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The Politics of Resources, Resistance and Peripheries in Sudan

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African perspectives. Global insights.

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ABSTRACT

In July 2011, Southern Sudan will become Africa's 54th independent state. Since independence in 1956, Sudanese people have been subjected to two civil wars spanning 40 years. Factors, such as clashing identities and political marginalisation that contributed to these civil wars, illustrate the complex layering of political and socio-economic dynamics that created conditions of instability. Within the historical and contemporary contexts, the politics of resources, resistance and peripheries in Sudan are analysed in order to identify the conflict drivers that shaped the political-economic and social environments of Sudan. State formation and the apparent inability of the state to include disgruntled peripheries in decision-making processes are the root cause of countless political crises. Sudan's history of peripheral struggles for access to local-level subsistence resources and the two north-south civil wars are examples of multiple interlocking conflicts that shaped the country's politics in the 20th century. Marginalisation and the economic neglect of peripheral regions formed the bedrock of Sudan's internal conflicts. Both Northern and Southern Sudan will have to contend with these challenges after the south's independence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AUHIP	African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
ESPA	Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement
GoSS	Government of Southern Sudan
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
NCP	National Congress Party
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SLM/A	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SSIM/A	Southern Sudan Independence Movement/Army

INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence in 1956, Sudan has grappled with resource conflicts, the marginalisation of peripheries and the challenges of state formation. In January 2011, Southern Sudanese people voted overwhelmingly in favour of secession from Northern Sudan, which means that in July 2011 an independent Southern Sudan will become Africa's 54th state. The referendum was a central component of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005, which brought Sudan's second civil war to an end. The vote for Southern secession is the culmination of a painful and decades-long history of internal conflict, which can be traced back to problems inherent to the state.

Southern Sudan's independence heralds a new era for both Sudan and the African continent. As Northern and Southern Sudan part ways, the future prospects of the two states will be determined by their ability to manage cross-border and internal conflicts. To manage conflict and ensure stability, the two new political entities will have to engage in processes of constitutional development, redefining each state's political economic base, establishing new institutions and consequently state formation. Both Northern and Southern Sudan need to secure people's livelihoods through meaningful economic activity, especially when viewed against the background of popular revolts in Northern Africa and the Middle East. Sudan's history of conflict is linked to political-economic marginalisation, which results in struggles at local level for access to subsistence resources in a harsh environment of deserts and equatorial swamplands.

To better understand the unique social, political and economic challenges that confront a post-independence Southern and Northern Sudan, it may be necessary to take a lesson from Sudan's history. The Mahdist revolt, which brought an end to colonial control of Sudanese territory in 1885, highlights the complex relations between Sudan's central state and its sometimes ungovernable hinterlands. On 26 January 1885, General Charles George 'Chinese' Gordon was killed on the banks of the lazy Blue Nile during the evacuation of Khartoum, as the local Sudanese forces led by Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad fought the Turco-Egyptian rulers of Sudan. Gordon's death sent shockwaves through the world and showed that the Mahdist revolt was a major military and political uprising. The Mahdist revolt is considered the first uprising of a Sudanese periphery against a central government located in Khartoum. Thirteen years of Sudanese rule followed, until Major (later Lord) Kitchener (who became known for his 'scorched earth' policy during the Anglo Boer War) was dispatched in 1898 to reoccupy the country.¹

Sharif Harir contends that the Mahdist revolt against colonial overlords in Sudan had a lasting impact on Sudanese state formation:²

The significance of the Mahdi for the formative stages of the Sudanese state lies, perhaps, not in his call for an Islamic state but rather in the ability of the charismatic leader to exploit the conditions of discontent precipitated by the colonial Turco-Egyptian rule and [to] unify the peripheral Sudanese to conquer the seat of central power in Khartoum.

The Mahdist revolt illustrates how discontented peripheries are fertile grounds on which to sow the seeds of revolt against the political centre in Khartoum. It was to become a pattern of political behaviour in the country that was repeated with dreadful humanitarian, economic, and political cost throughout the 20th century.

The future of Northern and Southern Sudan depends on redefining (and ultimately restructuring) how the state manages conflict that stems from contested claims for control over, and access to, resources. The singular focus on oil, as a shared natural resource and the cause for conflict during the second civil war, obscures another harsh political reality in Sudan, which is the struggle for access to subsistence resources at local level. The patterns of resource and centre–periphery struggles have defined Sudan's political landscape since independence. Based on historical experience, local-level resource conflicts (for land, water and grazing), or the general political–economic marginalisation of groups and peripheral regions, are likely to continue to affect both Northern and Southern Sudan after the break-up of the territory. For example, since Southern Sudan's referendum for self determination, small-scale conflicts have erupted inside the country, which indicates that the new state will have to contend with internal grievances and individuals or groups that feel marginalised in the evolving political–economic dispensation.

The stand-off between the north and south, with oil politics taking centre stage, is often presented as Sudan's 'national question'. However, Sudan's national question consists of several interlocking conflicts that all involve struggles for rights, economic opportunity and attempts by Sudan's peripheries to gain power and influence in the state. Low politics of resources, such as access to land, nomadic cattle herding, and internal displacement, have contributed to human insecurity in Sudan. Such local-level concerns are often neglected or not taken into consideration because political agendas inside the country are dominated by the high politics of oil and national unity. Yet, local-level resource grievances are a crucial determining factor for relations between Sudan's peripheries and the new state apparatuses, which will be developed in Northern and Southern Sudan after July 2011.

SUDAN'S MULTI-LAYERED 'NATIONAL QUESTION'

Since independence, the central state in Sudan has been involved in several armed struggles with political forces within its territory. The most prominent of these conflicts are the two civil wars between the north and south of the country. However, other examples of internal armed struggle, such as the Eastern Front insurgency that occurred concurrently with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) war in the south during the second civil war (1983–2005) and the Darfur rebellion in 2003, show that Sudan's national question encompasses historical and contemporary conflicts between the central state and marginalised peripheries. Economic marginalisation and Northern domination appear to be the main grievances that armed rebels or opposition groups hold against the central state and the reigning political order in Sudan.

