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**“Power, hegemony and dependence in the
Republic of Sudan (1956-2011). Socio-historical
genesis and political economy”**

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Introduction

The Republic of Sudan was founded during the decolonization process in the middle of the 20th century and has experienced barely a few years of peace. This research studies the former Sudan that existed from 1956 until 9th July 2011, when the Republic of South Sudan gained its independence. Therefore, Sudan refers in this text to both the southern and northern territories.

Sudan was the largest country in Africa until 2011, covering around 2.5 million square kilometres, with a huge diversity of landscapes, soils and ecosystems. Its territory included vast sandy areas in the north, among them the deserts of Libya, Bayuda or the Nubian Desert. They are part of the Great Sahara and merge with the Sahelian Belt that ends at the Red Sea, on the east coast. The Sudanese Sahel divides northern sands and central-south savannahs and they stroke southern swamps –*sudd*–, which arrive at jungles in the far south. The River Nile crosses the country from north to south and has determined communication networks as well as different cultures, agriculture and pastoralism.

Immense biodiversity has produced a great variety of people and a rich amount of different languages, cultures, social aspects and forms of religion. However, heterogeneity has facilitated constant conflicts, tensions and violence inside coexistence amongst the different human groups. Consequently, this thesis is based on the need to understand the origins and processes that lead into violence and war. This need arises from a scientific interest as well as from a personal interest, because the author lived in Sudan for one and a half years between 2000 and 2001.

The field of study will be the complex and heterogeneous Sudanese scenario from 1956-2011, presented through an introduction, six chapters and general conclusions. The first chapter carries out a literature and theoretical review to be taken into consideration in the Sudanese context. The second chapter introduces the methodology and shows the justification and the motivation for this work, as well as the main objectives, hypotheses, contents, structure and sources of information and data. The next chapter presents the main socio-political and institutional elements that influenced the outbreak of armed conflicts from 1956-2011. Slavery and the complex ethnical structure are explained, as well as social classes and organizations, political parties, religious groups and the major armed rebel factions. The fourth chapter tackles the history of Sudan from 1956-2011, including a brief background and four distinct periods. Additionally, two epigraphs about war in the northern Sudan – particularly in the regions of the Red Sea and Nuba Mountains – and in Darfur are incorporated.

The fifth chapter deals with demographic and economic aspects of the Sudanese context. It starts by analysing population features and main demographic indicators and studies the economic dynamics of four stages, from 1956-2011, that coincide with historical periods described in chapter four. Prior to the stages, a static review of the economic structure and situation in 1956 will be carried out. Finally, the last chapter concludes this research, presenting the main thesis findings and conclusions which are related to the objectives and the hypothesis.

Objectives

This work is organized around an overall objective and three specific objectives. The overall objective is to understand, with a cross-disciplinary perspective, different economic-ecological,

socio-political, and ethnical-religious complex aspects that converge to explain armed conflicts in the Republic of Sudan, from its independence in 1956 until the secession of the southern estates in 2011. A multidisciplinary focus will be applied, taking into consideration the complexity of the Sudanese scenario. This implies that successive wars in Sudan cannot be understood with a simple and partial approach. It is necessary to integrate different and complementary focuses to uncover the variety of elements that clarify and interact to generate the different conflict contexts in Sudan. Therefore, economic-ecological, social-political, religious-cultural, as well as ethnical-anthropological features will be taken into consideration.

With the aim of achieving this overall objective, the three following specific objectives should be reached:

- To explain the evolution of the Sudanese social, political, ethnical and religious structure and its most important institutions, in order to obtain arguments to understand the historical evolution of armed conflicts and how such conflicts have deeply affected and modified social, political, ethnical and religious elements in the Republic of Sudan from 1956-2011. Together with the ethnical aspects, the phenomenon and institution of slavery will be analysed. It became ingrained in the country over centuries and was utilized as an instrument within the conflict dynamics between north and south.

