Unequal Struggles

Regional Inequalities and the Sudanese Civil Conflicts

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Executive Summary

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between Regional Inequalities (RIs) and conflict occurrence. While its starting point is the theory of Horizontal Inequalities (HIs) based on the use of ethnic groups as the units of analyses, this thesis argues that the RIs approach that uses regions as the units of analyses has several advantages: It simplifies the process of identifying the units using regions that are often official geographical areas and administrative entities; it simplifies the data-gathering process as regional data is often available; and it increases the practical relevance of the research, as the inequalities are easier to address because regions often have or can be granted some sort of political and economic autonomy. This thesis then tests the theory of RIs on three cases from Sudan: The first and second civil war between the North and the South; the rebellion in Darfur; and the civil strife in East Sudan. From a theoretical point of view, it finds that the complexity and flexibility of ethnic groups in Sudan renders them inadequate for analytical purposes, and that regional, not ethnic, identity is the dominant form of identity relevant for the conflicts in the Sudanese cases. This thesis identifies multidimensional RIs in the Sudanese cases and strong correlation between regional inequalities and conflict occurrence in Sudan. The inequalities are multidimensional and persistent, and conflicts in the three cases have occurred or been intensified when there has been a widening of inequalities.

Acronyms

AUPD – African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur

AW – Abdulwahid el-Nur

BC – Beja Congress

CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement

CRISE – Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity

DPA – Darfur Peace Agreement

EF – Eastern Front

ESPA – Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement

GoNU – Government of National Unity

GoS – Government of Sudan

GoSS – Government of Southern Sudan

HI – Horizontal Inequality

JCM – Joint Chief Mediator

JEM – Justice and Equality Movement

JMST – Joint Mediation Support Team

JSR – Joint Special Representative

MAR – Minorities at Risk

MM – Minni Minnawi

NCP – National Congress Party

NDA – National Democratic Alliance

PCP – Popular Congress Party

RFL – Rashaida Free Lions

RI – Regional Inequality

SLA/M – Sudan's Liberation Army/Movement

SPLA/M – Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement

UNAMID – United Nations African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur

UNMIS – United Nations Mission in Sudan

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1. Introduction

One of the longest standing puzzles in the field of conflict studies is the relationship between inequality and conflict. While injustice and inequality has frequently been associated with misery, discomfort and conflict, and influential scholars like Gurr (1970), Sen (1973) and Hibbs (1973) have convincingly demonstrated the connection, an academic consensus is yet to be reached. Earlier efforts, notably by Russett (1964), Parvin (1973), Nagel (1974) and Weede (1981), produced conflicting results; with positive, negative, curve linear and insignificant relationships found between inequality and conflict. The impasse decreased the focus on inequality in conflict studies, but as civil conflict emerged as the dominant form of conflict in the 1990s inequalities "came in from the cold" (Atkinson 1997)[1]. The renewed focus on inequality somehow culminated with the so-called greed vs. grievance debate, initiated by Collier (2000abc) and Collier & Hoeffler (1998, 1999, 2001, 2002). However, the debate was controversial and failed to establish a consensus (Cramer 2006).

Simultaneously a new approach emerged that took a step away from earlier attempts to investigate the puzzle: The literature on Horizontal Inequalities (HIs), pioneered by Frances Stewart and the CRISE project, focuses on multidimensional inequalities between ethnic groups. The HIs literature reached a temporary high with the publication of *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies* (Stewart (ed.) 2008), that presents the findings from the CRISE project. The CRISE project is a welcome development with its focus on groups (horizontal) instead of individuals (vertical) and its strong emphasis on the multidimensionality of inequalities. The project identifies four dimensions of inequalities: political power, economic resources, social development and cultural status.

Despite this advance, the CRISE project's focus on ethnic groups is problematic because ethnicity remains a vaguely defined concept, data on inequality between ethnic groups are challenging to identify and inter-ethnic inequalities are also difficult to address in a sustainable way. While Stewart *et al*. focus on ethnic groups, a largely theoretically undeveloped and empirically untested aspect of HIs is that of spatial-horizontal inequalities; that is, inequalities between geographical areas. A specific variant of spatial-horizontal inequalities is Regional Inequalities (RIs); inequalities between sub-state units. Research on RIs is all but non-existent in the conflict literature. Consequently, as Kanbur and Venables

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[1] The title of Atkinson's article is "Bringing Inequality in from the Cold"

(2005) points out, "policy discussions tend to take place in something of an analytical and empirical vacuum" (2005: 3).

The RI approach has several advantages compared to using ethnic groups as the unit of analyses: It simplifies the process of identifying the units using regions that are often official geographical areas and administrative entities; it simplifies the data-gathering process as regional data is often available; and it increases the practical relevance of the research, as the inequalities are easier to address because regions often have or can be granted some sort of political and economic autonomy. From a theoretical point of view, the complexity and flexibility of ethnic groups in Sudan renders them inadequate for analytical purposes, and ethnic identity is not the dominant form of identity relevant for the conflicts in the Sudanese cases. I argue that while Sudanese have multiple and flexible identities a consistent identity is connected to regions; and that the regional identities among South Sudanese, Darfuris and East Sudanese are the basic group identities for their armed struggles against the central government. The first of three research questions for this thesis is consequently: RQ_1: *How can the current paradigm of HIs transcend ethnicity and develop a theory of the relationship between RIs and conflict?*

In this thesis, the theory of RIs is tested on three of the civil conflicts in Sudan: The first and second civil war between the North and the South; the rebellion in Darfur; and the civil strife in East Sudan. Sudan is the largest and potentially one of the richest countries in Africa. However, it is also one of the bloodiest, and parts of its population experience some of the worst living conditions in the world. Being the biggest country in Africa, no-one has ever been able to exercise political control of the entire area within its borders, and the idea of a single Sudanese state has been constantly challenged. The post-colonial civil conflicts of Sudan began with the South Sudanese claims for self-determination at independence, and the many layers and patterns of conflict within its vast areas means that since then Sudan has never experienced a year without violent political conflict.

Sudan has been subject of simplistic explanations, especially in popular accounts. As Douglas Johnson (2007) argues referring to the North-South civil war: "the Sudan conflict is frequently presented as either the continuation of an age-old confrontation between "cultures" defined by blood-lines ("Arab" vs. "African"), or the consequences of an artificial division imposed by colonial powers" (Johnson 2007: xi-xii); and he furthermore describes the coverage in Western media as "an atavistic return to the "Heart of Darkness" style of explanation" (2007: xii). Alex de Waal (2004) expresses similar

frustrations when he states that "it is hard to find a news account of the present war in Darfur that does not characterize it as one of 'Arabs' against 'Africans'" (2004: 25). Sudan has, in general, been subject to simplistic causal explanations and descriptions of the North-South conflict, as well as continuous neglect of other conflicts within the country. As late as in 2002, the instrumental Danforth report (2002) failed to identify the multiple and complex conflict patterns in Sudan.

With respect to the Sudanese conflicts, the argument regarding skewed distribution in Sudan is not new and has been actively advocated by rebel groups in South Sudan, East Sudan and Darfur. It is also a prominent part of the argument from most dominant Sudan experts such as Alex de Waal and Douglas Johnson. Furthermore, while not considered a scientific work the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD) (2009) went a very long way in making the argument that RIs are the root cause of the Sudanese civil conflicts. But even though marginalisation is an element in most thorough historical accounts that focus on Sudan exclusively, the argument that multidimensional RIs are the shared main causal factor for the Sudanese conflicts has not been comprehensively argued in any scientific work identified. In fact, there is an absence of any recognised large study on any kind of HIs in Sudan, and the Sudanese cases are not included as case studies in the sparse HIs literature. The second research question for this thesis is consequently: RQ$_2$: *Can the theory of RIs explain the Sudanese civil conflicts?*

Through empirical analyses of existing research and data on political power, economic resources, social indicators and cultural status gross regional inequalities in Sudan can be demonstrated, and argued to be the main causal factor common for the three largest Sudanese civil conflicts. But the Sudanese conflicts also provide challenges and subsequent insight to the theory. Specifically, despite considerable intra-regional conflicts, the regions (i.e. South Sudan, Darfur and East Sudan) represent identity markers behind group formation and mobilisation for the Sudanese civil conflicts. At the core of this apparent paradox is the fluency and multidimensionality of identity; as the presence of regional identity does not exclude the presence of other identity groups, such as tribe[2] (Bor Dinka), people (Dinka) or race (Black African). Indeed, while these identities may be stronger in most circumstances the regional identity has had particular relevance for the conflicts. The insights from the Sudanese conflicts are dealt

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[2]   While the term «tribe» has been discredited in modern social anthropology, it is alive and important as both kin and political unit for the Sudanese. When you travel in Southern Sudan, the question "what is your tribe (*qabila* in Arabic)?" is one of the first a visitor will receive.

with in the final research question: RQ₃: *How can lessons from the Sudanese cases develop the RIs theory?*

1.1 Research Question

How can the current paradigm of HIs transcend ethnicity and develop a theory of the relationship between RIs and conflict? Can the theory of RIs explain the Sudanese civil conflicts? How can lessons from the Sudanese cases develop the RIs theory?

1.2 Introducing Sudan

Sudan's post-independence history is dominated by war, with only parts of its northernmost areas spared from the disastrous effects of warfare. In addition to the internal conflicts, long-standing hostilities with its Chadian neighbour, chaotic instability in Central African Republic, various involvement of both Congolese and Ugandan armed movements, coupled with the influence of Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea makes the Sudanese conflicts also part of a region-wide pattern of instability and conflict. Indeed, so conflict-prone is Sudan that when it gained independence in 1956 it was already at war following the 1955 Torit mutiny. Beginning with the South Sudanese claims for self-determination at independence, post-colonial Sudan has experienced a number of internal conflicts. This has often been expressed as political violence from peripheral groups towards the central government, but also conflicts between groups at a smaller scale. Through the inability of the Sudanese state to provide security, a juridical system and subsequently welfare goods the central government has been largely invisible in its peripheries; its armed forces the most frequent exception to the rule.

Three of the conflicts are dealt with in this thesis: The civil wars between GoS and Southern movements; the civil conflict in East Sudan between Eastern opposition movements and GoS; and the war in Darfur between Darfuri rebel movements and GoS. These Sudanese civil conflicts have led to four major peace agreements[3]. Three of these still hold today, albeit to varying degrees: The Comprehensive Peace Agreement between GoS and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM); the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) between GoS and the Eastern Front (EF); and the Darfur

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[3] There have been a larger number of other "peace agreements", most of which have been agreements of alliances between Khartoum and its proxy militias

Peace Agreement (DPA) between GoS and Minni Minnawi's faction of Sudan's Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M)[4].

Table 1. Political conflicts in Sudan

	South Sudan	**Darfur**	**East Sudan**
Conflicts	➢1954 – 1972 ➢1983 – 2005	➢1986 – 89 ➢1996 – 98 ➢1999 – 2001 ➢2003-	➢1995 – 2006
Peace Agreements	➢Addis Ababa Agreement ➢Comprehensive Peace Agreement	➢Darfur Peace Agreement	➢Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement
Outcomes	➢Power-sharing ➢Wealth-sharing ➢Self-determination	➢Power-sharing ➢Wealth-sharing	➢Power-sharing ➢Wealth-sharing

1.2.1 Explanations on the Sudanese civil conflicts

There are considerable gaps in the literature on Sudan, despite a certain peak in recent years. The few central, mostly historical works on Sudan offer a nuanced view on the Sudanese civil conflicts. Among the conflict-specific scholars the work *par excellence* has been Douglas Johnson's *The Root Causes to the Sudanese Civil Conflicts*, one of the few books that tackle the causes of the Sudanese conflicts as a whole despite his main focus being on the North-South conflict. Holt and Daly's *A History of Sudan: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day* remains the dominant work on Sudanese history in general, though it is largely focusing on Northern Sudan. Julie Flint and Alex de Waal's *A Short History of a Long War* and the sequel *A New History of a Long War,* and M. W. Daly's *Darfur's Sorrow* are already considered must reads for Sudan scholars, but they focus exclusively on Darfur. While there is a considerable focus on other causes in them they all highlight marginalisation as one of the key

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[4] Not to be confused with the South Sudanese SPLA/M. To confuse matters further, the SLA/M has splintered into a number of smaller groups. The two most relevant of these are dealt with in this thesis: SLA/M – AW and SLA/M – MM.

reasons for the conflicts. Indeed, in most, if not all recognised academic works, marginalisation of the periphery is included as a cause of Sudan's conflicts. But there is a considerable gap in terms of identifying these inequalities as opposed to just stating the argument. To date, Cobham's (2005) working paper reviewing inequalities mostly across the North Sudanese regions remains the best attempt at systematising the marginalisation argument in a conflict-cause context.