On 5 January 2011, Thabo Mbeki, former South African president and chairperson of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan (AUHIP), gave a lecture at the University of Khartoum, in which he argued that political and economic power has been concentrated in Khartoum and its wider environs since British colonial occupation. As a consequence the rest of the country has remained a periphery that is marginalised and underdeveloped.³

Many scholars of state–society relations assume that acts of domination are necessarily checked by counteracting measures, as Victoria Tin-bor Hui argues in a comparison of Europe and China's state formation experiences.⁴ Khartoum's attempt to dominate the

territory has nearly always met stiff opposition and simultaneously marginalises the peripheries (as Mbeki argues above). Thus, a central feature of Sudanese national politics becomes peripheral resistance against Khartoum, which has had a tremendous impact on state-formation processes and territorial consolidation. Furthermore, posing a specific challenge to the new state of Southern Sudan is the problem of marginalised people and underdeveloped peripheral regions. Therefore, any analysis of Sudan's national question requires a dynamic theory that privileges neither the centre nor the peripheral point of view and that interrogates domination:⁵

A dynamic theory should also view politics – both international and domestic – as processes of strategic interaction between domination-seekers and targets of domination who employ competing strategies and who are simultaneously facilitated and burdened by competing causal mechanisms.

Three examples of the dynamic interactions between the political centre located in Khartoum and marginalised peripheries are explored below:

- The first civil war and Sudan's post-colonial independence as a state devoid of internal social cohesion or national identity.
- The struggle for resources and the quest by peoples living in the peripheries for political recognition.
- The high politics of oil and territorial unity.

As these examples show, a central feature of Sudanese politics is the dynamic relations between the central state and the marginalised peripheries. These relations will have to be negotiated with renewed vigour by power brokers and leaders inside Sudan, as a new chapter in Sudanese history begins.

THE FIRST CIVIL WAR AND THE BIRTH OF A STATE WITHOUT A NATION

The modern state differs from pre-state societies because it employs central coercive power to command obedience, invent ways to organise society and find ways of mobilising resources.⁶ The state therefore positions itself as the hegemonic power within a given territory. State societies are said to be defined by apparatuses of capture.⁷ Post-colonial Sudan's development into a modern state has been hampered by its geographical size, internal cultural diversity and hostile underdeveloped hinterlands. The central state has been unable to command obedience from subjects in its territory and has been unsuccessful in mobilising resources. However, the main grievance of Sudan's peripheries is the centralisation of power and hoarding of resources by northern elites. This has translated into a history of internal armed and political struggles between the state and local forces, revolving around a lack of resources or the state's inability to create an economic base for collective survival in a harsh climate and geography.

The history of state formation teaches that, in order for the state to hoard the means of violence, peripheral elites have to be subjected to the will of the central power

– the state. The measures deployed to subject peripheral elites to central state power essentially combine the use of superior force and/or means of violence, or co-optation.⁸ Sudan's history shows that, from the very beginning, the central state was concentrated in Khartoum and faced the challenge of extending control over hinterlands inhabited by disgruntled inhabitants prone to open dissent.

The fault-lines of conflict that characterise Sudan's post-independence politics date back to colonial governance structures, when during the 58 years of Anglo–Egyptian administration the north and south of Sudan were administered as two separate political entities under one governor-general.⁹ The British treated the north and south as different territorial entities and divided the south into 'closed districts' to protect the territory from Arab slave traders, Islamisation and Arabisation.¹⁰ The north of the country was ruled as a colonial territory with an Islamic and Arabic orientation, whereas the south and the closed districts were an African colonial territory that actively excluded the Arabic language and Islamic faith. Intriguingly, Sudanese from the south could travel freely to Uganda and Kenya but needed pass permits to travel to the north.¹¹

The fact that Southern Sudanese were allowed to travel to Uganda and Kenya without any interference, while pass documents were necessary for travel to Northern Sudan, shows that, in its historical institutional roots, Sudan was never unified. As Mahmood Mamdani observes, when people, however diverse, live under a common law, such a legal framework creates the foundation for a shared or common future.¹² Therefore, by imposing closed districts, limiting people's movement between the north and south of Sudan and entrenching internal identity divisions, the array of peoples, cultures and religions within Sudan's borders never learnt how to live in a single community.

Sudan's political woes cannot all be blamed on colonialism, but the immediate consequences of the systemic inequalities of Sudan's colonial state are clearly visible in the reasons for the outbreak of the first civil war in 1955. Regardless of the colonial policy of isolating Northern from Southern Sudan, which had the consequence of entrenching distinctly different socio-cultural, identity and political development paths for the territories, the British government decided that Sudan was to gain independence as a single (unified) territory. This decision, to merge two highly disjointed territorial and socio-cultural entities into an independent state, thus planted the seeds for Sudan's first civil war, which began before the country's independence in January 1956:¹³

It is abundantly clear that the failure of the colonial authorities to allow the peoples of the closed districts to exercise their right to self-determination is one of the main factors, which contributed to the first civil war in the Sudan (1955–1972). Indeed, the southern units in the (colonial) Sudan Defence Force mutinied when they learnt of the impending independence of the Sudan, as one country under northern domination. These units rebelled on 18 August 1955 in Torit, four months before independence in January 1956.

Born at independence, the battle for the heart of Sudan unfolded along the fault-lines of identity, language and religious orientation. The northern elites, who have controlled the state apparatus since Sudan achieved self-government in 1954, have enforced Islam as a religion and Arabic as the language of the state. However, since independence Southern Sudanese have resisted all attempts to impose a constitution based on Islamic Sharia law,¹⁴ which, as one person interviewed in July 2010 said, leads to the humiliation of people.

The same person, who wanted to remain anonymous, had on three different occasions been sentenced to a public caning by police for ignoring the strict prohibition against the consumption of alcohol.¹⁵ The marginalisation of Southern Sudan in the civil service and armed forces is another factor that increased fears of socio-political alienation from the centre. Thus, a protracted history of conflict becomes institutionalised with devastating humanitarian consequences.

SUDAN'S CONTESTED SOCIAL IMAGINARY

The social imaginary that has developed in Sudan since independence can assist in analysing Sudan's unique post-colonial experience. Shaped by Sudan's centre-periphery relations, the social imaginary is defined by contestation, grievance politics and armed conflict. Charles Taylor defines his approach to a social imaginary as:¹⁶

the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.

Taylor's conception of the social imaginary is an attempt to identify the ways in which people 'fit together with others'. However, factors that separate people from one another within a territory can also construct competing social imaginaries. This means that, while a social imaginary can play an integrative role, the inverse happens during civil conflicts. It fuels hatred and social fragmentation and provides the imaginary foundation for mobilising people to confront one another on the killing fields, when political discourse fails and armed violence takes over as the only viable means of political self-expression. While a social imaginary is the 'common understanding' that creates a space wherein common practices and a shared sense of legitimacy can emerge within a society,¹⁷ in times of civil conflict, the contesting parties construct their own unique social imaginaries based on their understanding of socio-political relations.