To do so, it is crucial to study social strata and classes, as well as the essential ethnical and religious structure. It is also very important to identify, characterise, understand and analyze the main Sudanese social and political organizations, and their links with the religious movements, highlighting major dominant and hegemonic elites. To support this point, power relationships throughout time will be identified, characterised, understood and analyzed according to Michel Foucault's approach.

- To present the general historical framework within armed conflicts that took place following independence and until the foundation of South Sudan, emphasizing central social and religious forces and organizations, political parties, and their ideologies. Historical analysis will also be related to different paradigms and theories of international relations and economic thought, taking into account armed conflicts and the concept of hegemony.

To the same extent, five fundamental periods in Sudanese history will be identified: independence and the following years of sovereignty (1956-1969); the regimen of Numeiri and the brief democracy (1969-1989); the Islamist period of the National Salvation Government (1989-1999); and from 1999-2011, when the Islamist movement splits, the south becomes independent, war in Darfur breaks out and oil arrives.

The Gramscian perspective on hegemonic groups will be an essential issue, as well as the study of repression and forms of coercion, and power relationships.

- To analyze the demographic and economic structure of Sudan and particularly its dependent nature as an extractive economy, which is indispensable in order to explain and connect the production, monetary and consumption flows to the conflict dynamics. Because of this, chronic food insecurity can be understood as a consequence of the evolution of the socio-economic structure and the exercise of

hegemony. Consequently, five main stages will be identified according to the main macroeconomic indicators, economic structure, economic actors and productive sectors. These stages coincide with the historical periods as follows: the starting point in 1956 and the colonial structure; the nationalist developmentalism (1956-1969); the long phase that allows the neoliberalization of State, that includes the socialist attempt of Numeiri and the process of state hybridizing (1969-1989); the Islamist neoliberalization (1989-1999); and the building of the new neoliberal state based on oil (1999-2011).

The theory of dependence and the centre-periphery concepts treated by Raúl Prebisch and André Gunder Frank will be taken into consideration, in order to illustrate economic evolution in Sudan. The institutionalist focus will be also applied, as well as the political ecology approach. Additionally, the Gramscian theories will be also related.

Hypotheses

The diversity of actors that influence and affect roots and progress of armed conflicts in Sudan from 1956-2011 involve a protracted context. Hence, explanations and interpretations of such conflicts should not be simple and they have to consider different focuses, as the overall objective stated. For that reason, the research hypotheses are as follows:

- Sudanese armed conflicts respond to many factors that comprise economic, ecological, social, political, ethnical and religious spheres. It depends on the historical evolution of Sudan and the analysis of armed conflicts from independence to secession of the south. According to this, many of these factors have a structural aspect and are based on the Sudanese society's way of living. This also affects their perception of each other.

It is necessary to apply several multidisciplinary approaches to understand the complexity of the Sudanese scenario. Three linked approaches are proposed by this text. They are not unique, but indispensable in order to comprehend the origin and evolution of the conflicts, as well as the complications involved in solving them. Such approaches are the study of the social, political, ethnical and religious structure, as well as the evolution of the demographic and economic structure.

- Sudan has got a less-diversified and dependent productive structure concentrated in natural resources exploitation, which should explain permanent and underlying social, territorial and ethnical tensions behind armed conflicts. However, those elements are not enough to give an explanation of the violence and humanitarian crisis. Local and international dominant elites have monitored and controlled resource exploitation through transnational capital flows and the Sudanese State. In each moment, hegemonic groups in power will illustrate the level of imposition of identity and why resource exploitation does not always generate a scenario of conflict and humanitarian crisis.

A situation of permanent food insecurity in some regions can be regarded as an extreme consequence of hegemonic groups' power, as well as the result of the economic structure of each stage. Furthermore, food insecurity and hunger have not been only provoked by inefficient economic structure. They are the corollary of an

economic policy that was aware of it and that planned and aimed to force hunger on to certain people in certain areas.

