209-220.

Tambiah, Stanley J., "The Nation-State in Crisis and the Rise of Ethnonationalism" in Edwin N. Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, (eds.), *The Politics of Difference: ethnic premises in a world of power*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 124-143.

Toledano, Ehud R., Social and Economic Change in the "long nineteenth century" in M.W. Daly, *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. Two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 252-284.

Totten, Samuel "The Darfur Genocide: The Mass Rape of Black African Girls and Women" in Samuel Totten (ed.) *Plight and Fate of Women During and Following Genocide*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009, pp. 137-169.

Dunstan M. Wai, "Political Trends in the Sudan and the Future of the Sudan" in Dunstan M. Wai (ed.), *The Southern Sudan: The Problem of National Integration*, London: Routledge, 1973, pp. 145-172.

West, Cornel, "A Genealogy of Modern Racism" in Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg (eds.), *Race, Critical Theories*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2002, pp. 90-112.

Wilmsen, Edwin N., "Introduction: Premises of Power in Ethnic Politics" in Edwin N. Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, (eds.), *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 7-12.

Wolmuth, Karl, "Alternative Economic Strategies for the Sudan" in Sharif Harir, Terje Tvedt, and Raphael K. Badal (eds.), *Short-cut to decay: the case of the Sudan*, Nordic Africa Institute, 1994, pp. 203-246.

Woodward, Peter, "Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Sudanese Politics Before Independence" in Gabriel R. Warburg and Uri M. Kuperferschmidt (eds.), *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983, pp. 97-112.

Journal Articles and Conference Papers

Abbas, Philip, *Africa Today*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1973, pp. 29-43.

Abdalla, Abdalla Ahmed, "Environmental Degradation and Conflict in Darfur Experiences and Development Options," *Environmental Degradation as a Cause of Conflict in Darfur*, Conference Proceedings, Khartoum, 2004, pp. 85-92.

Abdel Rahim, M., "The Development of British Policy in the Southern Sudan, 1899-1947," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.2, No. 3, 1966, pp. 227 – 249.

'Abd Al-Rahim, Muddathir, "Arabism, Africanism, and Self-Identification in the Sudan," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Jul., 1970, pp. 233-249.

Abdelkarim, Abbas, "Wage Labourers in the Fragmented Labour Market of the Gezira, Sudan," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 56, No. 1, 1986, pp. 54-70

Abubakar, Dauda, "Rethinking State Failure: Identity, Citizenship and the Crisis of the African State," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Annual Convention, Chicago, 2008,

http://www.allacademic.com//meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/7/8/9/8/pages178982/p178982-1.php

Adas, Michael, "Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 15, 2004, pp. 31-63.

Adedeji, Adebayo, "An Alternative for Africa," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1994, pp. 119-132.

Aguda, Oluwadare, "Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1973, pp. 177-200.

Aguda, Oluwadare, "The State and the Economy in the Sudan: From a Political Scientist's Point of View," *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 431-448.

Al Assam, Mukhtar, "Regional Government in the Sudan," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.3, 1983, pp. 111-120.

Al Assam, Mukhtar, "Bureaucracy and Development in the Sudan," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1-2, 1989, pp. 28-48.

Al-Shahi, Ahmed, "A Noah's Ark: The Continuity of the Khatmiyya Order in Northern Sudan," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1981, pp.13-29.

Amin, Samir, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa- Origins and Contemporary Forms" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1972, pp. 503-524.

An-Na'im, Abdullahi Ahmed, "Constitutionalism and Islamization in the Sudan," *Africa Today*, Vol. 36, No. 3/4, 1989, pp. 11-28.

Apter, Andrew, "Africa, Empire, and Anthropology, A Philological Exploration of Anthropology's Heart of Darkness," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 28, 1999, pp. 577-598.

Arrighi, Giovanni, "The African Crisis," *New Left Review*, 15, May-June, 2002, pp. 3-35.

Bartels, P. Brian, "HIV/AIDS, State Capacity, and Security in Africa," presented at the Workshop and Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University Mini Conference, 2-5 May, 2003.