A social imaginary is not a theoretical construct, but a product of organic human experience. It concerns the way ordinary people imagine their social surroundings.¹⁸ Fieldwork in Southern Sudan found that the experience of political subjugation, and the concomitant need by the people of Southern Sudan to assert their own identities and political vision of the future, led to the development of a social imaginary built on the desire for recognition.¹⁹ The social imaginary of Sudan, as a territory where inhabitants suffer marginalisation and domination, is well expressed in the publication entitled *The Black Book: Imbalance of Wealth and Power in Sudan*, which appeared in 2000 at Friday prayers, was distributed with 'military precision' and attained a life of its own within days of its first circulation. The book exposes how a small group of northern ethnic groups have maintained a hegemonic grip on political and economic power to the exclusion of all other regions and groups in Sudan.²⁰

The Black Book exposes the underlying power dynamics that have shaped Sudanese politics since independence. For example, it shows that every single president or prime minister since independence is from the north. The book also claims that, although (like many other third-world countries) Sudan has experienced several attempted coups, these

have failed because the coup leaders were not from the northern part of the country.²¹ Statistical information is used to drive home the north-domination argument. For instance, between 1954 and 1964 ministerial positions held were divided between Sudan's regions thus: eastern region 1.4%; northern region 79%; central region 2.8%; southern region 16%; western region 0%. Northern over-representation continued in later periods and, in the period 1969–1985, the spread of ministerial positions were: eastern region 2.5%; northern region 68.7%; central region 16.5%; southern region 7.8%; western region 3.5%.²² *The Black Book* is not a work of revolutionary ideology, but rather uses statistics to promote the idea that Sudan lacks a representative government.

The social imaginary of the book concerns the inequalities perpetuated by northern rulers who control the state apparatus. Furthermore, the domination of Sudan's territory by the north has largely been confined to three ethnic groups: the Jallayeen (of which President Bashir is a member); the Shaigiya (of which Deputy President Taha is a member); and the Danagla (from which former President Nimeiri, former Prime Minister Almahdi, and former Deputy President Alsibair originate).²³ Such a narrow ethnic domination of the central state apparatus laid the foundation for severe inequalities to take root. Part of the reason for the northern domination and the marginalisation of other Sudanese territories may lie in the geography and climate of Sudan's northern region. Despite the existence of the Nile River, this region is the most inhospitable of all Sudan's vast territory and has a very low carrying capacity compared to other regions of Sudan.²⁴ Such geographical and climatic realities may explain why regions have to be dominated in order to extract resources necessary for the survival of the desert dwellers.

PERIPHERAL STRUGGLES AND PEACE AGREEMENTS

The conflicting social imageries that have emerged in Sudan are illustrated by the fact that the government of Sudan signed three separate peace agreements in the first decade of the 21st century: the CPA of 2005; the Darfur Peace Agreement of 2006, which did not succeed in bringing hostilities to an end between the government and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM); and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) with the Eastern Front in October 2006. These agreements show the range of peripheral forces that took up arms against the centre in Khartoum. As Thabo Mbeki observes:²⁵

Part of our tragedy is that throughout the years of independence, until the conclusion of the CPA in 2005, the Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006 and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement again in 2006, ruling groups in this country failed successfully to resolve the problem posed by the polarisation of Sudan into one centre and many peripheral regions.

Sudan's political centre has faced rebellions by its people in the east, south and western extremities of the country. These conflicts show the extent to which Sudanese state is, and has been, besieged from within. Such a range of internal rebellions demonstrates that Sudan's national question cannot be reduced to the north–south polarity, nor explained by oil as the only divisive factor in Sudanese politics.

The signing of the ESPA ended a decade-long conflict in the eastern part of the country. Factors that led to the conflict include famine and drought, insufficient health and education services, high levels of unemployment, land degradation and shrinking pasture.²⁶ Eastern Sudan's insurgency took place concurrently with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) insurgency in the south. As the oil industry developed, with the oil pipeline infrastructure passing through eastern Sudan towards Port Sudan, the region became strategically important to Khartoum. However, although the insurgency in the east ended after the signing of the ESPA, the living conditions in the region and the continued perceived marginalisation may cause further security problems for the Khartoum government in the future.²⁷

Some articles in the ESPA identify measures to address the eastern periphery's grievances against the central state. For instance, Article 2 of the ESPA states that Sudan is a 'multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial nation. Recognition and respect of this diversity is an important foundation of national cohesion.'²⁸ Like during Sudan's first civil war, where questions of identity played an important role, the need for the central state to recognise the rights of a culturally diverse population is prominent in the ESPA. However, beyond questions of identity, the ESPA also addresses one of the more fundamental governance challenges confronting Sudan's political centre: the need to devolve power through a federal governance system. Article 5 of the ESPA foresees the creation of a federal system of government that devolves power and ensures a clear distribution of responsibilities between the different levels of government.²⁹ Articles 6 and 7 of the ESPA go further by addressing the need to have a representative civil service, armed forces, police, security and intelligence services.³⁰

The armed conflict in eastern Sudan is not unique, as it is similar to conflicts in the west and south of the country, and can also be compared to conflicts in other parts of the Horn of Africa where authoritarian regimes seek to control peripheral regions by imposing alien cultural forms.³¹ Movements such as the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Southern Sudan, the JEM and SLM/A in Darfur, and the Eastern Front in Eastern Sudan can be treated as a sociological limit, a hardened social border encapsulating an organisation or social organism that mobilises resources and people (however meagre these may be) to attack and resist forces of the central state. Thus, central features of Sudan's national question become the distribution of power, the need for representation in central decision-making processes and the urgent need for socio-economic development. The politics of internal rebellion in the east, south and west also shows that, although power may have been centralised in Khartoum, the politics of the country cannot be understood without interrogating the power dynamics in its peripheries and the resultant interactions between centre and periphery.