- The foundation and permanence of some institutions are very important to understand why war has been a constant in the history of Sudan and not an exception. It also clarifies why peace was only the time between battles in Sudan. War and humanitarian crisis have quite often been the outcome of elite interests. According to this, how religion and ethnical diversity have been manipulated by dominant groups would add arguments in order to make sense of the genesis of armed conflicts. Moreover, archaic and ancestral oppressive institutions like slavery will also provide elements to justify armed violence of some groups over other groups.

Conclusions

This study has researched the Sudanese scenario of conflicts and the sources of violence from 1956-2011 that emerged as a consequence of the human groups' interactions. In order to do so, Sudanese context has been focused on from different points of view and through a multidisciplinary approach, thereby escaping partial interpretations. In such a situation it is necessary to understand the dynamics and processes generating violence and war. Moreover, this holistic perspective allows global interpretation of conflicts and adds political, social, economic, ethnical, religious, institutional, ecological and cultural aspects on an international level as well as a local level.

Hence, the overall objective is answered, combining a Foucaultian approach regarding power relationships, a Gramscian definition of hegemony, centre-periphery and dependence theories, as well as an institutional focus and political ecology. All these elements are essential in order to obtain a broad view and to explain origins of violence and war in Sudan. Michel Foucault's theories have contributed to this text with the association between war and power, which has been very relevant in the Sudanese case, because exercise of power translated into direct, structural and cultural violence. Therefore, brutality and aggression from some groups to other groups have been signs of a cultural and institutional foundation during centuries that only the Condominium could calm. Only a lack of infrastructure, which encouraged exports, has allowed some certain isolation to the southern people. Slavery would probably have been more evident during the first half of the 20th century without British rule, which partially answers the third research hypothesis. It is confirmed by the suggestion that the Sudanese State was founded with an institutionalization of the violence from northern elites to southern population, because violence is inherent to the new State and its juridical and legal system. In the Sudanese State, military institutions are the core of national institutions which have motivated dominant groups' violence, and the exercise of hegemony has provoked extreme violence, taking into consideration that the South was the periphery of the country. Consequently, Clausewitz's saying is inverted, as Foucault stated, and politics becomes war through other means.

The new Sudanese State reflected the huge difference between north and south. The North adopted Arabic language and culture as the centre of identity, but the South was too heterogeneous to clearly assume a common identity. However, Christianity and the English language have been essential elements of a possible Southern identity.

Self-determination of Sudan was an opportunity to bring a Sudanese identity for Northerners and Southerners, but soon after independence General Abboud's regimen was clear about the

Sudanese identity. It must maintain the Arabic-Muslim element and an alternative identity was not welcome. Only after the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972 did Southern people have a chance to be recognized as Sudanese, but its effects ended soon after.

Identity is related to race in Foucaultian terms and due to this, imposition of a race in Sudan – a kind of an Arabic-Muslim race or biopower - has forced violence, repression and war. This violence has been the appendix or instrument of central power and dominant elites linked with northern elites and with the main religious brotherhoods: the Khatmiyya and the Mahdiyya. Both are related to political parties - unionist parties and the Umma party - and identity has crystallized in the likeness of these northern elites. Nevertheless, Arabic-Muslim identity has been transformed and the Islamist movement presented by Hassan al Turabi and the National Islamic Front (NIF) distorted the classical dominant Sudanese identity.

Attempts at the exercise of total hegemony over civil and political society by dominant groups, with the aim of imposing a unique vision of Sudanese citizenship and character, brought violence and repression. Nonetheless, southern heterogeneity has become a contra-hegemonic element to avoid the achievement of the integral State by dominant groups. Biopower has applied deep aggression against its enemies not only with regard to ethnical, cultural or religious differences, but political and ideological ones, like in Darfur, Red Sea or against communists and Republican Brothers.