On the non-conflict specific side, several historians, notably Collins (2008) and Holt and Daly (2000), offer a thorough historical account of Sudan – which necessarily involves conflict. Collins (2008) has a reduced focus on marginalisation, however, as he argues that the main reasons for Sudan's failures are ethnic and religious divides. This sentiment is strongly echoed in Deng (1995) and Jok (2007) who sees race and religion as the defining characteristics for the Sudanese identity conflicts. With this, they are linked to the simplified version of a North-South divide in Sudan, exemplified by the Sudan Household Survey's (DHS 1990) statement that "the population of Sudan is characterized by two distinct cultural traditions, one in the North and one in the South; regional divisions reflect this ethnic division" (DHS 1990: 1). While Deng (1995) clearly recognizes that religion and race *per se* is less important than the political and economic power that derives to the privileged from racial and religious discrimination, he still argues that "the relationship between religion and the state (…) has emerged as the central factor in the conflict" (Deng 1995: 16). Along similar lines with respect to the North-South conflict Anderson (1999) terms it a religious-ethnic struggle, even though he is quick to point out that "popular analyses invariably begin with an oversimplification: southern "black-African Christians and animists" fighting domination by northern "Arab Muslims"" (Anderson 1999: 65).

It is, however, much more than the popular version of the North-South divide and the newer simplification of an African-Arab conflict in Darfur to the racial-religious element of the Sudanese conflicts. Indeed, the particular form of Arab Islamist supremacy found in some quarters of the riverine Sudanese community – as for instance emphasized by Collins (2008) and Johnson (2003, 2007) – has alienated peripheral groups from the concept of a Sudanese identity, "afflicted the country with a crisis of national identity" (Deng 1995: 9) and in the process strengthened the regional identity. The link between the race, religion and ethnicity, and inequalities is often under-stated, however. As Collins (2008) points out, "the people of the riverine Sudan (…) have long demonstrated their scorn for those ethnicities from the west (…) they regard as ill-bred, uncultured rustics" (2008: 8), but from a conflict perspective it is more important the result of this – which Collins (2008) terms "conspicuous political

racism" – is that "three ethnic groups – Ja'aliyyin, Shayqiyya and Danaqla – have monopolized virtually all positions in the government, from cabinet ministers to the most junior civil servants, during the past fifty years of independent Sudan" (2008: 8). That the results of the political inequalities are linked with consistent social, economic and cultural regional inequalities that represent the core causes for the Sudanese civil conflicts is seldom established. The AUPD report on Darfur (2009) goes the furthest in making this argument, and clearly links the occurrence of regional identities and regional inequalities to the Sudanese conflicts. While setting out to address the conflict in Darfur the report states that the conflict "is a manifestation of Sudan's inequitable distribution of wealth and power", hence, the panel "defines it as Sudan's crisis in Darfur" (2009: xiii).

However, the Sudanese conflicts are still frequently cited as ethnic, religious or greed-driven wars for resources. This is particularly so with the North/South civil conflict: Rotberg (2004), for instance, describes the conflict as reflecting "fundamental ethnic, religious and linguistic differences" (Rotberg 2004: 13); Huntington (1993) classifies the conflict as "civilizational"; Anderson (1999), Deng (1995) and Jok (2007) labels it a religious-ethnic struggle; and the Uppsala University Conflict database describes the Sudanese conflicts as having "its roots in the religious and cultural division of northern and southern Sudan" (Uppsala University 2010 URL). John Young also argues that "the international authors of the CPA assumed that Sudan suffered from a north-south, Arab-African, Moslem-Christian divide" (Young 2007: 125). There is also a significant focus on external forces in the literature. Collins (2008), for instance, sees the current Darfur conflict as nothing but the continuation of forty year long conflict for control over the Chad basin between Tripoli, Khartoum and Ndjamena. Likewise, in the foreword to the newest edition of *Root Causes…* Johnson (2007) points out that the argument that civil conflicts emerges when internal tensions are exacerbated by external interests covers Sudan's cases "uncomfortably well" (2007: xvi).

1.3 Main theoretical assumptions

The main theoretical argument of this thesis is that Regional Inequalities (RIs) can lead to conflict. This is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2. Regions are defined as geographical areas that are, or have been, recognised as political entities. Inequalities can be and frequently are operationalised in a number of ways. As this study emphasizes the multidimensionality of inequality it consequently also acknowledges that inequalities can be measured across a large number of indicators. The

operationalisation in this study is based on the main theoretical assumptions, some case specific consideration and the availability of data.

However, as the aim of this thesis is to contribute to and strengthen the CRISE project, it adopts the definitions and operationalisations from that project when possible. While contributors to the project have operationalised inequalities in a number of ways, Stewart (2008) generally identifies four dimensions: political participation; economic aspects; social aspects and cultural status. In this thesis, political inequalities are understood to be inequalities in access to political power; economic inequalities are inequalities in income and spending power; social inequalities are inequalities in scores on social indicators; and cultural inequalities are inequalities with respect to religious and cultural freedom.

Table 2 provides an overview of some of the possible indicators for RIs, all of which will be taken into consideration for the Sudanese cases.

Table 2. Regional inequalities – Dimensions and Indicators

Political inequalities	Economic inequalities	Social inequalities	Cultural inequalities
Political representation Political freedom Regional autonomy	Regional income Distribution of government spending	Score on social indicators: Poverty, access to education, health services and other basic social services	Religious freedom Discrimination Historical suppression

1.3.1 Existing research

There exists some research that focuses on RIs and conflict. Østby (2008) finds a positive and significant relationship between RIs in the distribution of assets and education compared to the capital region in a cross-country comparison of 36 conflicts from 55 developing countries. Murshed and Gates (2005) find a positive relationship between severe education inequalities between the capital and regions and conflict in Nepal.

1.4 Justification

At the start of a research project, the first question posed should be: *is this research needed?* Following the much cited argument of King *et al*. (1994) there are two main criteria for scientific research. First, all research should pose a question of importance to the real world. Second, each research project should "make a contribution to an identifiable scholarly literature by increasing our collective ability to construct verified scientific explanations of some aspect of the world" (King *et al*. 1994: 15).

The first criterion is answered without any additional argument: the causes of civil conflicts are of importance to the real world. On the second criterion, while this thesis touches upon several debates, it is primarily concerned with three issues connected to clusters in the scholarly literature. The first is the long standing academic controversy surrounding the inequality-conflict nexus. However, as the HIs literature is currently largely focused on ethnic groups this thesis is also connected to the literature on ethnic conflicts. Finally, as this thesis is investigating the causes for the Sudanese civil conflicts it is thus directly related to the literature on the causes for the Sudanese civil conflicts. Consequently, the research is directly related to an issue of great importance to the real world, and it aims to increase our collective ability to construct verified scientific explanations through contributions to three clusters of the scholarly literature.

1.5 Research design and methodological considerations

The second question to pose is: *how should the research be conducted?* This part answers this question by presenting the research design and the main methodological considerations.

1.5.1 Case Studies

A small-N case study has certain advantages and disadvantages. According to Bennett (2001) "a case study is (…) the investigation of a well-defined aspect of a historical happening" (2004:21). George and Bennett define the case study approach as a "detailed examination of an aspect of an historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be applicable to other events" (2005:5). The main advantage of the case study approach, according to George and Bennett (2005), is the attention to detail that the case study offers, thus allowing for contextualized comparisons of phenomena which

large-N studies normally do not (2005:19). On the other hand, however, case studies do not identify the theory's antecedent conditions (Van Evra 1997:71). Consequently, we cannot be sure whether the causal mechanisms identified owe to unique conditions in the Sudanese cases or the conclusions hold generally. A main obstacle with small-N case studies is consequently the possibility for generalization. This is partly overcome in two ways. First, this thesis is guided by George and Bennett's (2005) method of structured, focused comparison – a systematic data compilation method that makes it possible to draw generalizations from a small number of cases. It requires the researcher to structure the analysis of each case around a set of standardized general questions and focus selectively on those aspects of each case that are relevant for the research question. Consequently this thesis uses identical indicators from – at least – similar sources for the different cases. Furthermore, case study methods are used to give a detailed presentation of the cases and then to analyse their relevance to the RI theory. As the general theory on HIs and conflict is developing, it has been subject to a large set of case studies and several large-N studies. Thus, when adding a case-study to such previous research, the problem with lack of generalisation is partly overcome.

The demands of the method of structured, focused comparison were not straightforward to meet in this thesis. Most importantly, while the cases are inherently connected they also differ in time, space and available data. While comparisons across time and space are questionable within a structured, focused comparison framework to begin with, the data on post-conflict inequalities – in particular in South Sudan – is relatively thin, and thus represented further challenges for the approach. As a result of the difficulty in finding data from at least similar sources for the different cases across all dimensions and indicators the analyses part is divided into a comparative analysis of general inequalities across the regions, and an analysis of regional-specific inequalities in the different cases[5]. Nonetheless, as far as data have been available the method of structured, focused comparison has provided the main methodological principle for this thesis.

1.5.2 Unit of analyses

One of the key points in this thesis, as articulated in *RQ₁*, is the use of regions as the units of analyses. There has been a strong tendency, in particular in the quantitative literature, to analyse at the level of

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[5] *Regional-specific* inequalities in this context is related both to the availability of specific data and the occurence of specific inequalities

the nation-state (Urdal and Raleigh 2007:675). In respect to civil conflicts, this is intuitively inappropriate, as the presence of internal violent political conflicts in itself signal that some inhabitants argue that the state lacks the necessary legitimacy, and consequently questions the state's monopoly of legitimate violence. As Rotberg (2004) puts it, the "state's prime function is to provide that political good of security (…), the delivery of a range of other desirable political goods becomes possible when a reasonable measure of security has been sustained" (Rotberg 2004: 3). Bøås (2007) argues that « the state's failure to provide for its population" creates "nearly permanent marginalization of large segments of the public in political and economic life" and "intensified political conflicts over the redistribution of ideas, identities, resources, and positions" (Bøås 2007: 45).

Consequently, Urdal and Raleigh (2007) argue for the use of smaller geographical units as the level of analyses. One potential sub-unit is based on geography. States, regions and counties are readily available sub-units. It could also be argued that sub-units are particularly relevant in certain cases. For Sudan, several points can be made in this regard. First, Sudan's size makes it prone to the development of sub-units. Second, its largely artificial boundaries mean that sub-units could be more relevant. Third, Sudan has a diverse population with its different groups largely concentrated in specific areas. Fourth, Sudan's geographical features function as effective within-state borders; namely the deserts, mountains, rivers and the Sudd. Fifth, previous or existing units, defined or imagined, provide alternative markers for group identification. Thus, while all of Sudan's regions are multi-cultural and multi-ethnic the Sudanese make clear distinctions between Southerners, Darfuris and East Sudanese.

The use of the region as the unit of analyses is simultaneously the main argument and the most intuitive counter-argument to the conclusions in this thesis. For all the cases, the counter-argument towards the importance of regional identities will be the importance of identities above – religion, race and state – and below – tribe, ethnicity and nation – the region. In all three regions there has been – and still is – considerable intra-regional violence; partly political, partly economic and partly as a result of the strengthening of small political entities – the tribes – to provide security and other goods in the absence of the state. The argument of regional identity and the region as the basis for the civil conflicts in Sudan is consequently challenged by the existence of relatively strong smaller political entities and considerable amount of intra-regional violence. However, the existence of other identities does not render the regional identities irrelevant. A central premise of this thesis is that identities are flexible and multi-dimensional, and different identities are given different significance at different times. Evidence

based on the way the rebel groups are organised, the rhetoric they use and data to back up their claims to be regional movements fighting RIs suggests that regional identity has trumped other identities in the Sudanese civil conflicts. Nonetheless, the importance of intra-regional identities largely based on small political entities – tribes – and some concepts of people and race has considerable importance for most Sudanese.

Furthermore, the argument that while the movements have a regional nature they have not been all-regional inclusive has considerable relevance for all cases. For instance, SPLA/M had a weaker position in Equatoria than the rest of South Sudan, Gedaref State was relatively uninvolved in the conflict in the East, and the larger tribal network of Baggara Arabs in South Darfur State have been largely uninvolved in the conflict in Darfur. The occurrence of militias aligned with Khartoum and considerable intra-regional violence provided additional difficulties. This is also relevant for the identity-argument, as strong sub-regional identities and considerable intra-regional violence threatens the strength of the region as identity maker and core unit in the conflicts. In addition, while this thesis will demonstrate strong RIs there are certain relevant exceptions from the rule that provides a more nuanced picture of the Sudanese RIs. There are particularly strong intra-regional inequalities between North and South Kordofan, and between Blue Nile and the rest of the Central region. Additional relative strong resentments against Khartoum further strengthen the argument that these states do not have a natural place in their respective regions from neither an identity nor inequality perspective.