A crucial factor implied in the above centre-periphery dynamics is that of resources and their distribution in Sudan's social and political space. Although grievance politics has by and large informed relations between the centre and periphery, Sudan's geographical and climatic realities also affect people's ability to survive. When analysing Sudan's national politics, the competition for access to resources has to be considered, as a direct linkage can be traced between local struggles for resources and Sudan's larger national conflicts in Darfur, or in the history of the north-south civil war. To gain military advantage, the central government and the rebel forces both manipulate religious and ethnic differences and local competition for resources. In some cases, manipulating access to resources at

a local level establishes a direct linkage between national- and local-level conflicts.³² As Azar Gat points out, 'Resource competition is a prime cause of aggression, violence, and deadly violence in nature. The reason for this is that food, water, and, to a lesser degree shelter against the elements, are tremendous selection forces.'³³ Psychological theory acknowledges the link between the human mind, brain and environment. Environmental circumstances can change neuron circuits in the human brain, affecting behaviour and social conduct, 'Thus individuals, groups and societies (and research shows that animals as well) are conditioned to become more or less violent by the sort of environment to which they have been exposed.'³⁴

Sudan's national question cannot be reduced to oil-politics or the secession of Southern Sudan. Environmental and ecological variables also contribute to conflict and play a significant role in the regional rebellions in Sudan, and so it is necessary to move beyond the well-entrenched dichotomies usually given as reasons for conflict between the north and south (Christian versus Muslim or African versus Arab identities).³⁵

THE HIGH POLITICS OF OIL

Sudan emerged from the colonial era as an internally divided state at war with itself. When Chevron discovered oil in the late 1970s, the historical conflict between the north and south of Sudan attained a new level of importance. The discovery took place at a time when the Addis Ababa peace agreement, which brought the first Sudanese civil war to an end, was breaking down. A series of events and contentious decisions made by then President Nimeiri contributed to the breakdown of the peace agreement. Following the discovery of oil, President Nimeiri launched a campaign to divide Southern Sudan into three administrative districts, as a tactic to gain more control over Sudan's oil fields. Southerners interpreted this move as a violation of the peace agreement, which had given Southern Sudan a high level of regional autonomy and self-government. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the discovery of oil sparked a new wave of political interference in southern affairs. Thus, whereas identity and religious issues underpinned Sudan's first civil war, the second war emerged as a result of new resources (oil) discovered in the south.³⁶

In April 1982, the Nimeiri regime added further fuel to the fire by dissolving the National and Regional Assemblies.³⁷ A sign of the south's growing disgruntlement came in the form of an anonymous booklet (produced by professors and students from the University of Khartoum), which criticised the Khartoum government of interfering in Southern Sudan's internal affairs. The booklet warned President Nimeiri 'not to tamper with the south and to let it run and manage its own affairs and to let the region exploit its own resources for its regional development.'³⁸

During the years of fragile peace that preceded the second civil war, Southern Sudan was a hot bed of resistance against Khartoum. Between 1972 and 1983 several groups, such as the National Action Movement, the Movement for the Total Liberation of Southern Sudan, the Absorbed Forces Underground Movement and the Anya Nya II Movement, fomented political resistance against the Nimeiri regime that controlled Khartoum at the time.³⁹ As tensions mounted in the war of words between Northern and Southern Sudan, the proverbial straw that broke the peace camel's back – the Bor rebellion – was yet to come.

The history of underground resistance against Khartoum had carried on after the end of the first civil war. After 1972, the Anya Nya forces absorbed into the national army maintained contact with and continued to foment underground resistance against Khartoum, while Khartoum sought to control the south by weakening the rebel groups' military structure.⁴⁰ In 1983 the Anya Nya forces, which had led the insurgency against Khartoum during the first civil war, resisted attempts to be integrated into the national army. The Bor rebellion in Southern Sudan was the result of years of planning and deliberate infiltration of southern military units:⁴¹

the discontent with the peace agreement expressed throughout the ten years of peace and the persistent reluctance of the former Anya Nya officers to fully integrate with their troops into the national army as required by the agreement were the main causes. Basically, the immediate cause, which ignited the insurgency, has more to do with the government's reaction to the Anya Nya refusal to transfer to the north where they would integrate into the national army.

The discovery of oil, Nimeiri's attempts at redrawing the map of Southern Sudan and a gradual breakdown of trust between northern and southern leaders thus precipitated the Bor insurrection. With the outbreak of the second civil war, Sudan's historical internal animosities grew greater because of the existence of oil along the north–south border. The presence of a resource such as oil is often a major factor in bringing violent secessionist movements to the fore and, statistically, secessionist movements that utilise violent means to pursue their cause are more likely to occur if a country has valuable natural resources. Oil is, unsurprisingly, one of the most 'dangerous' resources in terms of secessionist movements.⁴²

But, the question to ask is: how did Sudan manage to develop its oil industry in the midst of a civil war? The oil discoveries made by Chevron could not initially be developed due to the outbreak of the second civil war in 1983. However, when Riek Machar, of the Southern Sudan Independence Movement/Army (SSIM/A), one of Southern Sudan's rebel factions, signed a peace treaty (the Khartoum Peace Agreement of 1997) with Khartoum, central government could enter areas not under its control. This led to the expansion of oil operations and the construction of the pipeline system through which oil is transported to Northern Sudan.⁴³

Even though the Khartoum Peace Agreement did not last very long, the SSIM/A rebels controlled most of the areas where oil is found. By signing a peace treaty with Khartoum, the SSIM/A created a window of opportunity for Khartoum to kick-start the development of these oil fields. Developments in Sudan's oil industry also had repercussions for the civil war, as the exploitation of oil in the Western Upper Nile led to Sudan officially becoming an oil exporter, which meant Khartoum was able to acquire much needed weapons, Antonov planes, helicopter gunships and other military hardware to fight back against an increasingly powerful SPLA insurgency.⁴⁴

Thus, the discovery and subsequent development of Sudan's oil sector becomes yet another element of the national question. By the late 1990s, Sudan had become an oil exporter, with the promise of further discoveries. Yet, with that promise, the struggle intensified between Khartoum and Juba. Sudan's national question thus graduated from a

historical struggle for recognition and rights (the first civil war), to a full-blown resource war for access to, and control over, oil.

BEYOND THE COMPREHENSIVE PEACE AGREEMENT

The discovery and subsequent battle for control of oil resources is an important part of the background to current developments in Sudan. As the country negotiates the period after Southern Sudan's referendum, the governance of the shared oil reserves will remain a major issue. The CPA entrenched revenue sharing and co-management of the resource, but oil could either divide Southern and Northern Sudan or be the basis of new policy and institutional co-operation. The CPA not only brought the civil war to an end, but is also aimed at restructuring wealth accumulation and power distribution in the Sudanese system.⁴⁵

In an effort to ensure a smooth transition, the AUHIP, chaired by Mbeki, mediated post-referendum negotiations between Northern and Southern Sudan. Structured around four working groups, these negotiations focus on natural resources, legal issues, citizenship and financial relations.⁴⁶ In July 2010, at the official launch of talks in Khartoum, Mbeki made it clear that the post-referendum negotiations are essentially geared to fundamentally restructuring the Sudanese state. Now that Southern Sudan has voted for independence, the historical conflict between the north and south has been settled. However, even though a Southern Sudan 'solution' has been found, the CPA and the south's independence has done little to address the grievances of Sudan's other marginalised peripheries such as Darfur.⁴⁷