Berman, Bruce, "Ethnicity, Patronage and the Politics of Uncivil Nationalism," *African Affairs*, Vol. 97, No. 388, 1998, pp. 305-341.

Berman, Bruce, "A Palimpsest of Contradictions": Ethnicity, Class and Politics in Africa," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No.1, 2004, pp.13-31.

Bernal, Victoria, "Colonial Moral Economy and the Discipline of Development: The Gezira Scheme and "Modern" Sudan," *Cultural Anthropology* Vol 12, No.4, 1997, pp. 447-479.

Birks, J.S., "The Mecca Pilgrimage by West African Pastoral Nomads," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1977, pp. 47-58.

Boddy, Janice, "Anthropology and the Civilizing Mission in Colonial Sudan," Firth Lecture, London School of Economics, 2008,
http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/anthropology/pdf/asa_conf_08/Boddy_Firth_Lecture_2008.pdf

Bratton, Michael, "Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa", *World Politics*, Vol.41, No.3, 1989, pp. 407-430.

Brewer, William D., "The Libyan-Sudanese 'Crisis' of 1981: Danger for Darfur and Dilemma for the United States," *Middle East Journal*, Vol.36, No.2, 1982, pp. 205-216.

Brubaker, Rogers and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, Vol. 1, pp. 1-47.

Chiriyankandath, James, "1986 Elections in the Sudan: Tradition, Ideology, Ethnicity: And Class?" *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. No.38, 1987, pp. 96-102.

Clapham, Christopher, "The *longue duree* of the African State," *African Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 372, pp. 433-439.

Cline, William R., "Perspectives on the External Debt Situation: International Debt from Crisis to Recovery?" *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 75, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Ninety-Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association, May, 1985, pp.185-190.

Cooper, Frederick, "Africa and the World Economy", *African Studies Review*, Vol. 24, No.2/3, Social and Humanistic Research on Africa: An Assessment, 1981, pp.1-86.

Cousins, Alan, "Governing Africa: The Imperial Mind in British Colonies, 1938-1947, in the Light of Indian Experience," *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, No. 7/8, 1999, pp.140-167.

Dean, Roger, "Rethinking the Civil War in the Sudan," *Civil Wars*, 1743-968X, Volume 3, Issue 1, 2000, pp. 71-91.

Dekmejian, Richard H. and Margaret J. Wyszomirski, "Charismatic Leadership in Islam: The Mahdi of the Sudan", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1972, pp. 193-214.

De Waal, Alex, "Creating Devastation and Calling it Islam: The War for the Nuba, Sudan," *SAIS Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2001, pp. 117-132.

De Waal, Alex, "Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 31, No. 102, 2004, pp. 716-725.

De Waal, Alex, "Who are the Darfurians? African and Arab identities, violence and external engagement," *African Affairs*, Vol. 104, No. 415, 2005, pp.181-205.

Dirar, Uoldeul Chelati, "Colonialism and the Construction of National Identities: The Case of Eritrea," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2007, pp. 256-276.

Doornbos, Martin, "The African State in Academic Debate: Retrospect and Prospect" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28, 2, 1990, pp.179-198.

Doornbos, Martin, "Linking the Future to the Past: Ethnicity and Pluralism", *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 52, 1991, pp.53-65.

Drescher, Seymour, "Capitalism and slavery after fifty years," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, Vol. 18, No.3, 1997, pp. 212 – 227.

Duffield, Mark, "From Emergency to Social Security in Sudan- Part 1: The Problem," *Disasters*, Vol.14, Issue, 3, 1990, pp. 187-203.

Duffield, Mark, "Absolute Distress: Structural Causes of Hunger in Sudan," *Middle East Report*, No. 166, 1990, pp. 4-11.

Duffield, Mark and John Prendergast, "Sovereignty and Intervention after the Cold War: Lessons from the Emergency Relief Desk," *Middle East Report*, No. 187/188, 1994, pp. 9-15.