The problem with adjusting regions, however, is that it reduces the amount of available data as some of the sources use regions and not states as units of analyses. For this reason, I have chosen to stick to the pre-1995 regions (see *Figure 2*). The Northern region thus consists of the Northern and River Nile states; Khartoum is considered a separate region; The Central region consists of Gezira, Sennar, White Nile and Blue Nile states; Kordofan of North and South Kordofan states; East Sudan of Kassala, Red Sea and Gedaref states; Darfur of the three Darfur states; and the South of the ten Southern states.

Figure 2. Regional map of Sudan

Source: Map designed by author and produced by UNDP Sudan

1.5.3 Methods

In short, this thesis makes use of two scientific methods. The first is a critical literature review that evaluates existing sources. It thus consists of a review of existing academic work, and is attributed to both the theoretical and the historical part. The second is systemising existing primary and secondary sources and testing of the systemised data on the RIs theory.

While initially extensive field work with interviews and surveys was identified as useful methodological tools for the purpose of this research, this thesis is based first and foremost on written primary and secondary sources. There are two main reasons for this. First, there exists a large amount of data already. In particular on the history of Sudan, there is an abundance of literature to draw from. While a number of interviews with key actors in the conflict formation phase could enlighten the causal mechanism between inequalities and conflict further, this work was not prioritised. This is partly related to the restrictions of the master's thesis, but much more to the restrictions of my position in Sudan. As a political officer representing the Government of Norway, it was unacceptable to act part time as a researcher with the same key stakeholders I interacted with regularly through my official capacity. Consequently, as this would significantly reduce the number of interviewees the questions that could be asked and the probability of obtaining un-biased outcomes the idea was abandoned altogether. It should be noted, however, that this research owes considerable debt to a number of actors connected to Sudan, and that the 18 months I spent in Sudan embellished the research with considerable advantages that are not sufficiently reflected in the references. The other main data-gathering process, the empirical evidence for inequalities, seemed sounder to investigate through a direct data-gathering process. However, I soon realised that this could risk duplicating efforts made by more seasoned researches. Consequently, while on one hand there seemed to be a great need for evaluating existing data and introducing it to the academic literature and on the other the costs of collecting new data in this way also far outweighed the benefits, for the purpose of this thesis it was more worthwhile to analyse the empirical work that already exists.

1.5.4 Data

This thesis argues that RIs are the main causal factor for the Sudanese civil conflicts. But to demonstrate the existence of RIs from a causal perspective they need to occur before the conflicts

emerged, and therefore the identification of pre-conflict data is a prerequisite. This was not straightforward. For instance, while the conflict in the East significantly increased during the 1990s there is no doubt that there was an active political movement with certain violent methods present in East Sudan through the Beja Congress from the time of independence and onwards. Thus, while the actual starting year for conflicts proved an obstacle to identify, the general rule also applied that the further back in history the less available data; indeed, identifying credible data from the early days of independence proved a formidable task for South Sudan in particular.

Identifying data on inequalities in general was easier, however, as there is a considerable amount of new data, for instance the UN/GoS Sudan Household Survey (2006). Data mostly from the UN agencies is consistently of high quality but with more dubious explanatory value for the conflicts. Specifically, with the humanitarian operation in the Darfur and the increased international presence in South Sudan living conditions and social indicators in particular has been positively affected by the international community. Thus, education and health services provided by the international community post-conflict does not correspond with pre-conflict conditions and are as such irrelevant for conflict occurrence. On the other hand, however, it seems perfectly clear that conflict has had devastating effects on the lives and livelihood of the population in conflict affected areas. Consequently, this has had a negative impact on social indicators in particular that do not necessarily reflect pre-war conditions. Some exceptions are made to the rule to use pre-conflict data, mostly for South Sudan. The lack of adequate data for South Sudan in particular required the use of some post-conflict data to illustrate the RIs experienced in South Sudan. This is done with caution, however, and complements more reliable data.

1.5.5 Validity

Internal validity is directly connected to the validity of the argument made. It concerns the establishment of a causal relationship between an independent and dependent variable. To address concerns of internal validity it is necessary to explore possible spurious effects; that the causal relationship is caused by a third variable (Yin 2003: 34). Internal validity is strengthened in this thesis through detailed historical accounts of each case that reduce the possibility for unknown spurious effects, as well as the use of data from several different sources. Strengthened internal validity is one of the advantages of the case study method, as the causal mechanisms are more thoroughly investigated.

External validity concerns the issue of determining whether findings can be generalized beyond the specific case study. As this thesis is written into an existing debate, it draws on and can be compared to other case studies, large-N studies and theoretical work within the HIs literature. Thus, through the cumulative efforts of different researchers external validity is strengthened. External validity is also strengthened with increased number of cases. Specifically, as RIs are identified in all of the three Sudanese civil conflicts put to the test, it increases the probability that RIs are at the core of the causes for conflicts in Sudan.

1.5.6 Reliability

Reliability means minimize errors and biases in the study (Yin 2003:37), so that the research can be repeated with the same results. The issue of reliability has been a long-standing obstacle for reaching consensus in the inequality literature. In particular, the dominance of large-N studies combined with the lack of adequate data has led to flawed and inconsistent operationalisations which subsequently have produced different results. The depth provided by a case study minimizes the possibility for weak reliability, though it requires transparency with regard to choice of methods and the analyses. Reliability is increased in this thesis by being explicit about the reasons for choices made in the course of both the data collection and during the analysis. Furthermore, reliability is increased by approaching the cases with structured, focused comparisons. To enhance reliability data have been compiled from a number of sources. Consequently, the data in this thesis are drawn from data collected by the rebel movements, data from the Sudanese government, data from the World Bank and data from different UN agencies on the ground in Sudan. Data from different actors with arguably different and sometimes opposite motivations all show a similar and strong trend of RIs in Sudan, a fact that strengthens the argument and the reliability of the study.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This thesis proceeds in three parts. The second chapter provides the theoretical framework for the thesis. It starts out by presenting the main assumptions of the HIs literature as argued by Stewart *et al*. (2008). It then questions and subsequently discusses the applicability of ethnic groups as units of analyses for the Sudanese civil conflicts. Concluding that they are inappropriate from a theoretical and

methodological point of view the discussion on ethnicity suggests a chance of focus from ethnicity to identity. Since regional identity provides the most relevant identity groups for the Sudanese civil conflict the theory chapter consequently turns to the main theoretical assumptions on the relationship between RIs and conflict.

When the theoretical framework is established the focus shifts to the case studies. Chapter 3 builds on the introduction to Sudan in Chapter 1, and provides brief historical overviews of the different cases.

Chapter 4 is the analyses chapter. It tests the theory of RIs on the Sudanese civil conflicts. To do this, it starts out by looking at the occurrence of regional identity as well as other possible identity groups in the different cases and argues that regional identity provides the most relevant identity groups. The evidence for RIs across the political, social, economic and cultural status dimensions are then presented, first in a comparative analysis including all the cases and then the regional-specific evidence for each case is presented.

Finally, the findings are summarized in the conclusion.

2 The theoretical framework

Being a direct contribution to the Horizontal Inequalities literature this thesis shares the common theoretical assumptions that have been developed through decades of intense academic debate on the relationship between inequalities and conflict. It consequently does not tackle the criticism towards the vertical inequality debate and the subsequent greed vs. grievance debate in detail. This chapter proceeds in three parts. The first part briefly explains the basic assumptions of the HIs literature, the second highlights the theoretical and methodological problems with ethnicity as the unit of analyses, while the third part shifts the focus to the theory of RIs.

2.1 Horizontal Inequalities

The inequality-conflict nexus, that the HIs theory is a part of, is far from new. At least since the days of Plato, injustice and inequality have frequently been associated with misery, discomfort and conflict (Cramer 2002:1848). A wide range of disciplines in social science have investigated these problems, from criminology and social psychology to economics and political science. A long-standing puzzle has been the effect of inequality on conflict occurrence. From a theoretical point of view, the theory that a feeling of deprivation might lead to conflict is most commonly associated with Ted R. Gurr, and his influential work *Why Men Rebel*. His theory has increasingly gained importance in the post Cold War world, in which the majority of conflicts are intra-state conflicts. From a correlative point of view as a minimum it seems without any doubt to be the case that poverty is related to civil war, and almost every study supports this relationship (Collier & Hoeffler 1998, 2001; Hauge & Ellingsen 1998; Hibbs, 1973).

The testing on the effects of inequalities on conflict, however, has produced a range of different results, even with the same datasets. The pioneer work of Russett (1964) found a positive relationship, and this was supported by the theoretical work from Gurr (1970), Hibbs (1973) and Sen (1973). However, Parvin (1973) reach the opposite conclusions; that the relationship between inequality and conflict is negative. To complicate matters further, Nagel (1974) proposed an inverse u-shaped relationship, with political violence most likely at intermediate levels of conflict. Completing the circle Weede (1981) found no relationship at all. The impasse continued into the 1990s. Some, like Booth (1991), Boyce (1996), Alesina and Perotti (1996), Binswanger *et al*. (1995) and Nazfiger and Auvinen (1997)

conclude that income and asset distribution have strong and significant impacts on social and political unrest. Others, like Boswell and Dixon (1990) and Deininger and Squire (1997), find no relationship between economic inequality and conflict.

As a response to the impasse Paul Collier initiated the greed vs. grievance debate that has dominated the literature from the late 1990s until today. As head of the Development Research Department at the World Bank, the Oxford University professor was instrumental in setting up the research program *The Economics of Civil War, Crime and Violence*. The project produced numerous papers on the relationship between economic growth, natural resources and civil conflict[6]. As Collier (2000abc) and Collier & Hoeffler (1998, 1999, 2001, 2002), supported by scholars such as Keen (1998) put greed on top of the agenda, the greed vs. grievance debate had started. Generally speaking, the debate puts those that focus on deprivation, injustice and inequality against those that see economic gains as the main cause for political violence. In the words of Cramer (2006), «it was proposed that one of these neatly discrete drives must account wholly for the incidence of war» (2006: 124). Through quantitative studies, proponents of the greed argument found factors of grievances "unimportant or perverse" (Collier 2000: 96). Rebel organisations are motivated by greed, Collier concludes, but they are not so naïve as to admit such. Rather, they have developed different narratives of grievances, one of those being that of injustice and inequality (Collier 2000: 92-96). The debate, however, was largely discredited[7] and failed to establish a consensus.

Mancini (2008) identifies two main reasons for the lack of consensus in the literature. The first is an inconsistency in defining violent conflict, where some use a definition that requires the state or government to be involved (*Armed Conflict Dataset*, Strand *et al.* 2003), others include incidents between nongovernmental factions (*Minorities at Risk*, Gurr 1993), while others again exclude genocides (Auvinen and Nafziger 1999). There are also different approaches for the fatality threshold for conflict. According to Eck (2005), there are generally three approaches: 1,000 battle-related deaths per annum, as in the Correlates of War (COW) project (Singer and Small 1972; Small and Singer 1982); 1,000 battle-related deaths over the entire conflict and at least 100 per year (Sambanis 2004); and the 25 battle-deaths per year threshold in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Gleditsch *et al.* 2002). At the same time, some assessments refer only to deaths while others include displacement to

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[6] See Collier (2000abc); Collier & Hoeffler 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002; Le Billon 2001; Auty 2000, 2001;

[7] See, for instance, Cramer (2006)

measure conflict intensity (Mancini 2008: 106). Consequently, differences in definitions can provide drastically different results.

Along similar lines Christopher Cramer (2006) criticizes the "civil war onset" definition used by datasets and most statistical studies, and argues that there is a "broad continuum of forms of violent conflicts" (2006:49), with "overlapping phenomena" (2006:74). Cramer (2006) explores the argument in detail by investigating violent crime and communal violence in South Africa, India and Brazil. These countries, three of the most unequal in the world, somehow represent a challenge for the inequality literature as they have not experienced civil conflict. However, by looking at violent conflict with Cramer's (2006) perspective it becomes clear the while they do not score positive for "civil conflict onset" violent crime and communal violence in South Africa, India and Brazil is closely connected to political violence and have similar causality. A similar argument is made by Richards (2005), when he states that "war is a long-term struggle for political ends, commonly but not always using violence" (Richards 2005: 4, quoted in Bøås and Dunn 2007b: 4). Galtung (1996) also tackles the problem by making a distinction between negative peace – the absence of conflict – and positive peace, which is a state of social equilibrium where new disputes do not escalate into violence. Thus, by strict definitions of conflict we define ourselves away from important insights of reasons for long-term struggle for political ends. This is challenge for the conflict literature that has affected the inconclusive testing on the effects of inequality on conflict.