While Darfur may protest, the CPA is considered as much more than a bilateral power- and wealth-sharing agreement between the National Congress Party (NCP) and SPLM.⁴⁸ The CPA has laid the foundation for developing a democratic governance system in Sudan, accepting the values of justice, good governance, respect for rights, mutual understanding and tolerance of diversity. The significance of the CPA roadmap can only be appreciated now that the referendum has been conducted, and Sudan has been peacefully torn in half. The CPA 'provides for decentralisation of government and most importantly fiscal reform to help ensure that communities benefit from their own resources. This condition had been the root cause of instability and conflict in the country.'⁴⁹

It is clear that the structural problems inherent to the Sudanese state have been the major causes of conflict in the country since independence. As the CPA process draws to a close, the future of the oil sector will depend on political compromises made between Juba and Khartoum. The governance of oil resources will have economic implications, such as the impact on Northern Sudan of losing oil income.

According to a report in the *Sudan Tribune*, published on 17 October 2010, a mere three months before the referendum in Southern Sudan, the Minister of Finance Ali Mahmood Abdel-Rasool, commented that Northern Sudan will have to impose austerity measures if the south chooses to secede. The *Sudan Tribune* estimates that 75% of Sudan's proven reserves of oil (+/-6.3 billion barrels) are located in southern territories.⁵⁰ The south's vote for independence therefore means that the north will not only lose 75–80% of the country's oil reserves, but also its 50% share of oil revenues received through the CPA's wealth-sharing agreement. However, a complicating factor is that Southern Sudan depends on

the north for the export of oil, as the only pipeline to Port Sudan runs through Northern Sudan. Plans have been mooted for a pipeline to link Juba to an export terminal in either Mombasa or the island of Lamu, but these constructions will take years to complete.

Juba and Khartoum's reliance on oil exports may lead the elites in the SPLM and NCP to find a suitable post-referendum working relationship, as '[a]bout 80% of Sudan's proven reserves and production are in Southern Sudan. Estimates of future reserves are based on comparisons with similar geological systems in other countries.'⁵¹

Oil exports are estimated to constitute 95% of Sudan's export revenues. The revenue-sharing agreement in the CPA stipulates a 50–50 split of income between the north and south, which means that 98% of Southern Sudan's total revenue comes from oil exports, while Khartoum relies on oil for 65% of its revenues. Reliance on a single resource creates economic vulnerability and, in the Sudanese context, may either be a source of potential conflict or urge Khartoum and Juba to maintain strategic co-operative relations. The deeper social and governance challenge to both Juba and Khartoum is to maintain strategic business and economic linkages in order to prevent conflict and enhance co-operation around strategic natural resources, and to find ways of using income from the resource for economic diversification and social development. Therefore, oil could either be a source of perpetual war, disagreement and conflict, or form the nucleus of a constructive relationship between Northern and Southern Sudan.

THE 'LOW POLITICS' OF SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES: LAND, NOMADS, AND DISPLACED PERSONS

If a complicated layering of centre–periphery struggles defines Sudan's national question and led to the secession of Southern Sudan from the north, then the specific local-level resource conflicts help to explain the unique challenges confronting Sudan. First, these conflicts need to be contextualised within the broader picture of Southern Sudan's civil war experience. For the foreseeable future, Southern Sudan's political environment is defined by the war's devastation, displacement and destruction of livelihoods, as well as the problems people face to access basic subsistence resources. The concern is that the legacy of marginalisation, such as poor social services and non-existent infrastructure, may lead to grievances emerging against the SPLM government of a newly independent Southern Sudan.⁵²

These concerns need to be viewed against the background of the civil war's devastating impact on Southern Sudan. In the poem, *The Tears of Juba*,⁵³ Juba, who personifies the city, laments the woes, displacement, torture and fear that the civil war unleashed upon the city and its inhabitants. The poetic description of the continuous bombardment of Juba is a stark reminder of the social conditions most Southern Sudanese live under, of their anguish and suffering in an '[e]ndless war that leaves no stone unturned.'⁵⁴ The poem laments the social dislocation and the more than two million deaths that resulted from the civil war in Sudan, 'All my trees from branches to roots are gone, houses from roofs to foundations no more.'⁵⁵ The wounds and scars on Juba's face represent the chaos and suffering of the war, part of the endless list of abuses and destructive violence that are inscribed, forever, on the landscape and memories of the inhabitants.

Although, during the CPA period, Juba developed and expanded economically, Southern Sudan remains undeveloped and prone to conflict. Stabilising Southern Sudan's territory remains a gargantuan task, as the Lord's Resistance Army continues to operate in provinces bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo such as Western Equatoria. Further north, rebels from provinces adjacent to Darfur are increasingly entering southern territories, with in some cases the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) in hot pursuit.

Furthermore, the SPLM has to contend with a fragile balance of forces in the SPLA. This situation was brought to light after the April 2010 elections, when a senior member of the SPLA, General George Athor Deng, Deputy Chief of the General Staff for Moral and Political Orientation, rebelled because he was not elected as the governor of Jonglei state.⁵⁶ He was ultimately followed into the bush by Major General Gabriel Tanginye, Robert Gwang and Colonel Gatluak Gai, who each took several hundred, and in some cases more than a thousand, troops into the field. Although President Kiir subsequently pardoned these four high-ranking military officers, the incident illustrates the precarious and unconsolidated nature of the SPLA and Southern Sudan's democratic political system. Within weeks of the referendum, General Deng and his forces once again launched stinging attacks on the SPLA, and they continue to pose a direct challenge to the stability of Southern Sudan.⁵⁷

The contemporary history, and future prospects, of Southern Sudan cannot be properly understood without an overview of the role of the SPLM/A. The SPLM/A played a significant role in the civil war and, since the signing of the CPA, has entrenched itself in the fledgling state apparatus of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS). In the post-referendum and post-CPA Sudan, the SPLM, as the dominant political force, will have to confront the political challenges that Southern Sudan faces, especially in relation to the local-level resource conflicts.

As post-referendum Sudan's institutional frameworks take shape, the low-level resource conflicts facing Southern Sudan include struggles for access to land, the complex territorial relations between agriculturalists and pastoral communities and the ongoing resettlement struggles of displaced persons. These resource conflicts occur when environmental, social and political-economic realities intersect: '[d]ecreasing rainfall in pastoral areas, environmental degradation in agricultural islands, and technological-economic stagnation are over time combining to intensify ethnic conflicts over subsistence resources in both the south and the north.'⁵⁸

At a local level, the basis for social insecurity and instability is access to subsistence resources. To minimise the conflict potential, an independent Southern Sudan will have to confront several complex policy questions regarding land rights and the development of economic and institutional capacity.