Ekeh, Peter P., "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1975, pp. 91-112.

El-Amin, Mohammed Nuri. "Was there an Alliance between the Watanist (Nationalist) Party, International Communism, and the White Flag League in the Sudan?", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2,1992, pp. 177-185.

Elhussein, A.M., "The Revival of 'Native Administration' in the Sudan: A Pragmatic View," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 9, 1989, pp. 537-446.

Ellis, Stephen, "Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa", *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 43, No.1, 2002, pp. 1-26.

El-Tom, Abdullahi, "The Black Book of Sudan: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in Sudan," *Journal of African National Affairs*, Vol. 2, No.1, 2003, pp. 25-35.

El-Ayouty, Yassin, "Settlement of the Southern Sudanese Problem: Its Significance and Implications for the Future," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1972, pp.10-12.

El Zain, Mahmud, "Tribe and Religion in the Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 23, No. 70, 1996, pp. 523-529.

El Zain, Mahmoud, "The Passing of Development Discourse and its Successors: Is the condition ripe for putting forward alternative development packages? (A case from the Sudan)," Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 11th General Assembly, Maputo, Mozambique, 6-10 December, 2005, www.codesria.org/Links/conferences/general_assembly11/papers/zain.pdf

El-Zein, Salah, "Articulation of Cultural Discourses and Political Dominance in Sudan," *Respect: Sudanese Journal for Human Rights' Culture and Issues of Cultural Diversity*, Issue No.2, March, 2006.

Englebert, Pierre, "The Contemporary African State: Neither African nor state", *Third World Quarterly*, vol.18, No. 4, 1997, pp. 767-775.

Fourie, Pieter and Martin Schonteich, "Africa's New Security Threat." *African Security Review*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 2001, pp. 29-57.

Freund, Bill, "Democracy and Colonial Heritage in Africa: Revisiting Mamdani's *Citizen and Subject*," *Left History*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 101-108.

Gallab, Abdullahi A., "The Insecure Rendezvous Between Islam And Totalitarianism: The Failure Of The Islamist State In The Sudan", *Arab Studies Quarterly (ASQ)*, Spring, 2001, pp. 87-108.

Gordon, Casey N., "Recent Developments in the Land Law of the Sudan: A Legislative Analysis," *Journal of African Law*, Vol.30, No.2, 1986, pp.143-174.

Goswell, Harold F., "The 1958 Elections in the Sudan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1958, pp. 409-417.

Griffiths, Ieuan, "The Scramble for Africa: Inherited Political Boundaries", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 152, No.2, 1986, pp. 204-216.

Grosfoguel, R., 'The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economy Paradigms,' in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2/3, 2007, pp. 211-223.

Hailey, Lord "Native Administration in Africa," *International Affairs*, Vol. 23, No.3, 1947, pp. 336-342.

Hasan, Yusuf Fadl, "The Sudanese Revolution of October 1964," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Dec., 1967, pp. 491-509.

Hassan, Mohamed S., "Political Islam Versus the Society in Sudan; How the Islamic Project for Renewal Failed," Sudanese Studies Society, Santa Clara University, May 28-30, 2004.

Hinderink J. and J. J. Sterkenburg, "Agricultural Policy and Production in Africa: The Aims, the Methods, and the Means," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1983, pp. 1-23.

Holy, L., "Drought and Change in a Tribal Economy: The Berti of Northern Darfur", *Disasters*, Vol.4, No.1, 1980 pp. 65-77.

Hutchinson, Sharon Elaine, "Nuer Ethnicity Militarized," *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 16, No.3, 2000, pp. 6-13.

Ibrahim, Hassan Ahmed, "Mahdist Uprisings against the Condominium Government in the Sudan, 1900-1927," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1979.

Ibrahim, Hassan Ahmed, "Imperialism and Neo-Mahdism in the Sudan: A Study of British Policy towards Neo-Mahdism, 1924-1927," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1980, pp. 214-239.

Ismael, Tareq Y., "The U.A.R in Africa," *The Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2, No.2, 1968, pp. 175-194.