The second reason identified by Mancini (2008) is that "inequality is conventionally measured using Gini coefficient based on individual income or wealth" (2008: 106) – consequently, it is a *one-dimensional* and *vertical* approach to inequality, thus excluding other dimensions of inequality as well as group membership. Cramer (2006) also points out that not only is this approach one-dimensional; the data available is also notoriously flawed and unsuitable for cross-country analyses. As a response to the critique of the *one-dimensional vertical* approach to inequality a *multi-dimensional horizontal* approach emerged.

2.1.1 Existing literature

The causal relationship between HIs and conflict has been largely neglected up until the last decade, but there are a few notable exceptions. An early attempt at investigating group inequalities is Barrows

(1976). In this pioneer study, Barrows finds a consistent positive correlation between ethnic group inequalities and political instability across 32 sub-Saharan African states in the 1960s (1976: 154–155). The most notable exception, however, is Ted R. Gurr and the *Minorities at Risk* (MAR) project[8]. In four phases from 1988 to 2005, the programme tracked 283 ethnic groups from 1945 to 2003. Through his work, Ted R. Gurr has identified a positive relationship between minority rebellion and relative deprivation caused by economic, political and cultural inequalities (Gurr 1970; 1993; 2000; Gurr & Moore 1997; Gurr & Harff 1994). As Gurr reports in *Minorities at Risk* (1994), discrimination and competition for scarce resources were experienced economically by 63 % and politically by 72 % of the 233 ethnic groups he studied. Most groups protested in some form, and in almost 50 % of the cases the conflicts turned violent (Gurr 1994:6). The MAR datasets are great accomplishments, and will be useful tools for further research on horizontal inequality and ethnic violence. However, the programme is more about gathering data than investigating causality and includes little theoretical work. Thus, the data have existed in a theoretical vacuum.

Another large research programme set out to fill this vacuum. After the initial theoretical and case-study work on HIs (HIs) (Stewart 2000; 2002ab; 2004) Frances Stewart headed a research project at the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE)[9] at Oxford University, UK. While the project in many ways culminated with the presentation of its findings in Stewart (ed.) (2008), the project is still ongoing and frequently produces working papers. The project includes theory building, large-N studies, case studies and comparative case studies. It is, by far, the greatest effort to date to research the effects of HIs. Consequently, this thesis' theoretical understanding is to a large degree drawn from and adjusted to Stewart's pioneer work (2000; 2002ab; 2004) and the project's findings (Stewart (ed.) 2008).

2.1.2 Theory and hypotheses

The two basic concepts in the HIs literature are identity groups and inequality. Identity groups are defined as groups formed by "religion, ethnic ties or racial affiliation, or other salient factors" (Stewart 2008: 12-13). The CRISE project consequently open up for a large number of identity groups in theory,

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[8] Consult http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/ for information on the project

[9] Consult www.crise.ox.ac.uk/ for information on the project. A brief overview is provided at:
    http://www.crise.ox.ac.uk/pubs/CRISE%20In%20Brief%201.pdf

but focuses in practice almost exclusively on ethnicity and religion; indeed, the volume produced from the project is called *Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Stewart's starting point is thus ethnic conflicts. Drawing her understanding of ethnic group mobilization from the constructivist tradition, she argues that differences in actual underlying conditions are important for group development. Without such inequalities, group identification and mobilization is likely to be weak (Stewart 2000: 247). Inequalities are categorized by Stewart (2008) into four dimensions: political participation; economic aspects; social aspects; and cultural status.

Building on Stewart's initial work, the CRISE project had four core hypotheses: That conflict is more likely where there are significant political or economic HIs, or both; that political mobilization is especially likely where there are consistent HIs, that is both political and economic HIs running in the same direction; that lack of cultural recognition and equity, or cultural status HIs, will be provocative, while cultural inclusion will help sustain peace; and that political mobilization and conflict will become more likely where HIs are widening (Stewart 2008: 18-19).

In addition to these hypotheses, they had some theoretical ideas on how contexts of political conditions, cultural demographic conditions, and economic conditions affect the likelihood of conflict when HIs are present. With respect to political conditions, the project focused on the structure of the state and of power; and how accommodating the state is. Stewart argues that conflicts are more likely in "highly centralized systems than in less centralized systems", because "more is at stake" in political contests in centralised systems (Stewart 2008: 19). On accommodation, the project stressed the idea that violent political conflict should be seen as an alternative to non-violent political conflict. Thus, when the state is accommodating, meaning that there are channels open for mobilization through non-violent means the risk of violent conflict is reduced. Cultural demography is also highlighted as an important factor. Demography affects the potential for political violence in several ways. First, the size of the group compares the potential of it in a number of ways. Second, the geographic concentration of the group has relevance. Third, the cohesion of the group directly affects the potential for mobilization. The two most important features that determines groups' mobilization potential are whether others "categorize people as belonging to a single group" (Stewart 2008: 21), thus yielding external pressure; and the presence of effective leadership.

2.1.3 Findings

The project produced ten findings:

1) The probability of conflict occurrence rises where socioeconomic HIs are higher;
2) conflict is more likely where political and socioeconomic HIs are high and run in the same direction, or are consistent;
3) inclusive (or power-sharing) governments tends to reduce the likelihood of conflict;
4) citizenship can be an important source of political and economic exclusion;
5) inequality of cultural recognition among groups is an additional motivation for conflict and cultural "events" can act as a trigger for conflict;
6) perceptions of HIs affect the likelihood of conflict;
7) the presence of natural resource can be a significant cause of separatist conflict, as well as of local conflict, often working through the impact this has on HIs;
8) the nature of the state is of enormous importance in determining whether serious conflict erupts and persists;
9) some HIs are very persistent, even lasting centuries; and
10) international policies and statistics are too often blind to the issue of HIs, though national policies are often more progressive in this respect.

The findings strongly support the theoretical proposition that HIs matter. The project shows "that severe HIs can be an important source of conflict, especially where they are consistent across dimensions" (Stewart, Brown and Langer 2008: 299). It is argued that "while socioeconomic HIs generate generally fertile ground for conflict to emerge and cultural status inequalities act to bind groups together, political HIs provide incentives for leaders to mobilize people for rebellion" (Stewart, Brown and Langer 2008: 299).

2.2 Ethnicity

Ethnic groups are the units of analyses prescribed in the HIs literature, a choice that puts the project within a trend where the concept of ethnicity has seen dramatically more attention after the end of the Cold War, particularly in conflict studies. As highlighted by the Center for Systematic Peace (PCP) "a

virtual cornucopia of these seemingly intractable (and previously 'invisible') social identity conflicts exploded onto the world scene and captured the public and policy eyes" (quoted in Stewart 2008: 7), and the proportion of conflicts labelled as ethnic has increased from 15 percent in 1953 to nearly 60 percent in 2005 (Stewart 2008: 7; Marshall 2006). This subchapter briefly presents the general theoretical assumptions behind the concept of ethnicity, before it discusses its applicability for the Sudanese civil conflicts. It argues that ethnic groups are unsuitable as units of analyses for the Sudanese case.

2.2.1 Ethnicity in theory

Anthony Smith's (1986)[10] commonly accepted definition of ethnicity includes five characteristics: A group name; a believed common descent; common historical memories; elements of shared culture; and attachment to a specific territory. Most literature reviews on ethnic conflicts differentiate between two main paradigms: According to Kaufman (2001), the two main categories are rational choice explanations and psychological arguments; while Gurr and Harff (1994) differ between instrumentalism and primordialism. These dichotomies all represent two opposites: the natural on the one side; and the artificial or socially constructed on the other.

The primordial or natural approach at the one extreme, takes ethnic identity as given at birth. According to Isaacs (1975) "Basic group identity consists of the ready-made set of endowments and identifications which every individual shares with others from the moment of birth" (quoted in Kaufman 2008: 8). While primordialism has been discredited in recent years (Brown 2001: 209) it still plays a part in accounts of conflicts between ethnic groups. For instance, former US president Bill Clinton argued that the end of the Cold War "lifted the lid from a cauldron of long-simmering hatred. Now, the entire global terrain is bloody with such conflicts" (quoted in Brown 2001: 209). Christopher Cramer (2006) argues that this is based on a view of conflicts in the non-Western world as essentially different and that it "barbarises developing-country violence, dressing it in exotic masks of difference and pre-modernity. Thus, deviance comes from a failure of development and lack of modernity" (Cramer 2006: 7).

The instrumentalist approach, on the other side, views ethnicity as instrumental. From this notion, the

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[10] While this sub-chapter contains considerable criticism of Smith's (1986) definitions and the way it is being used in the literature on ethnic conflict I would like to point out that this is slightly unfair to Smith, who in his works among other nuances particularly points to the multidimensionality of identity.

concept of instrumental ethnicity has developed into a more nuanced and sophisticated school of thought, with different starting points. One general induction from the instrumentalist approach is that ethnicity provides conditions – rather than causes – for conflict. Closely related to instrumentalism constructivists concur that ethnicities are used instrumentally, but put emphasis on "the making and remaking of ethnic boundaries" (Stewart 2008: 9). In this view ethnic identities are products of on-going processes of social interaction. Still, while some identities are strengthened and others weakened, constructivists do not believe that ethnic identifies can be invented from out of the blue: "there will normally exist some visible cultural differences or "markers" which might help to divide communities into fairly well defined groupings or ethnic categories" (Glazer and Moyniahan 1975: 379, quoted in Stewart 2008: 9). This is the theoretical understanding of ethnicity used by Stewart *et al*. (2008).

2.2.2 Theoretical and methodological challenges

The development from vertical to horizontal inequality and the renewed focus on different dimensions of inequality (i.e., inequalities) is welcome, and Stewart *et al*. (2008) represent a paradigm shift that yields hope of an academic consensus on the effects of inequalities on conflict. Nonetheless, the HIs literature still needs some slight adjustments – at best – or corrections. The starting point for Stewart *et al*. (2008) is ethnic groups. I argue that ethnicity is from a theoretical point of view a vaguely defined concept; from an empirical point of view it is difficult to identify appropriate data on inter-ethnic inequalities; and from a practical perspective ethnic inequalities are challenging to address in a sustainable way.

For the purpose of analyzing the Sudanese conflicts the ethnic group appears unsuitable as unit of analyses. A case in point is the complexity of identity: According to Collins (2008) there are over 600 ethnic and linguistic groups in Sudan (2008: 4); according to el-Battahani (2008) there are reportedly 19 nationalities, 597 ethnic groups, 115 dialects and 26 active spoken languages; and Stevenson (1984) finds 50 languages from 10 main linguistic groups among the Nuba[11] alone. This complexity also results in a considerable variety in estimates: For Darfur estimates for ethnic groups range from 36 to 90 (Idriss 1999; Flint and de Waal 2005:8); and I have identified estimates on ethnic groups in South

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[11] The name Nuba itself refers to "a bewildering complexity of ethnic groups", and origins from Arab groups categorization of the native black Africans (Suliman 1997: 9). The Nuba are an indigenous group that populate the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan

Sudan from one (MAR 2010) to 60 (Collins 2008: 7). A recurrent problem with theories of ethnicity and conflicts is that as ethnic groups exist all over the world most intra-state conflicts will be between groups that can be defined as different ethnic groups. But occurrence of ethnic groups in conflicts in itself does not justify labelling the conflicts as ethnic. For instance, with reference to inter-tribal cooperation and competition over grazing rights in Darfur Suliman (1997) argues that conflicts over economic and natural resources are labeled ethnic "simply because the warring factions come from diverse ethnic/cultural backgrounds" (1997: 4). Similar misunderstandings are found in assumptions of the Darfur conflict as racial and the civil war religious due to the apparent racial-religious differences. Johnson (2007) argues that ""ethnicity" is taken for granted (…) often drawing (…) from a simplified understanding of ethnography" (2007: xiv). He is particularly critical to the way the tribe has been equaled with an ethnic group in South Sudan, as he argues that it is a political term:

> *A tribe is the largest units of political combinations of smaller, affiliated, sections. The organizing principle of a tribe vary from people to people, and even within peoples; combinations vary over time; and the people within a tribe do not necessarily claim direct common descent or kinship links with each other* (Johnson 2007: xv).