LAND DISPUTES

Two civil wars, and the massive forced displacement of people to make way for oil operations in Southern Sudan, created a humanitarian catastrophe. Uprooting people in civil conflict and forcibly removing communities have created the conditions for extensive land disputes. The low level of economic development in Southern Sudan means that people's livelihoods are directly tied to land, which implies that land is a source not only

of cultural identity, but also of sustenance for residents. According to United Nations estimates, up to 40% of Southern Sudanese needed some form of food aid during 2010, which explains why such a high incidence of cattle raiding occurs in some parts of Southern Sudan.⁵⁹ A report on the dynamics of conflict in Southern Sudan found that:⁶⁰

Access to land is one of the most common triggers of violence. In Southern Sudan the problematic nature of access to land and its link to the exacerbation of hostilities manifests itself in issues regarding new administrative boundaries, local borders or clashes between residents and IDPs [internally displaced persons].

Land can very easily turn into a bone of contention between residents, and in Southern Sudan, the civil war and its aftermath has exacerbated the contest for land. A common situation is contestations over land when displaced persons and communities return to their places of origin. People who stayed at home occupied the land after the war, and, in some cases, SPLA soldiers feel that they are entitled to occupy the land as liberators of Southern Sudan.⁶¹

In recent months it has become apparent that the south's central government may face a complex land question of its own. The Bari community, to whom the land in and around Juba belongs, recently decided not to allow Southern Sudan's capital to be based in their territory. The Bari suggested that the capital be established in Ramkiel, as originally proposed by the late John Garang de Mabior. The fact that the newly independent state cannot find land on which to locate its capital further serves as an illustration of the land problems the south will have to confront in future.⁶² Land disputes are anchored both in the history of displacement, which occurred because of the civil war, and in the 'ethnic memory' of traditional boundaries between ethnic groups. The latter is a significant source of local conflict, as the dispute between the Dinka and Shilluk tribes shows. The two groups have completely opposing views of the border between their territories: Dinka tribal leaders and politicians believe that the border runs through the middle of the Nile River, while the Shilluk argue that they control both banks (eastern and western) of the river. After 2005, Shilluk communities returned from the north to find Dinka groups occupying the land, from which they had fled during the war. Tensions between Dinka and Shilluk led to clashes during January 2009 over competing claims for the ownership of the town of Malakal.⁶³

Such conflicts, which may seem to be localised and linked to specific cases of displacement and contested 'ethnic memories' of boundaries, often have political implications. For instance, in response to Dinka occupation of land, the Shilluk claim that the Dinka are using their dominant position in the government and armed forces of Southern Sudan to consolidate their territorial expansion during the civil war. Politically, the Shilluk territories were not a SPLM stronghold, with most being held by the SAF during the civil war. This implies that land disputes in parts of Southern Sudan may result from the displacement of people during the war, but are also fuelled by the ascendancy of the SPLM/A and its local allies in the post-2005 political dispensation. SPLA soldiers that occupy land, and ethnic groups allied to or linked into the command structures of either the SPLM or SPLA, thus have a politically advantageous position to enforce their occupation of land.

People displaced by the war face complications upon returning to their places of origin. For instance, upon her return in 2005, one woman, who fled from the town of Magwi in Eastern Equatoria province in 1983, found that an army captain had settled on her plot. She demanded that he leave and, after he threatened to shoot her, filed a case. The subsequent ruling was in her favour, but was suspended by county authorities because they feared bringing an officer to book.⁶⁴

Land is clearly a sensitive and central issue for both urban and rural communities in Sudan, as it carries profound cultural meaning and is socio-politically significant. Indeed, local-level conflicts for access to natural resources shape the interaction between different groups in Sudan.⁶⁵

Environmental degradation and climate change further complicate the conflicts for access to land, which occur in the aftermath of war. The politics of land, resources and livelihoods combine to shape a peculiar set of socio-political circumstances that neither the SPLM administration in Juba, nor the national government located in Khartoum, have managed to address in any significant or sustained manner. As the case of the Abyei region discussed below shows, these conflicts also have a direct bearing on the tensions that pervade relations between Northern and Southern Sudan.

In most parts of Sudan, the national question of unity and the attendant challenge of managing oil as a common resource take precedence over other local governance issues. Therefore, land conflicts, and the rights of returnees to be re-settled on properties they left behind when they fled from the war, pose a tremendous challenge to the Juba administration. Although the CPA provides for the establishment of a National Land Commission and the creation of State Land Commissions for Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile states, it does not address the problem of land ownership in any substantial way. The sheer complexity of resolving land disputes in Sudan meant that:⁶⁶

[T]he problem of land ownership was deferred by the CPA to the post-agreement phase. The CPA does not per se address issues regarding the ownership of land and natural resources, but establishes a process to resolve this question through the establishment of a National Land Commission and a Southern Sudan Land Commission. Similarly, the Darfur Peace Agreement has delegated the resolution of land issues to a future Darfur Land Commission.

Unfortunately, relegating the question of land ownership to the post-CPA period simply transfers a huge unresolved headache to an unpredictable future.

The four main types of land conflicts, which have resulted in many casualties over the last two years, are:⁶⁷

- 1 Between pastoralists and farmers, ranging from low-level tensions to incidents of violent confrontation, which was at the heart of the war in Southern Kordofan and is resurfacing.
- 2 Among agro-pastoralist communities, exacerbated by returning communities, which is not widespread, but is serious in some locations where more powerful groups are seen to be expanding their land holdings at the expense of others.
- 3 Between farmers and traders, where farmers clash with traders who are exploiting natural resources such as timber, gum arabic and palm trees.
- 4 Between returnees and labourers (sharecroppers) on mechanised farms.

PASTORALISTS VERSUS FARMERS

At the border between Southern and Northern Sudan is one of the African continents' most unique biospheres, which marks the slow transition from tropical central Africa to semi-desert and desert landscapes. Also referred to as the 'goz', Michael Asher describes this transitional environmental space in his history of Sudan:⁶⁸

On a clear day, the steppe rolls out to infinity under the great blue dome of the African sky, an undulating sea of red sand, yellow grass and thorn forest, stretching all the way across the continent between the 10th and 13th parallels. The goz marks the southern boundary of the Sahara Desert – the place where Africa and the Arab world meet.