Ismael, Tareq Y., "The United Arab Republic and the Sudan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 23, No.1, 1969, pp. 14-28.

Jamal, Abbashar, "Funding Fundamentalism: The Political Economy of and Islamist State," *Middle East Report*, No. 172, 1991, pp. 14-17 and p. 38.

Jessop, Bob, "Gramsci as a spatial theorist," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2005, pp. 421 – 437.

Kaikati, Jack G., "The Economy of Sudan: A Potential Breadbasket of the Arab World?" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 11, No.1, 1980, pp. 99-123.

Kapteijns, Lidwien, "The Emergence of a Sudanic State: Dar Masalit, 1874-1905," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 4 1983, pp. 601-613.

Kapteijns, Lidwien, "Mahdist Faith and the Legitimation of Poplar revolt in Western Sudan", *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 55, No. 4, 1985, pp. 390-399.

Kevane, Michael and Leslie Grey, "Local Politics in the Time of Turabi's Revolution" Gender, Class and Ethnicity in Western Sudan," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol.65, No.2, 1995.

Kirk-Greene, Anthony, "The Thin White: The Size of the British Colonial Service in Africa," *African Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 314, 1980, pp. 25-44.

Lefebvre, Jeffrey A., "The United States and Egypt: confrontation and accommodation in Northeast Africa, 1956-60," *Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29, No.2, 1993, pp. 321-338.

Lerhe, Eric, "The Role of Nationalism in the Rwandan Genocide" in Susan M. Thomson and J. Zoe Wilson, (eds.), *International Insights: A Dalhousie Journal of International Affairs*, special issue, Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region: Ten Years on from Genocide, 2005, pp. 49-74.

Lienhardt, Godfrey, "The Sudan: Aspects of the South Government among Some of the Nilotic Peoples, 1947-52," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1982, pp. 22-34.

Carolyn Fleur-Lobban and Richard Lobban, "The Sudan since 1989: National Islamic Front Rule", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No.2, 2001, pp. 1-9.

Mahmoud, Mahgoub El-Tigani, "Inside Darfur: Ethnic Genocide by a Governance Crisis," *Comparative Studies of South Asia Africa and the Middle East*, 2004; Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 3-17.

Makinda, Samuel M., "Conflict and Superpowers in the Horn of Africa", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.1, 1992, pp. 93-103.

Mamdani, Mahmood, "Making Sense of Political Violence in Postcolonial Africa," *Identity, Culture and Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2002, pp. 1-24.

Manger, Leif, "Resource Conflict as a Factor in the Darfur Crisis in Sudan," International Colloquium, *At the Frontiers of Land Issues*, Montpellier, 2006, http://www.mpl.ird.fr/colloque_foncier/Communications/PDF/Manger.pdf

Mazrui, Ali, "Black Africa and the Arabs," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 4, 1975, pp. 725-742.

Mazrui, Ali, "Religion and Political Culture in Africa," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. LIII, No.4, 1985, pp. 817-839.

Mazrui, Ali A., "The Re-invention of Africa: Edward Said, V.Y Mudimbe, and Beyond", *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 2005, pp. 68-82.

Miller, Catherine, "Power, Land and Ethnicity in the Kassala-Gedaref States: an Introduction," *Le Caire, Cedej*, 2005, at <http://www.mmsh.univ-aix.fr/iremam/HTML/PUBLI/CHERCH/CM-IntroductionSoudan.pdf>

Mohamed, Adam Azzain, "Indigenous Institutions and Practices Promoting Peace and/or Mitigating Conflicts: The Case of Southern Darfur of Western Sudan,"

Environmental Degradation as a Cause of Conflict in Darfur, Conference Proceedings, Khartoum, 2004, pp. 67-79.

Morton, John, "Ethnicity and Politics in Red Sea Province in Sudan," *African Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 350, 1989, pp. 63-76.

Mowat, R. C., "From Liberalism to Imperialism: The Case of Egypt 1875-1887," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1973, pp. 109-124.