In Sudan, different tribes are connected through political unions to form larger tribes, and they will also have a common connection to concepts such a people, nation and state. But these connections are negotiable. A specific case in point is how people relate to the concept of "Arab" and "African" in Darfur. For instance, Ibrahim (1984) bases his classification on degree of arabisation: Arabs, fully Arabised, partly Arabised, and non-Arabised. Much can be said about using the concept of Arab as the dividing mechanism in Darfur[12], but Ibrahim (1984) nonetheless makes a valuable point in terms of the fluidity of identity. Abdul-Ghalil (1984) further notes how ethnic boundaries are fluid and specifically points to how the Arab groups Djawama and Tekera became Black African Fur and Zaghawa respectively. Thus, whole groups can change their ethnocultural affiliation by choice.

The fluidity of identity and ethnic, racial or tribal affiliations is also highlighted by Jok Madut Jok (2007) with reference to South Sudan: "...there are many ways in which people who may be classed as blacks could also pass as Arabs, while those who have been known to be Arabs could decide to label themselves African or black if their political circumstances demanded and allowed it" (Jok 2007: 3). This view is echoed by Alex de Waal (2004) who argues that the "long history of internal migration,

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[12] Literal meaning is home (*dar)* of the (Black African) Fur people

mixing and intermarriage" has made ethnicity "mostly a matter of convenience" (2004: 25). Another important aspect for ethnic categorization in Sudan that is non-primordial and flexible appears to be economic activity. Ahmed and Harir (1982), for instance, divide the populations in Darfur into four groups: Baggara (cattle nomads), Aballa (camel nomads), Zurga (the local name for non-Arab peasants derived from the Arabic word for black), and inhabitants of urban centers. While Baggara and Aballa has long been considered a way to divide the Arab tribes you will within this classification set have some Zaghawa (Zurga) defined as Aballa, and many Baggara appears in culture, appearance and economic activity identical to their Zurga neighbors. Thus, many Baggara become "African" by their decreasingly nomadic economic activities, while nomadic Zurga become "Arab". Likewise, Suliman (1997) identifies three main ethnocultural groups of Darfuris: The Arabic camel and cattle herders; the sedentary farmers and small scale cultivators; and the traders, landlords, government officials and urban-based professionals. El-Attabani (2008) argues that "an account of the main elements of the diversities of Sudanese society is not adequate without considering the distribution of the population into various occupational categories" (2008: 3). Ethnicity in itself has little explanatory value.

The questionable theoretical assumptions works in tandem with the empirical problem: the lack of data available. Consequently, if the difficult tasks of defining ethnic groups and identifying conflicts between them are overcome, the obstacle of identifying inequalities between them *qua* ethnic groups still remains. The distribution of political, social and economic resources between ethnic groups is seldom readily available, particularly in developing, conflict-prone countries. Lack of data has been a notorious obstacle for research on the inequality-conflict nexus, and is even more challenging for ethnic groups.

The effect of the unclear definitions of ethnicity is the imprecise attribution of ethnicity to describe both the causality for and the physical manifestation of political conflicts in Sudan. Recall that Anthony Smith's (1996) definition of ethnicity includes five characteristics: A group name; a believed common descent; common historical memories; elements of shared culture; and attachment to a specific territory. One recurrent problem with such an open definition is that most individuals will be members of a large number of groups. The Sudanese cases present several good cases in point. For instance, consider a person of Black African origin from Abyei. He is, by definition, a member of a set of different groups: his particular Ngok Dinka tribe; the Ngok Dinka tribal network, the Dinka people, the South Sudanese, the Sudanese and the Black African.

This has two implications. The first is that it reveals a flaw in the use of ethnic groups as units of analyses as it is challenging to determine which ethnic group is most relevant for the analyses. A more crucial point is the second implication, however, as all these groups are relevant because identity is contextual, fluent and multidimensional. The concept of identity contains a number of sub-concepts that individuals attach variable importance to. Bion's (1989) much quoted statement that "the individual is, and has always been, a member of a group" (1989: 168) thus needs a slight modification as the individual is, and has always been, a member of many groups. This, though, is nothing new. According to van Binsbergen (1976) "Almost all recent studies of nineteenth century pre-colonial Africa have emphasized that far from there being a single "tribal" identity, most Africans moved in and out of multiple identities" (quoted in Stewart 2008: 8).

For conflict studies the crucial concept that can be attributed to a wide range of conflicts is the comprehensive concept of identity. Identity, then, is at the core of group formation in apparently different conflicts along religious, ethnic, class and similar dividing lines. A key effect of shift from the developing country specific ethnic approach to an identity approach is that we thus acknowledge that civil conflict involving groups that can be defined as ethnic does not have fundamentally different causal explanations from other forms of civil conflicts and that the reasons for these groups to engage in conflicts have little to do with ethnicity in itself. Indeed, it seems clear that ethnicity is unlikely be the casual explanation for civil conflicts as fewer than 20 of the world's states are ethnically homogenous[13] but the great majority of ethnic groups live together in peace. According to Fearon and Laitin (1996) only 0.01 percent of potential ethnic conflicts in Africa turned into violent conflict in the period 1960 to 1979.

The concept of ethnicity in general is vaguely defined; unsuitable with respect to available data; and challenging to address in real life. For the Sudanese cases, ethnicity does not meaningfully capture the idea of tribe, people and region in Sudan, and data on distribution of goods between ethnic groups – if one succeeds to identify them – is largely unavailable. While I argue for a shift from the concept of ethnic groups to the concept of identity groups in general, I find the use of regions as the units of analyses most suitable for the Sudanese cases. Consequently, the next part turns to the theoretical assumptions of the RIs theory.

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[13] Minority groups less than 5 % of population

2.3 Regional inequalities and conflict

This part builds on the foundations of the HIs literature to articulate a theory on the relationship between RIs and conflict. As such, it is directly related to RQ$_1$: *How can the current paradigm of HIs transcend ethnicity and develop a theory of the relationship between RIs and conflict?* Since the HIs approach only requires small adjustments to include RIs the originality of this part is modest, and it owes gratitude to considerable theoretical work by among others Stewart *et al*. (2008). In this thesis RIs are defined as inequalities in the distribution of political, economic, social and cultural goods between sub-units within the state that are or have been recognized as political entities either from the central government or from its inhabitants. The RIs framework follows the basic assumptions made by the HIs literature: It argues that regional identity provides a basis for group formation and that political, social, economic and cultural inequalities lead to grievances that provide motivation and justification for those groups to engage in conflict.

The change from ethnic to regional inequality is sound for several reasons. First of all, by the mere existence of regions; they exist on maps, in databases, in political power sharing arrangements, and in the minds of the individuals that inhabit it. While regional borders can clearly in theory be both artificial and simply manipulative, they usually originate in some historical fact or geographical feature. Even when they do not, their existence over time consolidates their relevance. Political violence is in general organised around some form of political entities – regions, already existing or newly created, are already political entities in some capacity. Second, the region as the unit of analyses simplifies operationalisation and measurement, since the regions have already been defined. While in many cases, for instance the Sudanese, the regions were no longer existing political entities and as such required a process of identification it was a much less complicated process than identifying ethnic groups in the different regions. Furthermore, due to the nature of the region as a political entity they also provide a less complex data gathering process. In the Sudanese cases data across most of the RIs dimension were readily available on state level and as such required a simple process to accumulate the results to the regional level. Third, regional inequality is not only more easily operationalised and measured, but it also more easily addressed as regional distribution is a part of virtually every government's policies.

Despite this, the concept of regional inequality still receives little scientific attention as I have only identified two large studies on regional inequality (Kanbur and Venables (eds.) 2005; Folmer and Oosterhaven (eds.) 1979); and only the latter focuses on conflicts. The focus on the linkage between RIs and political violence in Sub-Saharan Africa is all but non-existent. As Kanbur and Venables (2005) states, "policy discussions tend to take place in something of an analytical and empirical vacuum" (Kanbur and Venables 2005: 3). Thus, this calls for immediate focus to identify and address RIs.

2.3.1 Regional identity

As already noted there are both theoretical and methodological reasons to call for a general shift from ethnicity to identity, and specifically increased focus on regional identity and regions as units of analyses for civil conflicts. There are, however, some cases where regions are more likely to be the units chosen for political uprising. For instance, if regional borders coincide with other cleavages, such as race, ethnicity, tribe or religion, they are more likely to form a foundation for group organisation. But, in addition to coincide with, regional borders can create identities. Following the logic that identities are created, and not given, geographical proximity is likely to be one of the features that contribute to the creation of identity. Furthermore, regions do not appear in an historical vacuum. Essentially, shared culture and history within a territory can be the basis of that specific regional unit. Even if it is not, the region's existence in itself strengthens its potential importance. As Stewart (2008) notes, «past group formation, although possibly constructed for political or economic purposes at the time, also contributes to present differences» (2008: 9). Hence, characteristics of identity affect the existence of regions; and the regions affect the forming and development of identity groups.

This should be even more so in certain particular cases. Geographic features can play an important role. For instance, segregating elements such as lakes, rivers, mountains, deserts and long distances are likely to reduce inter-regional contact, and thus strengthen relative intra-regional similarity. Furthermore, in instances with weak identification or even opposition to the idea of the state, the region can possibly replace the state as political unit. This is particularly likely to happen in cases where the regions exist or have existed as independent political units; in federal or con-federal states today, or in historical forms of political organisation.

Still, the most important issue to take into account with respect to group identity is the fluidity and

multidimensionality. The existence of a strong regional identity does not exclude the existence of other identities – tribal, ethnic or others. And herein lies the strength of the region as the focal point of political violence: while it might not be the most natural and emotionally strong unit for ethnocultural identification, it is useful for the organisation of political violence, particularly when this violence stems from unequal distribution of goods between regions, or between subgroups that identify stronger with regions that receive less.

2.3.2 Regional inequalities operationalised

Recall that there are four dimensions of inequalities: political, economic, social and cultural. The distribution of political goods is ultimately linked to access to power. Political goods can be derived from many sources that will vary in different contexts. For example, army positions can be highly relevant in states where the army is considered a significant political actor, yet less relevant from a political point of view in other states. Simultaneously, local government positions will be more desirable in decentralized than in centralized states and so on. In general, then, political goods need to be defined broadly to include different sources of power for different contexts.

Social and economic goods are related to income, well-being and livelihoods and the former in particular can be operationalised into a number of different indicators. Suitable indicators for this dimension will often be a question both of theoretical considerations and the availability of data. Throughout this study, the economic category will be centred on government spending, while the social category will be centred on indicators related to health and education.

The last dimension, the cultural, is perhaps the most difficult to both grasp and measure. Langer and Brown (2008) argue that "differences in the *status* afforded to different cultures by the state, whether implicitly or explicitly, and popular perceptions of and anxieties over *differences* in cultural status" constitute cultural status inequalities (2008: 42). Hence, different recognition of religious practices or similar cultural traits or different attitudes expressed on behalf of the state with respect to cultures are thus indicators of cultural status inequality. Lack of political representation can also be an indicator as "cultural status inequality can also occur where the state is associated *primarily although not exclusively* with one cultural group" (Langer and Brown 2008: 43). For the Sudanese cases, recognition of religion and expressed attitudes and actions, as well as the monopolization of the state apparatus by

one cultural group represent cultural status inequality.

Recall the operationalisations for this thesis as they were presented in *Table 2* in Chapter 1:

Table 3. Regional inequalities – Dimensions and Indicators (revisited)

Political inequalities	Economic inequalities	Social inequalities	Cultural inequalities
Political representation Political freedom Regional autonomy	Regional income Distribution of government spending	Score on social indicators: Poverty, access to education, health services and other basic social services	Religious freedom Cultural freedom Discrimination Historical suppression

The four dimensions of RIs are closely interlinked, but a key starting point is that of political power since the core of most civil conflicts is access to political power. According to Chabal and Daloz (1999), the key to patrimonial patterns in African states is the fact that the states are not emancipated from society. In the Weberian tradition, the modern state is created through a process of emancipation through institutionalisation of a truly independent bureaucracy. A second important process for the modern state is the development of a citizenship for individuals that are separated from other ties, of "kinship, community or faction" (1999: 6). However, according to Chabal and Daloz, this is not the reality in postcolonial Black Africa. They claim that state bureaucracies are empty shells, and that public employment is exploited as a private resource. One point that is made clear in Chabal and Daloz' analyses is the communal logic of African societies where the individuals are not individualistic rational actors maximizing their own profit – they are "nodal points of larger communal networks" (Chabal and Daloz 1999: 156).