This area, where two competing environments intersect, is also home to two competing lifestyles: settled agriculturalists and pastoral or nomadic cattle-herding communities. Due to migratory patterns, established over hundreds if not thousands of years of human habitation, the arbitrary line on the map separating Northern from Southern Sudan is a meaningless demarcation for pastoralists whose survival depends on making the annual trek down south. Pastoralism is:⁶⁹

the finely-honed symbiotic relationship between local ecology, domesticated livestock and people in resource-scarce and highly-variable regions, often at the threshold of human survival. It represents a complex form of natural resource management, involving the direct interaction between three systems in which pastoral people operate, i.e. the natural resource system, the resource users system and the larger geopolitical system.

Thus, pastoralism poses a peculiar political challenge to states with settled boundaries and territorial property rights. State societies are defined by apparatuses of capture,⁷⁰ which means that state formation requires the development of systems or mechanisms that capture, control and order social relations. The same goes for land. The pastoralist or nomad defies the state and the settled agriculturalists' practices of individual or communal land ownership. The dynamic existential tension that emerges from the interaction between sedentary and nomadic groups ultimately exposes the state's inability to capture and control the flow of people, and in this case livestock, across the territory. The survival of nomads or pastoralists depends on their ability to transcend territorial space, to trek towards 'greener pastures'. Thus, sedentarisation, or the settlement of people in immobile encampments, towns or cities, presents a major obstacle to the nomad, whose life is dependent on the freedom to move to places where both animal and human can survive. At a local level, cattle-raiding incidents often create tensions between Sudanese pastoralists and settled agriculturalists, and '[t]he challenge of harmonising land usage so that farmers and cattle-keepers can peacefully co-exist is a recurring problem reported each year towards the end of dry season, when cattle are taken to graze on planted fields.'⁷¹

The history of conflict between nomads and sedentary agricultural communities dates back to the dawn of civilisation. For example, the Great Wall of China was built to keep nomadic peoples at bay and to mark the territorial space of ancient Chinese civilisation.

Violence between shepherd and farmer is as old as civilization itself. With such a history, is it merely coincidence that many of today's major conflicts are fought in pastoral regions – places such as Somalia, Afghanistan, Sudan and Palestine? Extensive pastoral production takes place on some 25 percent of the world's land area, from the drylands of Africa (66 percent of the total continent land area) and the Arabian peninsula to the highlands of Asia and Latin America. It provides 10 percent of global meat production, and supports some 200 million pastoral households and herds of nearly a billion head of camel, cattle and smaller livestock.⁷²

Considering that nomadic peoples occupy 25% of the world, in areas where some of today's major conflicts are fought, the problematical and sometimes violent relations between pastoralists and their agriculturalist brethren in Southern Sudan are not unique. However, the tensions between such groups do affect political conditions and complicate the local power relations. The confluence of nomadic and sedentary lifestyles, as well as the border demarcation disputes, means that the north–south Sudan border has tremendous potential for friction and local-level instability.

One example is the case of the Baggara, a group that lives just north of the Bahr al-Arab River, which marks the western borderline between Northern and Southern Sudan. Environmental circumstances mean that the Bagara are forced to cross the river annually to find grazing for their cattle. South of the river, they cross through tribal lands of several different Dinka groups living in Southern Kordofan.⁷³ Violence often accompanies these annual incursions into southern tribal lands, due to tensions over access to water, or herds of cattle ruining residents' crops. Baggara pastoralists, armed to protect their livestock from cattle raiders, wild animals and other security threats, often end up in violent confrontations with the Dinkas of Southern Kordofan.

The history of the civil war further complicates the already tense relationships brought about by the clash of lifestyles, as '[w]hen the civil war between the SPLA and the central government broke out, these nomadic groups were viewed as a military resource and deployed against neighbours with perceived ethnic links to the SPLA.'⁷⁴ The Bagara are also implicated in one of Southern Sudan's most painful memories of dispossession during the 1980s, when the central government removed farmers from their land in the Nuba Mountains to make way for foreign agricultural investment projects. The Bagara were mobilised to assist in the removal, which also led to the Nuba Mountain forces joining the SPLA in its war with Khartoum.

In this instance, several overlapping layers of conflict can be identified: the civil war between North and South Sudan; conflicts over the dispossession of land; and the existing tensions between pastoral and settled communities, who were exploited and made part of military strategy to control southern territories. Tensions between some of these groups persist due to the historical memory of Bagara raids on southern ethnic groups. The social relationship between nomads and settled communities is complex, as 'the nomads do not precede the sedentaries; rather, nomadism is a movement, a becoming that affects sedentaries, just as sedentarisation is a stoppage that settles the nomads.'⁷⁵

The nomads' dynamic relationship with territory clashes directly with the customs, perceptions of ownership and lifestyle of sedentary peoples. As a result of the intermingling of nomads and settled communities, Southern Sudan and Northern Sudan confront what is probably one of the most complex sets of human relationship to manage. Therefore, the

management of shared resources – access to land or water and grazing for cattle – must be a serious priority for a post-independence southern administration.

The dynamic tensions that define relations between the Bagara and Dinka groups are also found in a region that is often in the news due to a disputed border and the presence of oil deposits: Abyei. Abyei is another localised resource conflict that links directly to national questions of unity and/or secession. The exact location of the north–south border that cuts through Abyei is not only an ongoing dispute, but is aggravated by a clash over eligibility to vote in Southern Sudan's referendum. According to the CPA, the Abyei region should have held a referendum concurrently with the rest of Southern Sudan during January 2011. During negotiations about the Abyei referendum, the NCP argued that the Misseriya, a nomadic tribe living across the border in Northern Sudan that crosses into Abyei for seasonal cattle grazing, should be allowed to vote in the referendum. However, the SPLM insisted that the Misseriya are not permanent residents of Abyei and should therefore not be allowed to vote. This disagreement led to the Abyei referendum being postponed indefinitely and, at the time of writing, no indication has been forthcoming as to when it will take place.

Underlying the dispute over who is eligible to vote in Abyei is the history of Misseriya militias working as proxies for the SAF during the civil war. During December 2007 fighting erupted in Abyei between the SPLA and Misseriya, when Edward Lino, an Ngok Dinka and the SPLM chairperson for Abyei, was appointed as chief administrator for the region:⁷⁶

In response, a group of Misseriya tribesmen calling themselves the Abyei Liberation Front announced that they had appointed a new governor, Mohamed Omar al-Ansari. They demanded that the SPLM stand down and withdraw, or face attack. A tense stand-off persists today with the Misseriya frequently blocking the road into Abyei and the SPLA preventing Misseriya from moving south along their traditional cattle grazing routes.