Niblock, Timothy C., "A New Political System in Sudan," *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 293, 1974, pp. 408-418.

Niblock, Tim, "Sudan's Economic Nightmare," *MERIP Reports*, No. 135, 1985, pp. 15-18 and p. 32.

Norris, M.W., "Local Government and Decentralization in the Sudan," *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.3, 1983, pp.209-222.

O'Brien, Jay, "Toward a Reconstitution of Ethnicity: Capitalist Expansion and Cultural Dynamics in Sudan," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 88, No. 4, 1986, pp. 898-907.

Oesterdiekhoff, Peter and Karl Wohlmuth, "The "Breadbasket" Is Empty: The Options of Sudanese Development Policy," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1983, pp. 35-67.

Ogunbadejo, Oye, "Qaddafi's North African designs," *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1983, pp. 155-178.

Olsson, Lennart, "On the Causes of Famine: Drought, Desertification and Market Failure in the Sudan," *Ambio*, Vol. 22, No. 6, 1993, pp. 395-403.

O'Fahey, Rex S. and Jay L. Spaulding, "Hāshim and the Musabba'āt," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1972, pp. 316-333.

O'Fahey, R.S., "Some Recent Sudanese Biographies, Memoirs and Histories (including music): A bibliographic note", *Sudanic Africa*, 6, 1995, pp. 137-155.

O'Fahey, R.S., "Endowment, privilege and estate in the Central and Eastern Sudan'," *Islamic Law and Society*, iv, 3, 1997, pp. 334-351.

O'Fahey, R.S., "Does Darfur Have a Future in the Sudan," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 27 2006, pp. 27-41.

Patel, Maresh, "An Examination of the 1990-91 Famine in Sudan," *Disasters*, Vol.18, 1994, pp. 313-31.

Pisano, Eric Allina, "Resistance and the Social History of Africa," *Journal of Social History*, 37.1, 2003, pp. 187-198.

Power, Samantha, "Business as Usual at the U.N.," *Foreign Policy*, No. 144, 2004, pp. 38-39.

Prendergast, John, "Blood Money for Sudan: World Bank and IMF to the "Rescue"," *Africa Today*, Vol. 36, No. 3/4, 1989, pp. 43-53.

Robinson, Arthur E., "The Arab Dynasty of Dar For (Darfur)," *African Affairs*, Vol. XXVIII, No. CIX, 1928, pp. 55-67.

Roden, David, "Regional Inequality and Rebellion in the Sudan," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 64, No.4, 1974, pp. 498-516.

Rodinelli, Dennis A., "Administrative Decentralisation and Economic Development: The Sudan's Experiment with Devolution," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1981, pp. 595-624.

Ronen, Yehudit, "Sudan and Egypt: the swing of the pendulum, 1989-2001," *Middle East Studies*, Vol. 39, No.33, 2003, pp. 81-98.

Poggo, Scopas S., "General Ibrahim Abboud's Military Administration in the Sudan, 1958-1964: Implementation of the Programs of Islamization and Arabization in the Southern Sudan," *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2002, pp. 67-101.

Salih, Kamal Osman, "The Sudan, 1985-9: The Fading Democracy," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2, Jun., 1990, pp. 199-224.

Salih, M. A. Mohammed, "'New Wine in Old Bottles': tribal militias and the Sudanese state," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 16, No. 45, 1989, pp. 168 – 174.

Salih, Mohamed A. Mohamed, "Resistance and Response: Ethnocide and genocide in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan," *GeoJournal*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 1995, pp. 71-78.

Salih, Mohamed M.A., "Tribal Militias, SPLA/SPLM and the Sudanese State: "New Wine in Old Bottles," Management of the Crisis in the Sudan, Proceedings of the Bergen Forum, 1989, <http://www.fou.uib.no/fd/1996/f/712001/index.htm>.

Scholch, Alexander, "The 'Men on the Spot' and the English Occupation of Egypt in 1882," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1976, pp. 773-785.