Bøås and Dunn (2007) argue along similar lines when they argue that newly independent African states "created a special patrimonial path of redistribution, which divided the indigenous population along regional, religious, ethnic, and sometimes even family lines" (2007: 22). As a consequence, RIs in political power is likely to be reflected in government policies, including distribution of economic resources and the status of different cultural groups subsequently affecting economic, social and cultural RIs.

2.3.3 From regional inequalities to conflict

Having established the region as the unit of analyses and the regional inequalities, the key question is how these inequalities lead to conflict. *Figure 3* illustrates the causal relationship between regional identity, RIs and conflict. Experienced RIs – real or perceived – will affect both the occurrence of grievances and the regional identity, while regional identity through increased consciousness of the region will affect experienced RIs and grievances. In turn, these grievances increase the probability of conflict.

Figure 3. Regional inequalities, identity and conflict
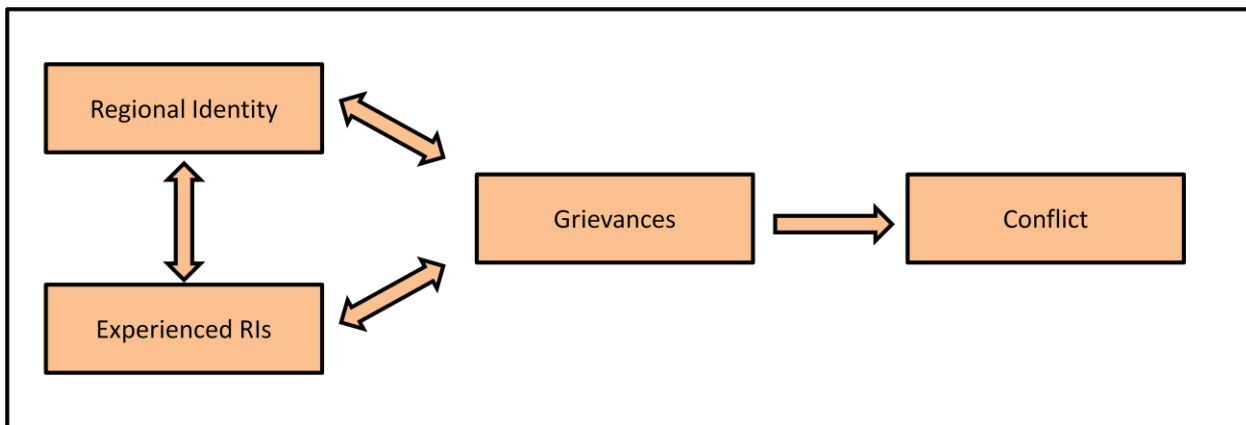
There are intra-group differences as to the importance of the different dimensions of RIs. As illustrated by Figure 4 different group segments are – in general – motivated by different types of inequalities. Elites are expected to be generally more motivated by political inequalities as it reduces their power. Thus, political inequalities both provide elites motivations and indicate few alternatives to violent conflict. The masses, on the other hand, are believed to be more motivated by socioeconomic and cultural inequalities, as they are more affected by these inequalities – socioeconomic inequalities in particular. In addition, while the political and socioeconomic inequalities are mutually strengthening, masses can mobilise elites and vice versa.

Figure 4. Grievances, mobilization and conflict
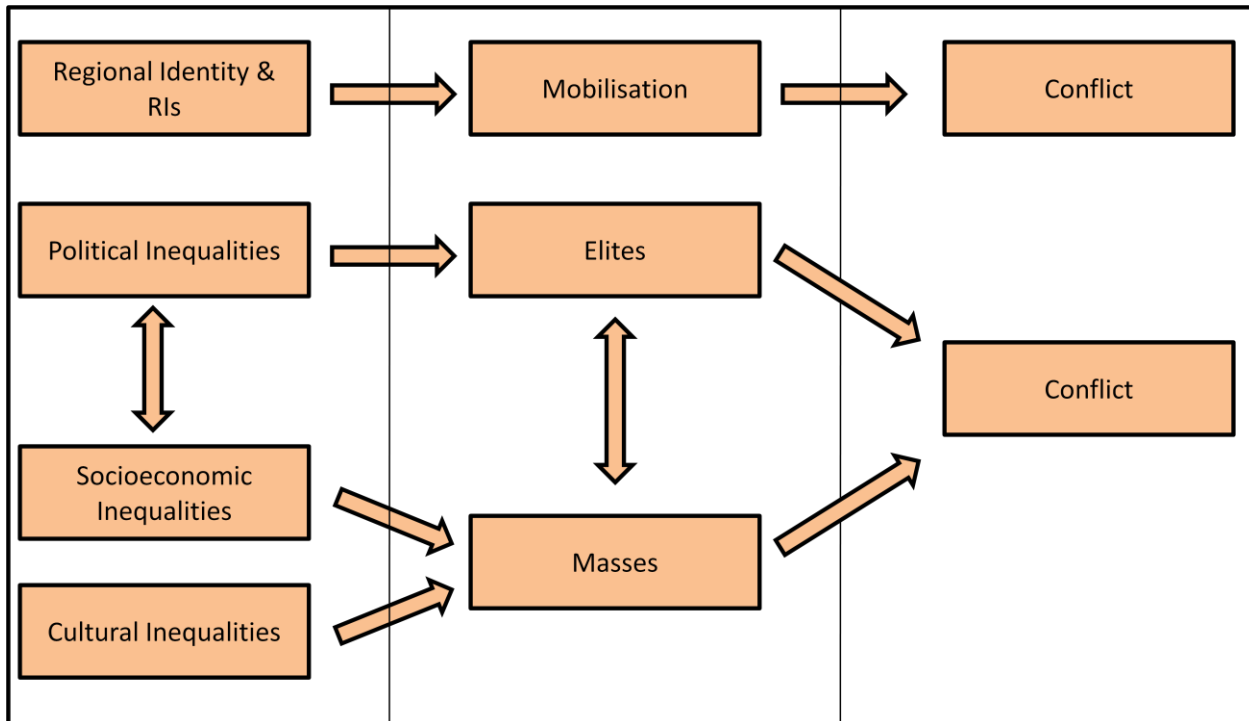
Perhaps needless to say – but still important to point out – there is no natural law which turns grievances into conflict. Clearly, conflict is only possible and preferable under certain conditions that can vary from case to case. Grievances in general provide a conflict cause, and when they are multidimensional they are more likely to provide motivation to both political leaders, financial backers and the masses simultaneously.

A few lessons from the literature can provide helpful guidelines as to when grievances materialise into conflict. First of all, the level of political freedom, which is an integrated part of the concept of political power inequalities, has been demonstrated by Muller and Weede (1990) to affect the likelihood of conflict; with the highest conflict probability at intermediate levels of political freedom. This view is echoed in the democratisation literature, were there has emerged a consensus that countries are most vulnerable for political violence in the democratisation process. A related argument is that conflict is likely to occur when conflict causes exist with small possibilities for change through the political system. Clapham (1998), for instance, argues along the lines that the use of violence is more probable when other channels for addressing grievances are blocked when he argues that "insurgencies derive basically from blocked political aspirations and in some cases also from reactive desperation"

(Clapham 1998: 5). Similarly, Englebert (2007) argues that political conflict in Africa "provides marginalized and excluded groups with the means to fight for (re)insertion into the system" (2007: 61).

Stewart (2008) also argues that level of centralization affects the likelihood of conflicts, as increased centralisation means that there is more to gain from central political power. That the nature of the state affects conflict occurrence is also reflected the findings from the CRISE project, were they among their conclusions found that inclusive (or power-sharing) governments tends to reduce the likelihood of conflict; and that the nature of the state is of enormous importance in determining whether serious conflict erupts and persists[14]. Consequently, cause and condition are interlinked in the political dimension of inequality. High inequality in political power indicates a cause for conflict in two ways: First, because inequality leads to grievances; and second, because these grievances cannot be addressed through non-violent political channels. At the other hand, however, high levels of political inequality can be followed by high levels of suppression and thus reduce the possibility for conflict and likelihood for success.

Second, Stewart (2008) argues group demography – the size, concentration and cohesion of groups – affects the likelihood of conflict. Large, geographically concentrated and coherent groups are more likely to rebel. As always, this is a matter of definition, as for instance "Southerners" and "Darfuri" in Sudan are large and geographically concentrated but with limited cohesion; yet they have come to be represented dominantly by coalitions of smaller groups with stronger cohesion.

A third lesson is the politico-economical effects of external backers on conflict occurrence. Johnson (2007) has argued that the combined effects of internal tensions and external interests have been particularly strong in Sudan's case. Likewise, Prunier (2008) provides an overview of armed movements and their external backers in the Horn of Africa that demonstrates a complicated web of connections between the region's capitals and different rebel movements. Some of these movements are unlikely to have persisted for so long without considerable support from external backers

Consequently, conflicts occur as a combination of the underlying causes and specific conditions that mobilizes groups for political violence. While this thesis argues that the underlying causes can be multidimensional RIs, the conditions can, for instance, be that political violence is the only possible

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[14] see Chapter 2.1.3

channel for protest or that political violence is likely lead to success. That this will vary from case to case is illustrated by the Sudanese cases, as while the South Sudanese have been engaged in almost constant conflict since independence, the Darfuri and East Sudanese did not engage in large-scale conflicts before the mid-1990s and onwards.

The theory of RIs will be tested on the three Sudanese cases in Chapter 4. Before that, Chapter 3 provides the historical background for the three cases.

3 Historical background

This chapter provides the historical background of the Sudanese post-independence conflicts. As Chapter 1 provided a brief introduction to Sudan this parts presents the historical background specific for the three cases. It proceeds chronologically, consequently starting out with the first and second civil war, before it turns to the conflict in East Sudan and, finally, in Darfur.

3.1 South Sudan

3.1.1 The first civil war

When Sudan gained its independence on January 1st, 1956, it existed for the first time as an independent political unit; however, it was already at war. Having been discriminated against and underdeveloped during colonialism, the Southerners had little ability to influence the de-colonisation process. The 1947 Juba Conference was ineffective and unrepresentative, and only managed to get Southern representation in the legislative assembly (Johnson 2004: 25). Disillusioned by their lack of influence in Khartoum, Southern politicians convened the 1954 Juba Conference to address the future of the South Sudan, and the right to self-determination for the people (Johnson 2009). The Southerners agreed on Sudanese independence from Egypt, but on the condition that the new unified Sudan would be a federalist state. Without federalism, the South Sudanese would exercise their right to self determination. According to Douglas Johnson "the right to self-determination has been a constant theme in South Sudanese political thought" (Johnson 2009). But both claims were meet with refusal in Khartoum, and discontent spread across the South.

The 1955 Torit mutiny quickly spread to other garrison towns in the South and marked the beginning of Anyanya I[15] and the first North-South civil conflict. The initial years were marked by sporadic guerrilla warfare, and it was not until 1960-62, when prominent political leaders left for the bush or exile in neighbouring countries to organise the military rebellion, that we can talk about continuous acts of war[16]. The goal of the political wing of Anyanya I – The Sudan African Nationalist Union (SANU) – was self-determination for the South, and as the Southern opposition fragmented, they kept the joint

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[15]   The name refers to a type of snake venom, Johnson 2004: 31

[16]   The UCPD/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset sets the start of the conflict to 1963

goal of self-determination (Johnson 2007: 33). Two events triggered the Addis Ababa negotiations. The first was the 1969 coup by Nimeiri, where the May Revolution Declaration granted the South a regional self-government. In his 9th of June declaration, Nimeiri said in his address to the Sudanese that the new government "recognize the historical and cultural differences between the North and the South" and that the "Southern people have a right to develop their respective rights and conditions" (Nimeiri 1969, quoted by Alier 1990). The second event was the relative strengthening of Joseph Lagu's South Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM), as it emerged as the most powerful military and political movement in the South from 1971. It entered into discussions with the government in 1972 and signed the Addis Ababa Agreement later that year. The agreement established Southern Sudan as an autonomous region, prompting hopes of increased political power and development in the region.

3.1.2 The second civil war

The hope was short-lived: Sporadic fighting continued, tensions grew both between North and South and within the North and in 1978 oil was discovered in South Sudan (Iyob and Khadiagala 2006:88); adding a new dimension to the conflict. Nimieri also "moved relentlessly towards imposing Islamic law," gaining the support of the politically influential Muslim Brotherhood (Deng 1995:12). In 1983 Khartoum dismantled the agreement by claiming the oil revenues from the South, divided the South into three regions, and by September Sharia penal laws were extended to the South (El-Battahani 2006:13).