The first specific objective will be answered by exposing different social classes and dominant elites. The upper class were related with traditional-rural and modern-urban elites and they are identified as the northern nationalist elites that came into power after independence. In Gramscian terms, they controlled political society and civil society and they could extend a concept of Sudanese identity according to Arabic-Muslim aspects as they ruled the new State and its politics. Political society was controlled by the main political parties related to the religious brotherhoods: Khatmiyya-unionist parties and the Mahdiyya-Umma Party. They preserved a definition of Sudanese citizenship based on Arabic-Muslim identity and forced this view even during democratic periods.

Southerners became independent citizens without being considered Sudanese citizens. It was only after the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972 that they could have an opportunity to be regarded as Sudanese people. Despite the Government of May Revolution, President Nimeiri's regimen could not face northern nationalist elites and civil society was subjugated by these elites. After the split between communists and president Nimeiri, leftist organizations – unions, students and women's associations- were repressed by the state and Islamist organizations were strengthened because of this.

When NIF's Islamists came into power in 1989, they started an exercise of hegemony by the state with Islamic arguments provided by intellectuals like Turabi, merging political, social, ethnical and religious components in their notion of Sudanese identity. This is the reason why northerners also suffered strong repression either because of political or religious reasons. Southerners had little chance to be recognized as full Sudanese citizens and their heterogeneity and divisions did not help to confront northern biopower.

Historical evolution provides arguments to fulfil the second specific objective. Arabic-Muslim domination started very quickly with the Turkiyya regimen and the government of El Mahdi at the end of the 19th century. British power extended a native administration in the south, trying to avoid Mahdist revolts and isolating southern territories from the north. After independence, historical events just confirm that a new Sudanese State dominated by northern elites would

try to exercise hegemony of dominant groups and war would be part of the strategy. The outbreak of the First Civil War (1956-1972) was the consequence of race war within the exercise of hegemony by dominant northern groups. War ceased only when socialists came into power together with Nimeiri, but the failure of Nimeiri's regimen and enactment of September Laws accelerated a new war scenario in the 80's.

The Salvation Government after 1989 intensified oppression and race war in order to consolidate a new Islamist biopower. War in Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile, Darfur and Red Sea were examples of such repression, not only of southerners but also of northerners. Islamists tried to accomplish an integral State, but international political and financial pressure influenced a split between president Bashir and Islamist leader Turabi. The main outcome of this was the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005 between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). However, international pressure was not so intense as to stop violence in Darfur.

The third specific objective introduces demographic and economic aspects in order to complete the holistic view of the Sudanese context which has been determined by three major processes: nationalist Desarrollism, social Islamization and economic neoliberalization.

Demographic structure has revealed the unequal feature of the evolution of Sudanese population between 1956-2011 as well as oscillation experienced by the southern population. In this point, the decrease in southern population between 1983-1993 provides a very relevant illustration of the severity of race war and the exercise of hegemony through repression and violence. Demographic indicators like life expectancy or child mortality also evidence deep differences between north and south. Hence, policies carried out by Sudanese Governments since 1956 have affected north and south in a very unequal ways as a consequence of exercise of hegemony.

Sudan emerged from the decolonization process as a dependent territory in the Commonwealth sphere with a dual economy, where traditional nationalist elites dominated economic resources in rural areas and modern elites were in charge of the administration. In any case, both groups controlled exports and imports and consequently independence supposed a merging of economic and political power. However, Sudan kept a dual character. On the one hand, in the north an export economy connected with international markets and ruled by elites coexists with a traditional sector based on subsistence economies. On the other hand, south Sudan had an economy only based on pre-capitalist activities.

However, the low degree of openness offered a space for the first Sudanese Governments to follow a national industrial policy that enhanced exports and reduced extraversion through import substitution. The '60s were in effect a lost decade, where the state could not transform economic structure and leave it in private sector's hands. Different Governments were also not able to connect internal demand and supply and the private sector was not very interested in transformation, although lack of financing was an additional constraint. The few industries as well as the main agriculture scheme were established in the north, which proved centralism and less interest about development of the south.