Sconyers, David, "Servant or Saboteur? The Sudan Political Service during the crucial decade: 1946–1956," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1988, pp. 42-51.

Scott, Philippa, "The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Liberation Army (SPLA)," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 33, 1985, pp. 69-82.

Sharkey, Heather J., "Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity and Race," *African Affairs*, Vol. 107, No. 426, 2008, pp. 21-43.

Sharma, B.S., "The 1965 Elections in the Sudan," *The Political Quarterly*, Vol.37, No.4, 1966, pp. 441-452.

Shaw, Timothy M., "Debates about Africa's Future: The Brandt, World Bank and Lagos Plan Blueprints," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Africa: Tensions and Contentions, 1983, pp. 330-344.

Shaw, Timothy, "Ethnicity as the *Resilient Paradigm* for Africa: From the 1960s to the 1980s." *Development and Change*, Vol. 17, 1986, pp. 587-605.

Shaw, Timothy M., "Reformism, Revisionism, and Radicalism in African Political Economy during the 1990s", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 1991, pp. 191-212.

Shazali, Salah and Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed, "Pastoral Land Tenure and Agricultural Expansion: Sudan and the Horn of Africa," Paper presented at the DFID workshop on Land Rights and Sustainable Development in sub-Saharan Africa, Berkshire, UK, 16 February, 1999.

Smith, Tony, "The Underdevelopment of Development Literature: The Case of Dependency Theory," *World Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 2, 1979, pp. 247-288

Tar, Usman A., "Old Conflict, New Complex Emergency: An Analysis of Darfur Crisis, Western Sudan", *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, Vo. 15, No.3, pp. 406-427.

Tignor, Robert L., "The Sudanese Private Sector: An Historical Overview," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 25, 1987, pp.179-212.

Tobert, Natalie, "The Effect of Drought among the Zaghawa in Northern Darfur," *Disasters*, Vol. 9, No.3, 1985, pp. 213-223.

Trevor-Roper, Hugh, "The Past and Present: History and Sociology," *Past and Present*, Vol. 42, 1969, pp.1-17.

Tunick, Mark, "Tolerant Imperialism: John Stuart Mill's Defence of British Rule in India" *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 68, 2006, pp.586-611.

Van Der Graaf, Henny J., "Proliferation of light weapons in Africa," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 30, No.3, 1997, pp.133-141.

Voll, John O., "The British, the 'Ulama', and Popular Islam in the Early Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1971, pp. 212-218.

Voll, John, "The Sudanese Mahdi: Frontier Fundamentalist", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1979, pp. 145-166.

Wai, Dunstan M., "The Sudan: Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations under Nimeiry," *African Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 312, 1979, pp. 297-317.

Wai, Dunstan M., "Revolution, Rhetoric, and Reality in the Sudan," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1979, pp. 71-93.

Wai, Dustin, "Pax Britannica and the Southern Sudan: The View from the Theatre," *African Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 16, July 1980, pp. 375-395.

Warburg, Gabriel R., "The Sharia in Sudan: Implementation and Repercussions, 1983-1989," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 1990, pp. 624-637.

Warburg, Gabriel R., "The Turco-Egyptian Sudan: A Recent Historiographical Controversy," *Die Welt des Islams*, Bd. 31, Nr. 2, 1991, pp. 193-215.

Warburg, Gabriel, "Mahdism and Islamism in Sudan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1995, pp. 219-236.

Weiss, Holger, "Variations in the Colonial Representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, ca. 1900-1930," W O P A G - Working Papers on Ghana: Historical and Contemporary Studies 2, January 2004,
<http://www.helsinki.fi/project/wopag/wopag2.pdf>

Welsh, David, "Ethnicity in sub-Saharan Africa," *International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1996, pp. 477-491.

Williamson, John, "A Short History of the Washington Consensus," paper commissioned by Fundación CIDOB Conference, *From the Washington Consensus towards a new Global Governance*, Barcelona, September 24-25, 2004.