This prompted a string of rebellions in the South. While some will assert that the first civil war never ended[17], the 1983 Bor Mutiny is normally recognised as the start of the second civil war, and subsequently led to the establishment of the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M)[18]. SPLA/M changed some of the rules of the game for the Southerners. Under the leadership of John Garang SPLA/M advocated a vision of a "New Sudan", in which a federal system would protect Southern autonomy and in which political authority would derive from a secular, rather than an Islamic, legal basis. At the very start of their manifesto they redefined the «problem of Southern Sudan» to the «problem of backward areas», downplayed the issue of self-determination and called for revolution in all of marginalised Sudan. However, while independence was not an explicit goal, Douglas Johnson

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[17]   See, for instance Rolandsen 2005: 26

[18] The SPLA/M refers to the entire organization, SPLA to the army, while the SPLM refers to the political movement.

observes that it remained an «unspoken» and «coded» option (2007: 65).

As the 1980s progressed, a parallel Anyanya II structure emerged with dominantly Nuer commanders – specifically Bul, Lou and Jikany – and Khartoum also financed militias in Equatoria. SPLA/M remained a dominantly Nilotic – Dinka and Nuer – but still multitribal movement (Johnson 2007: 69). At the end of the 1980s the pendulum had shifted to SPLA/Ms favour, and the movement increasingly gained support from the local population. SPLA/M had drawn important Anyanya II commanders and Equatorian milita in under its command, and had consolidated its position as *the* rebel group in South Sudan. Furthermore, SPLA/M gained followers and commanders outside of the South, notably in Blue Nile, South Kordufan and Darfur – providing influential commanders such as Abdelaziz al-Nur and Malik Agar. By 1989 SPLA/M held the entire Ethiopian border from Kapoeta to Jokau and continued stretches of territory from border-to-border across South Sudan. Sudan was now at full scale civil war, and the Southern rebellion seemed stronger than ever (Johnson 2007: 83-86).

In the North, Nimieri lost his grip on power and was overthrown in 1985. The Umma party under its leader Sadiq al-Mahdi got power through elections, but their reign did not last for long. At the time of a breakthrough in the peace negotiations, a military coup led by Omar al-Bashir and sympathetic to Hassan al-Turabi and his National Islamic Front overthrew al-Mahdi in 1989. While hopes for peace under al-Mahdi might have been optimistic and premature, it once again slipped with the new regime. At the same time, humanitarian catastrophes reached the South, in particular with the 1988 famine, where at least 250,000 died. Shortly after SPLA/M suffered another blow as Mengistu fell in Ethiopia and the Nuer commanders Riek Machar and Gordon Kong and the Shilluk commander Lam Akol broke away in 1991.

However, the set-back proved temporary and the SPLA was soon back on the offensive and won a string of important victories. Simultaneously, the Khartoum-sponsored movements had fragmented. Lam Akol's SPLA-United, Riek Machar's SSIM, SSDF and SPDF, Gatwic Gatkuoth's SSDF-2, Paulino Matiep's SSUM and Kerubino Kuanyin's fluid alliances variably fought each other, SPLA and the government. By 2002 the commanders were invariably within the SPLA fold, and Khartoum seemed eager for peace talks with its own internal issues following Turabi's dismissal and increased hostility in Darfur and the East. The 2002 Geneva cease-fire set in motion the process that eventually led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005.

3.1.3 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is a set of protocols and agreements negotiated in different locations in Kenya from 2002 to 2005. Of most importance are those for power-sharing and wealth-sharing that gave the SPLM a considerable number of political positions in Khartoum and regional autonomy in South Sudan, as well as splitting oil revenue from the South equally between the North and the South. While implementation has been slow the Sudan experienced general elections on all levels in April 2010 and at the time of writing South Sudan is preparing their referendum on self-determination.

3.2 East Sudan

The region of East Sudan consists of Gedaref, Red Sea and Kassala states, and borders Ethiopia, Eritrea, Egypt and the Red Sea. Despite climate factors such as extreme heat and dry weather East Sudan has a welcoming environment in a Sudanese context. Being the only part of Sudan with access to the sea and with large green agricultural areas its potential is considerable. As with most other parts of Northern Sudan it is populated by a mixture of nomadic groups claiming Arab ancestry and a Black African population in the indigenous Beja people, as well as a large and increasing number of Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees.

To say that East Sudan has largely been neglected academically is an understatement. For instance, prominent works like Collins (2008) that claim to cover all of Sudan hardly mentions the East at all. Surveying the academic literature on East Sudan from 1993-2007 Ati (2009) identifies only seven published academic materials in English on East Sudan. The region has thus not received the same sort of attention as other Sudanese conflicts. Consequently, just a small amount of research exists, mostly from NGOs on the ground. There is, however, a considerable focus on East Sudan by some scholars connected to the University of Bergen and their partners in Sudan.

There are several good reasons to analyse the civil conflict in East Sudan. First of all, it seems clear that East Sudan and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement has been left unattended by Khartoum, Asmara and the international community. Second, while largely forgotten in the conflict literature,

there has been a great deal of research on humanitarian indicators done by UN agencies and other actors. Thus, while there is an almost complete lack of systematic research on East Sudan in the conflict literature, there is a great deal of empirical evidence available for those who choose to look and have the energy to systemise it.

3.2.1 East Sudan at war

Armed groups have been present in East Sudan since 1961 (Young 2007). The majority group, the Bejas, formed the Beja Congress (BC) in 1958 and began what can best be described as a long, but mostly cold conflict. Military activity was limited, and thus received almost no international attention at all. The creation of the BC came few years after Beja intellectuals authored the pamphlet "The Struggle of the Beja" in 1953, in which they denounced the social and economic conditions in which the Beja were living (Pantuliano 2005:13). The BC consists of different Beja tribes, clans and sub-groups who are as a whole considered a distinct East Sudanese ethnic group of pastoral camel nomad Muslims. The other main rebel movement, The Rashaida Free Lions (RFL), consists of tribes that claim an Arab ancestry and identity; but most of which are also particular for the region.

In 1993 the BC joined the Asmara-based National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the umbrella organization that was established in 1989 between marginalised groups, some riverine elites that had been excluded from power by the NIF revolution, and other parties with a stated commitment to end the elites' hegemony in Khartoum and bringing about a "New Sudan" free of marginalization (Young 2007: 11). As the movement in early days were dominated by Central riverine political forces from DUP and Umma the movement's sincerity in terms of the marginalisation can arguably be contested. Nonetheless, the SPLA/M joined in 1995 and quickly came to dominate the military wing of the organization. With the support of the Eritrean Army and the SPLA, the BC and RFL launched a series of attacks along the Sudanese-Eritrean frontier (Young 2007:22).

These two main rebel movements – BC and RFL – joined forces with some other movements to set up the Eastern Front (EF) in 2005 in connection with NDA. Later that year the movement split with NDA ahead of negotiations with the government. The EF is "representing a regional political force" that are "fighting marginalization and underdevelopment through a call for regionalization and devolution of powers" (Manger and Ahmed 2009: 8).

3.2.2 The Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement

By 2006, Khartoum was ready for negotiations and Asmara was chosen as the location. The Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) between the EF and the GoS was signed in October 2006, ending the fighting. The ESPA builds on the foundations from the CPA, with the notable exception of self-determination. Furthermore, the rigid power-sharing arrangements found in the agreement left little room for newcomers with SPLM already securing 28 % of the parliamentary seats and 30 % of executive positions in the government. With limited military power as both SPLA and Asmara effectively banished the Eastern movements, and their former alliance partners in NDA unwilling to let go of the little gained from the new arrangements, influence on central power was largely unavailable to the East Sudanese. If anyone was to eat into the power in Khartoum of the new rebellions it was the Darfuris, not the Easterners. Consequently, a few positions in Khartoum in addition to increased political power in the region's assemblies and promised government spending on development was all they got. The ESPA is holding to date, but it is largely unimplemented and is perceived by people in East Sudan as being imposed upon them by the governments of Eritrea and Sudan and not addressing their concerns. John Young (2007) describes the agreement as «largely a product of Khartoum and Asmara's current interest in improving relations» (Young 2007: 52). After the ESPA the EF has fragmented considerably and is today unrecognisable.

3.3 Darfur

Darfur is situated in North-Western Sudan, bordering the Central African Republic, Chad and Libya, with a pre-war population of around eight million people[19]. The region alone is about the size of France, and it is inhabited by a wide range of tribes, communities and ethnic groups. Black African tribes Fur, Zaghawi and Masalit, and Arab tribes Abbala- and Baggara Rizeigat are the largest groups in the region, but they all consist of a range of sub-units, with varied rules as to why and how they connect with the larger groups. While Darfur has traditionally consisted of a mix of settled farmers and nomads, Darfuris have been subject to both forcible and voluntarily urbanisation processes in recent

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[19] This is a contested topic as Darfur's population increased by almost two million people from the 2001 to the 2008 census, prompting accusations that the number for North Sudan in general was too high. In the aftermath of the census no new consensus on the population in Darfur has been established.

years, and the continued conflicts have resulted in a discontinuity of the traditional economy and left many areas unpopulated.

The conflict in Darfur has received considerable attention from the media, advocacy groups and scholars. Darfur today is dominated by the international relief effort and has only sporadic fighting (but an increasing amount of banditry and kidnappings). The Darfuri rebel groups are splintering, re-grouping and fighting each other at a pace that makes it almost impossible to follow for any outsiders. So far in 2010 a group consisting of more than ten movements have formed, broken up and re-formed coalitions in Addis Ababa, Tripoli and Doha. At the time of writing[20] most of them are included in the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) lead by the former Darfur governor Tijani al-Sessi. Sudan Liberation Army/Movement – Minni Minawi (SLA/M – MM) remains intact but inactive post-DPA, SLA/M – Abdulwahid el-Nur (SLA/M – AW) remains in control of most of Jebel Marra but is under increasing pressure from government forces, while Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) for the moment appear weakened by the recent normalisation of relations by Khartoum and Ndjamena. A peace agreement involving JEM, LJM and GoS appears to be within reach, though it is a long way from being completed and it is highly uncertain whether it would hold.

3.3.1 Darfur at war

The already severe situation in Darfur further worsened during the 1980s. Drought and the humanitarian disaster that followed it were met with denial – at best[21] – by the government. At the same time, the civil war in Chad evolved into a conflict between the West and Libya. While the US sent arms to Chad through Darfur, Libya armed Arab militia in the region. From 1986 the militia was supported by both Khartoum and Tripoli. The result of the increased tension and militarisation of Darfur was the first Darfuri civil conflict between the Baggara and the Fur (1986-89), and the 1990s saw a continuation of clashes in the Masalit War (1996-1998) and the Zaghawa war (1999-2001) [22]. However, in February 2003 the conflict reached new dimensions when SLA/M and (JEM) started attacking the government's military forces in the region.

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[20] April 2010

[21] See Keen (2008) and de Waal (1986) for a discussion on the role of Khartoum in inflicting the famine.

[22] For more background, see Crisis Group (2005)

While war is still on-going in today's Darfur, the rebel movements are largely unrecognisable and constantly shifting alliances. A large number of movements are also appearing and getting involved in the peace process, most of which have very little, if any, military capabilities. At the start of the rebellion in 2003, however, JEM and SLA/M were the two dominant rebel movements. JEM and SLA/M can best be described as co operations between different tribal militias, dominantly from the Masalit, Fur and Zaghawa tribes – but they also included some Arab[23] commanders and senior officers. SLA/M and JEM are fundamentally different. SLA/M consists of villagers and professionals who took up arms to fight the government's representatives in Darfur, calling for more autonomy to end the suffering in the region. They are dominantly drawn from Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit communities. JEM, on the other hand, is almost exclusively Zaghawa Kobe, and has close links both to elite struggles in Khartoum and regional politics with financial backers in Ndjamena, Tripoli and on the Arabian Peninsula.

According to themselves, the rebels reacted to the unequal distribution, the favouring of Arabs and the general discrimination from the centre towards the periphery in Sudan. While both groups cite similar causes, they have a somewhat different focus. JEM's leadership consists of political leaders calling for national solutions to the problems in Sudan and they strongly argue for a unity. They focus on political and economic marginalization, and call for equality and justice. JEM's first public appearance was the *Black Book*, a publication concerned with the political and economic marginalization in Sudan. In the words of JEM General Coordinator Abubaker Hamid Nur: there is suffering in Sudan because "a gang in Khartoum is controlling everything" (Flint and de Waal 2005:93). The government in Khartoum believes that JEM are connected to Hassan al-Turabi – the ousted formed NIF leader and speaker of Parliament for NCP – and that they thus could be considered a *de facto* military wing of his Political Congress Party (PCP), but the group denies this link. However, it is clear that many of these rebels were previously connected to NIF and the Islamic revolution. SLA/M on the other hand is much more of a grass root movement, with more limited Darfur-specific goals.