The economic crisis in the '60s demonstrated the failure of early Governments and May Revolution of 1969 initiated a new long stage that started with a shift towards a Soviet paradigm. Paradoxically, nationalizations and state strengthening provoked, in the end, fundamentals of future neoliberalization, because socialists and communists did not get a strong enough social base to build a new state. Removal and repression of Nimeiri's former allies

made him look to the Gulf States and started the breadbasket strategy assisted by petrodollars. This strategy pretended to boost exports based on agriculture products and import substitution, reinforcing agriculture schemes and mechanized land in the north. The breadbasket strategy was able to increase production in the '70s but, at the same time, raised debt, thereby undermining sovereignty and making Sudanese economy much more dependent and extroverted. During Nimeiri's regimen, the Sudanese not only lost an opportunity to reduce dependency, but the double dual character produced dramatic effects due to the combination of climatic, political, economic, ethnical, religious, social and territorial factors. These factors set in motion race war and exercise of hegemony that provoked hunger in many areas. Moreover, the discovery of oil reserves intensified repression around oilfield areas at the same time as international lenders supported Nimeiri and southern rebels attacked oil companies.

The breadbasket strategy pushed traditional Arabic tribes (baggaras) to go to the south where Nilotic populations - specially Nuer and Dinka - grazed and cultivated land. The drought of 1984-1985 was an additional issue that exerted pressure over Baggaras and Dinkas and both tribes reduced their harvest and cattle. After September Laws, Nimeiri's Government assumed an Arabic-Muslim identity and started an Islamization policy that empowered baggara tribes against Dinkas. The conflicts were not new between them, but legitimization given by the State granted permission to baggara and their *razzias* against Dinka people. Baggara were an instrument of biopower in order to impose a race in the context of the exercise of hegemony by the dominant class.

When Islamists came into power in 1989 they combined two apparently opposing elements: political Islamism and economic neoliberalism. In a crisis situation the new two-headed Government adopted neoliberal economic policies and reduced public expenditure and the public role in national economy, except for military industry. It was reinforced in order to exercise integral hegemony through Islamist biopower and a new Sudanese identity based on Arabic-Muslim foundation and NIF's ideology. Therefore, a new economic Islamist sector was strengthened and Islamic banks and NGO's appeared as very important actors. That meant that a process of state destruction and deregulations intensified the roll-back neoliberalization begun in Nimeiri's stage. Nevertheless, Sudan continued being a dependent country with a dual economy. Gulf countries and especially Saudi Arabia overtook Western countries, although IMF begun openly supervising Sudanese economic policy by the end of the '90s.

During the last economic stage (1999-2011), Islamists stayed away from exercise of integral hegemony and reduced violence and repression in the south. The process of neoliberalization evolved from roll-back to roll-out neoliberalization and a new neoliberal State was built based on oil profits. China has become a key economic actor for President Bashir's Government and Sudan was no longer on the economic periphery of Western centres but of China and Saudi Arabia. Sudan succumbed to Dutch Disease and oil profits could not transform local industry and connect internal demand and supply. Cotton was replaced by oil, which became the axis of the Sudan's economy. In the 21st century Sudan continues to have a double dualistic and extroverted economy, dependent and disarticulated. Sudan tried to be the breadbasket of the Arab World and turned into a Chinese oilfield. All these facts completed the second hypothesis.

War in Darfur in the 2000's would confirm that the Sudanese Government was pushed to sign peace with the south but continued imposing dominant identity in the north. Oil exploration had already started in Darfur, so oil was not the source of conflicts, but an element to trigger

violence because race war was supported by underlying biopower. This point would confirm the third hypothesis.

Finally, it is only by applying the different focuses explained in this text and political, social, economic, ethnical, religious and ecological perspective that a broad view can be obtained in order to understand the complex Sudanese scenario from 1956-2011. It demonstrates the first hypothesis, highlighting that complex contexts require complex and multidisciplinary interpretations. Only by taking into account a broad view of war scenarios can major key elements be identified in order to facilitate conflict resolution and reconciliation, which is the only process that could bring a peaceful future to the people of both Sudans.