Woodward, Peter, "In the Footsteps of Gordon: The Sudan Government and the Rise of Sayyid Sir Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, 1915-1935," *African Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 334, 1985, pp. 39-51.

Woodward, Peter, "Sudan after Numieri," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1985, pp. 958 - 972.

Young, M. Crawford, "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa: A Retrospective," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, Vol. 26, Cahier 103, 1986, pp. 421-495.

Young, Crawford, "The End of the Post-Colonial State in Africa?" *African Affairs*, 2004, Vol. 103, pp. 23-49.

Zahid, Mohammed and Michael Medley, "Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 110, 2006, pp. 693-708.

Working Papers

Salmon, Jago, "A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces," *Small Arms Survey*, HSBA Working Paper 10, 2007,
http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/sudan/Sudan_pdf/SWP%2010%20PDF.pdf

Takana, Yousif, "The Politics of Local Boundaries and Conflict: The South Darfur Case," Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, Sudan Working Paper, 2008.

Tubiana, Jerome, "The Chad-Sudan Proxy War and the 'Darfurization' of Chad: Myths and Realities," *Small Arms Survey*, HSBA Working Paper, 2006.

Anonymous, "Migrant Labor Remittances in Africa: Reducing Obstacles to Developmental Contributions" Africa Region Working Paper Series, No. 64 November 2003, <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp64.pdf>

Reports

Abdul-Jalil, Musa Adam, "The Dynamics of Customary Land Tenure and Natural Resource Management in Darfur," *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* p19 (24),
http://66.102.1.104/scholar?q=cache:c_OmHrQMg8J:scholar.google.com/&hl=en

Bikas C. Sanyal and Sammani A. Yacoub, "Higher Education and Employment in the Sudan," Report for the International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1975.

Collard, Elizabeth (ed.), *Middle East Economic Digest*, London, Middle East Economic Digest Ltd., 1969.

Fawzi, Saad ed Din, "Ethnical and Cultural Pluralism n the Sudan," in *Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in Inter-tropical Communities*, International Institute of Differing Civilizations, Brussels, 1957.

Miller, Catherine, "Power, Land and Ethnicity in the Kassala-Gedaref States: an Introduction," in C. Miller (ed.) *Land, ethnicity and political legitimacy in Eastern Sudan*, Le Caire, Cedej, 2005, at <http://www.mmsh.univ-aix.fr/iremam/HTML/PUBLI/CHERCH/CM-IntroductionSoudan.pdf>

Mohammad S.A., "Fundamentalist" Military Junta Drives Sudan to Catastrophe," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, August/September 1991.

Morton, James, *A Darfur Compendium: A Review of the Geographical, Historical and Economic Background to Development in the Region*, Hemel Hempstead, UK: HTSPE Limited, 1985.

Zaroug, Mahgoub G., 'Country Pasture Profile: Sudan,' A Report for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2000,
<http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPC/doc/counprof/sudan/sudan.htm#3.3%20Major%20Agricultural%20Enterprises%20in%20Each%20Zone>

Europa Publications Staff, *The Middle East and North Africa 2003*, London: Routledge, 2002.

United Nations Development Programme, "Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world: Human Development Report 2007/2008," <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>

Justice Africa, "Food and Power in Sudan: A Critique of Humanitarianism," London: 1997.

HTSPE, "HTSPE Experience in Darfur," <http://www.htspe.com/pdfs/ExperienceInSudan.pdf>

Human Rights Watch, "Behind the Red Line: Political Repression in Sudan," New York, 1996.

Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Watch World Report 1997 - Sudan," 1 January 1997, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8b214.html>

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, "Islamization,, Legal Reform and Human Rights in Sudan," New York:1996.

Norwegian Country Information Centre, "Sudan: Internal displaced persons in Khartoum," LandInfo, 3 November, 2008.

The Republic of Sudan, "Census of Agriculture: 1965-65," The Republic of Sudan Department of Statistics, 1966.

Websites, Newspaper and Magazine Articles

Abaker Mohamed Abuelbashar, "On the Failure of the Peace Talks in Darfur," *Sudan Tribune*, Friday 25 August 2006.