During the January 2011 referendum, a similar and somewhat tense stand-off ensued between Misseriya pastoralists and the SPLM. Political tensions in the region remain a critical challenge to both Juba and Khartoum. What may seem to be a simple dispute over who is allowed to vote in the Abyei referendum is linked to historical tensions that cut across ethnic lines. In addition, competing lifestyles of nomads and settled agricultural communities intersect with the complex network of allegiances built up during the civil war. These tensions of nomad versus sedentary lifestyles will therefore be transferred into post referendum and post-CPA political dispensations.

Instability at a local level can easily translate into new grievances because of the underdevelopment of the south, a near total lack of social and other physical infrastructures, and the persistent problem of an economy totally reliant on oil revenues. In a post-CPA setting, such grievances will be directed at Juba and the SPLM, not Khartoum. The political prospect of creating a state, stabilising the territory and diversifying the economy to bring much needed opportunities for residents, will in all likelihood bring new divisions and tensions to the fore within Southern Sudan.

However, several other conditions need to be considered when assessing the local-level resource conflicts that persist in Southern Sudan. Regardless of the referendum on self determination, Southern Sudan faces tremendous political, economic and social

challenges: the 640 000 square kilometre territory is totally landlocked; its closest port is more than 3 000 kilometres away in Mombasa, Kenya; only 40 kilometres of paved road exist in the entire south; and 90% of Southern Sudanese live on less than a dollar a day.⁷⁷ These conditions, together with a lack of basic social infrastructure such as schools, health clinics, and institutions like courts and police, make Southern Sudan a highly unstable political entity in the short to medium term.

Southern Sudan urgently needs security sector reform: up to 200 000 former guerrillas must be disarmed, demobilised and reintegrated; the GoSS has an annual salary bill of \$250 million to maintain its extensive armed forces; and defence expenditure gobbles an estimated 40% of the country's budget.⁷⁸

Like many other African territories, Southern Sudan has incredible development potential, as the country is well endowed with oil and is rumoured to possess abundant minerals ranging from gold to uranium, iron ore and copper. However, the fragile local socio-economic conditions in which people have to survive, combined with a very young and institutionally weak state, may yet prove to be major hurdles to Sudan's future political and economic evolution.

CONCLUSION

The Mahdist revolt against Khartoum, in which Gordon was killed, can be viewed as the first in a series of peripheral revolts against the central state that occur with grim regularity during Sudan's rather long and bloodthirsty 20th century. Sudan's history shows that the state is not omnipotent and can be partisan to – or hijacked by – narrow class and/or political interests. Furthermore, the state can easily fall prey to ideological or religious persuasions that aim to enrich the few to the exclusion and detriment of society. In such a setting, the state is one of many actors that use violence to subject those opposed to their dictates to the iron-fisted rule of might.

Southern Sudan's independence in July 2011 may have solved the historical problems of the south's marginalisation and the resulting conflict, but, as Sudan is torn in half, Northern and Southern Sudan face unique social and institutional challenges that are similar to those faced by Khartoum since 1956. The first challenge will be for the two territories to engage with the social imaginaries of its citizens, implying that new identity constructs will have to emerge from the proverbial rubble of the 'old Sudan'. Following the identity (or social imaginary) challenge, to establish legitimate state infrastructures will require tremendous investment in the basic institutional and governance frameworks of both Sudans. At the level of resource governance, history has dealt both Khartoum and Southern Sudan a historical irony. From July 2011 oil resources, which fanned the flames of war between 1983 and 2005, will have to be turned into a resource that can support both economies. In order to achieve this feat, the AUHIP-mediated negotiations between the north and south will have to thrash out a business model for managing oil extraction and exports. In July, when Africa's 54th state is officially born, the CPA expires, and with it the 50–50 division of oil revenues comes to an end. A model will have to be negotiated to enable the south to pay fees to the north for the use of pipelines and refineries to export its crude oil, which means that both Northern and Southern Sudan have to create new constitutional frameworks, while negotiating agreements on the key areas identified in

the post-referendum negotiations. These negotiations, taking place under the auspices of the AUHIP chaired by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, will remain a key political bargaining space between Northern and Southern Sudan.⁷⁹

Sudan teaches an important political lesson of how economic determinants, such as marginalisation, can cause war and political upheaval, while economic conditions also link with identity constructs that inform political perception and action. Therefore, much more is at stake in the two Sudans after July 2011 than state formation, new constitutions and governance structures. The challenges of internal conflict remain. In Northern Sudan, the Darfur conflict continues to tap resources, while undermining the legitimacy of the Khartoum government. In Southern Sudan, the rebellion of General George Athor Deng, the persistent threat of the Lord's Resistance Army and the challenge of demobilising and reintegrating soldiers linked to the SPLA will require a steady political vision and determination to evolve the country away from perpetual war. The process of demobilisation requires the new government to provide yesterday's liberation fighters with economic alternatives. For this reason the management of conflicts over access to subsistence resources, such as land, water, and grazing for cattle, will present a newly independent Southern Sudan with complex political and policy choices in coming years.

However, as a successful referendum for secession fades into history, Sudanese leaders and people have taken a brave step. To end bloodshed and to enforce the idea of peaceful coexistence, the state – as foundation of collective existence – has to be erased and something new imagined in its place. During the first and second civil wars, identity, class, language, religion and resources not only shaped the armed struggles, but also informed political discourse and the social imaginary through which people understood their existential conditions. Peripheral regions succumbed to the logic of rebel movements and insurgents because of a strange mixture of state weakness and strength. The state was weak because it was 'incapacitated' by narrow political-economic interests at its apex, while its strength was essentially linked to military capacity: dispatching the war machine to quash rebellions led by the Eastern Front or the SPLA in the south. Therefore, as the old order fades and new horizons for collective political action appear, the collective social imaginary of Sudan is changing.

The politics of peripheries are a defining feature of Sudan's history. Questions are raised about how to prevent the state becoming a vehicle for (political, economic, ethnic or religious) elites or sectarian interests to distort power in order to accumulate wealth. International attention may focus on the 'viability' of a new southern state, but the socio-economic dispensation that Southern Sudan and Northern Sudan plan to implement after July 2011 could be key to ensuring stability and social growth. The future of the two Sudans therefore depends on the willingness of its leaders and peoples not to centralise political-economic power in the hands of select elites. The two countries will also have to learn how to co-exist and continue to co-operate in oil extraction, which remains of strategic importance for both governments. The successful completion of the CPA process, which culminates in the independence of Southern Sudan, provides a firm foundation upon which to base future relations and to show that co-operation remains better than bloodshed and war.

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