El-Affendi, Abdelwahab, "The Sudanese experiment and the Crisis of the Contemporary Islamist Movement: Lessons and Significance," *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, 29 December, 1999.

Farrow, Mia, Ruth Messinger and Ruth Savitt, "Genocide in slow motion: How Darfur's refugees are dying a protracted death," *American Jewish World Service*, [http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EMAE-76DSGZ-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2007.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EMAE-76DSGZ-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

Herman, Edward, "The Cruise Missile Left (part 5)" <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/8538>

Kristof, Nicholas, "Ethnic Cleansing, Again," *The New York Times*, Wednesday March 24, 2004.

Kristof, Nicholas, "Will We Say 'Never Again' Yet Again?" *The New York Times*, Saturday March 27, 2004.

Kristof, Nicholas, "Starved for Safety," *The New York Times*, Wednesday 31 March, 2004.

Kristof, Nicholas D., "Genocide in Slow Motion," *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 53, No. 2, February 9, 2006.

Ryle, John, "Disaster in Darfur", *New York Review of Books*, 12 August 2004.

United Nations, Cartographic Section,
<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/sudan.pdf>

Zezeza, Paul Tiyaambe, "A Historical Accounting of African Universities: Beyond Afropessimism," *The Zezeza Post*, June 15, 2006,
<http://zezeza.com/blog/index.php?p=38>

Anonymous, "Africa: The Hopeless Continent", *The Economist*, May 2000.

Anonymous, "Beja," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1111/Beja>

Anonymous, "Darfur: Rwanda in Slow Motion," *CBS*, October 20, 2004,
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/10/20/60II/main650457.shtml>

Anonymous, "Darfur experts Debate Conflict" *Newsweek*, Nov 8, 2006,
<http://www.newsweek.com/id/69004/page/4>

Anonymous, "IMF Lifts Suspension of Sudan's Voting and Related Rights," IMF Press Release No. 00/46, 2000,
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2000/pr0046.htm>

Anonymous, Justice and Equality Movement,
http://www.sudanjem.com/2004/en/books_php/books.htm

Anonymous, "Sudan," *The New York Times*, Friday, July 17, 2009,
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/sudan/index.html>

"Sudan: The Wild West", *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 29, No.11, 27 May, 1988, p.6.

"One Killed in Riots ," *Panafrican News Agency* September 15, 2000.

Web Articles

Eltayeb, Galal Eldin, *The Case of Khartoum, Sudan*, http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global_Report/pdfs/khartoum_bw.pdf

El Tom, Abdullah, "The Arab Congregation and the Ideology of Genocide in Darfur , Sudan,"
http://aeltom.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=38

Hassan, Abdelsalam, *History of Law reform in Sudan*, 2008,
<http://www.redress.org/publications/HISTORY%20LAW%20REFORM%20FINALFeb08.pdf>

O’Fahey, R.S. and Jerome Tubiana, “Darfur: Historical and Contemporary Aspects,”
<http://www.smi.uib.no/darfur/A%20DARFUR%20WHOS%20WHO3.pdf>

Takana, Yousif, “The Politics of Local Boundaries and Conflict in Sudan: The South Darfur Case”, Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2008,
<http://www.cmi.no/sudan/doc/?id=967>

Usuanlele, Uyilawa, “Colonial State and Education in Benin Division, 1897-1959,”
<http://www.edo-nation.net/uyi3.htm>

Tanner, Victor and Jérôme Tubiana, “Divided They Fall: The Fragmentation of Darfur’s Rebel Groups,” *Small Arms Survey*, WSBA Working Paper, No. 6,
http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/sudan/Sudan_pdf/SWP%206%20Darfur%20rebels.pdf

Book Reviews

Kevane, Michael, “Review of Gérard Prunier’s *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*,”
<http://lsb.scu.edu/~mkevane/book%20reviews/review%20of%20gerard%20prunier%20darfur%20ambiguous%20genocide.pdf>