Much has been written and said about the nature of the government response and the use of Janjawiid militia, including the question of genocide. While the debate is important, it is not the focus of this thesis. After various yet relative high intensity from 2003 to 2006 the conflict in Darfur has consistently

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[23] As previously stated, this is a matter of definition. Young *et al*. (2009), for instance, define the Zaghawa as Aballa (an economic term largely linked to Arab tribes) and the JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim had strong connections to the current regime in Khartoum; of which their alleged backer, Hassan al-Turabi, was the founding father (Flint and de Waal 2007).

declined, prompting then Joint Special Representative and Head of UNAMID Rudolphe Adada to state that the war in Darfur was «over» in April 2010 (Sudan Tribune 2009). Nonetheless, armed clashes continue to be the norm. The SLA/M – AW control a substantial area in Jebel Marra area and JEM has a stronghold in Jebel Moun in West Darfur, with a spike in clashes in early 2010. As late as in May 2008, three months after GoS-backed militia nearly overthrew Deby in N'djamena JEM travelled all the way from their base in Jebel Jass in Chad, through the desert of North Darfur and Northern Kordofan, and launched an attack on the capital Khartoum. Darfur continues to be home to one of the largest humanitarian relief efforts in the world, and security for Darfuris and aid workers alike is fragile in the absence of an inclusive political settlement. Official UN numbers estimate that 300,000 have been killed in the war; 2.7 million are internally or externally displaced[24]; while 4 million people are in need of external aid to survive.

3.3.2 The Darfur Peace Agreement

After a lengthy process, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed in Abuja in May 2006. However, the two most important Darfuri actors, SLA/M – AW and JEM, did not sign, and it was signed only by a handful of Arab militias and Minni Minawi's SLA/M faction (SLA/M – MM). While the Darfur Transitional Regional Authority was set up in Khartoum and Minnawi given the title of presidential adviser and placed within the garden of the presidential palace, there was not much progress on the ground in Darfur. As Minawi himself stated at his movements latest revolutionary liberation council «the Darfur Peace Agreement has not been satisfactory implemented» (Minnawi 2009).

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[24] These numbers are relatively uncertain as the methodology behind is based on registering *replacements*; as many have been replaced several times the real number of IDPs today are believed to be around 1.5 million

4 Analyses

Based on the theoretical assumption of the RIs framework this part analyses the occurrence of RIs in Sudan and its relevance for the conflicts. As regional identity is assumed to be a precondition for the establishment of regional movements it starts out by looking at the basis for regional identity and the degree to which the rebel movements can be said to represent these identities. It subsequently turns to the empirical evidence for the existence of RIs in Sudan. This chapter answers RQ_2: *Can the theory of RIs explain the Sudanese civil conflicts?*

4.1 Regional identity in Sudan

> "*In general, people in Sudan tend to identify themselves in terms of vaguely-defined regions*" (Mohamed 2006:42).

> "*Scholars often display a difficulty in recognizing the Sudan as a collection of regions*" (Johnson 2007: xiii)

This subchapter will argue that there are strong regional identities in Sudan that have been the basis for the regional movements in the country. Recall that the multidimensionality of identity does not exclude the occurrence of other identities despite a strong regional identity. To the contrary, this part also acknowledges a number of additional identities. However, it argues that the regional identities have been the most relevant identities for the organisation of groups for the three Sudanese civil conflicts.

4.1.1 The South Sudanese regional identity and the SPLM as a regional movement

There is a strong South Sudanese regional identity closely connected to the racial-religious and cultural cleavages between the South Sudanese and the rest of the country. While it is true that the division between Black African Christian Southerners and Arab Muslim Northerners have been largely exacerbated and simplified – in particular as a causal factor for conflict – this is dominantly due to simplistic assessments of Northern Sudanese; few will argue against identity related cultural differences between the South Sudanese and Khartoum's political elite. This has been argued convincingly by among others Deng (1995) and Jok (2007), and the differences between the North and the South have also been emphasized by both Khartoum and the British. The distinct Non-Muslim

Black African cultural nature of the South Sudanese was understood by the British to be closer to their East African colonies than to the Arab north, and with the Civil Secretary's "Southern Policy" statement in 1930 Britain declared that the south was to be developed along African lines and that the future of the region might lie with the British East African colonies (Johnson 2004: 11). While the extent of British influence is contested, their policies both strengthened and institutionalised a North/South divide. South Sudan has existed as a political entity since the beginning of colonialism and is a well established concept. Furthermore, the SPLA/M is a regional South Sudanese movement that aims to represent the political entity and geographical area of the whole of South Sudan. From official documents and, indeed, their acts – such as the issue of self-determination for the South – this is a consistent theme. As Abdel Salam (1989) observes the SPLA/M "sought to unite co-ethnics into a broad political coalition with a common political creed" (Salam 1989: 60-61, quoted in el-Battahani 2008: 6).

A potential counter-argument is that the diversity of South Sudan weakens the South Sudanese regional identity. The strongest argument in this case is the apparent tribalism in the region. But it is important to remember that a tribe is much more than a primordial identity. In Sudan as a whole "tribe is a political term" (Johnson 2007: xv). Among the Nuer, tribe is a political unit that will unite militarily and accept mediation in feuds; among the Dinka the tribe is a question of attachment to a bloodline. In both cases a tribe will consist of separate sub-units or clans, and in neither will the definitions be un-negotiable (Johnson 2007: xv). As a consequence, the most important micro-level entities among the South Sudanese are political and flexible, not primordial.

In general, the tribalist argument has roots in a perception that the SPLA/M is just one of many movements from the South that are organized by tribal lines. This view has been strengthened by tribal militia in the South and the 1991 Nasir split, as the argument goes that Anyana II, the 1991 Nasir split and other Khartoum connected tribal militias were organised along tribal lines from Nuer, Shilluk and some Equatorian tribes, and that the SPLA/M is no more than a Dinka tribal movement. It is true that from the offset of SPLA/M there were leadership struggles as John Garang appeared from Khartoum and suddenly overcame the somewhat established hierarchy. However, these struggles were «ideological and personal» and did not run along tribal lines (Johnson 2007: 65). Garang intially formed an alliance with the Nuer officers Samuel Gai Tut, William Abdallah Cuol and William Nyuon Bany, and the Dinka officers Kerubino Kuanyin Bol and Akwot Akem. It is true, however, that the

SPLA/M has had a majority of Dinka commanders. But it is important to remember that the Dinka are divided into more than 25 units made up by different political sub-units, and according to Johnson (2007) they "have shown no tendency in the past to unite either politically or militarily" (2007: 51). It is thus not a unified Dinka-movement, but a movement with strong support from some Dinka tribes and some Nuer, Equatorians and others. The split that really put fire to the idea of the SPLM as a Dinka movement was the 1991 Nasir split. In 1991 the two SPLA senior commanders of Upper Nile – the Shilluk Lam Akol and the Dok Nuer Riek Machar – split from the SPLA/M and created SPLA/M – Nasir, later to renamed SPLA/M – United and subsequently divided into a number of different movements. It should be taken into consideration, however, that the reasons the Machar/Akol split assumed tribal lines was their lack of support, as they only managed to receive backing from some closely aligned Nuer groups, notably the Bul and Lou. Machar and Akol had backing from Khartoum, however, though it remains uncertain if this was out of necessity or choice[25]. In addition to limited support, the short-lived nature of SPLA/M – United is also often overlooked. As Collins (2008) points out, "by the end of 1995 virtually all Southern leaders had distanced themselves from Riek" (Collins 2008: 208). In the end the SPLA-Nasir split developed into more of a Nuer civil war than a Nuer/Dinka confrontation (Collins 2008, Johnson 2007).

The Nasir split was a continuation of Khartoum's policy of arming tribal militia that has created a complex web of Khartoum sponsored militia groups in South Sudan, including the Ugandan rebel movement Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)[26]. The occurrence of tribal militias can be competition for power organised through existing tribal ties and military units, but it is more frequently opportunistic behaviour from people in need of support and resources. That these militias are, indeed, opportunistic and thus flexible in their approach to alliances are clearly illustrated by the large number of commanders that have returned to the SPLA/M. Riek Machar is today Vice President of the GoSS, Paulino Matiep is number two in the SPLA hierarchy, Clement Wani is governor of Central Equatoria, Taban Deng Gai is governor of Unity, and Lam Akol has served as Foreign Minister in the GoNU on behalf of SPLM[27]. SPLA/M also includes a wide range of non-Dinka leaders that does not have an anti-

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[25]   Douglas Johnson (2007: 99) suggests the former

[26] Be it a bitter irony or not, it is illustrating for the religious simplification with respect to the conflict that a Christian Black African rebel movement has been deployed by the regime in Khartoum to fight the SPLA/M

[27]   In late 2009 he split from the SPLM to start the opposition SPLM-Democratic Change. Lam Akol ran for presidency in South Sudan as the sole opposition candidate in the 2010 elections. The incumbent president Salva Kiir got 93 % of the votes.

SPLA militia past, such as SPLA Chief of staff James Hoth Mai, Speaker of parliament James Wani Igga, Deputy Secretary General Yasir Arman, Secretary General Pagan Amum and others.

The political acts of the movement also illustrate its regional nature. On basis of a political platform justifying their rebellion on the inequalities in Sudan's peripheral regions, SPLA/M has signed and worked for the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which most significant features is the strong political and economic regional autonomy for South Sudan, as well as a referendum on self-determination for South Sudan scheduled for January 2011.

The bottom line for regional identity in the South is still probably the "otherness" of identity, that is, that identities are relational, and must therefore be studied in relation to the understanding of other groups (Neumann 2001:56). While "otherness" is also multidimensional and fluid, the presence of North Sudanese in South Sudan has become a consistent and strong "other", particularly when it has been follow by racial-religious discrimination and slavery. As Deng (1995) says it:

> *Without the confrontation with the North, the still vivid history of rapacious invasions by northern slave raiders, and the more recent attempt by the post-independence governments to dominate the southern peoples, there would be no South as a viable political entity* (Deng 1995: 9).

With an enemy like Khartoum, the South Sudanese identity has survived both inter-tribal fighting in the region and attempts to construct a unified Sudanese identity. While this remains strong today it is questionable whether it will survive the aftermath of South Sudanese independence. Consequently, Southern leaders must learn from their relationship with Khartoum to avoid strong intra-South regional identities to develop that could threaten the unity of South Sudan in the future.

4.1.2 Regional identity in the East and the Eastern rebel movements

The population of the East are from an ethnic perspective relatively homogenous, at least when one excludes the recent flow of refugees and IDPs to the region. The population is dominantly Muslim, though remains as a whole comparatively moderate in a North Sudanese perspective (Young 2007: 17), and over half the population is estimated to be Beja (Young 2007: 14). In addition to the majority being Beja, most of the minority is particular to East Sudan. Consequently, they have a connecting to East

Sudan as a region and there is a less affiliation with racial concepts such as Arab or African than in some other part of Sudan. This combination of homogeneity indigenousness made the move to a regional movement based on a common regional identity less challenging for the Beja Congress (BC) and the subsequent Eastern Front (EF) than for instance the movements in Darfur.

While the BC started out as mainly a tribal group, it soon came to represent the region. After efforts to build an alliance with Darfuri rebel movements, the BC sought instead to unify the peoples in the east. With a shift from an ethnic rationale to a regional rationale the BC joined forces with the dominantly Arab movement Rashaida Free Lions (RFL) and a host of other smaller groups. The process culminated in the formation of the EF in early 2005 (Young 2007: 11-12). That the EF is a regional movement is underlined by its consistent demand of reunifying the three states into one region, a claim that has also been central in Darfur and South Sudan (Ati 2009). The central demand for the Eastern movements has been the establishment of a genuine federal system with a true devolution of political powers to the regions and fair representation of all political forces at the local and national levels within a united Sudan (Pantuliano 2005:15).

The concept that there is a regional identity and regional movements in East Sudan is strengthened by the almost completely lack of intra-regional inter-tribal clashes. Despite numerous attempts and relative success with the same strategy in Darfur and South Sudan Khartoum has not been able to bribe and arm tribal militia in the East. The only notable exception is the Beja sub-tribe Beni Amar, though their alliance with NCP has been a partly religious but mostly strategically political one and has not led to violent clashes with rebel groups in the region (Young 2007: 27).

4.1.3 Regional identity in Darfur and the Darfuri rebel movements

Darfur draws its name from the Fur people who dominated the region through the Fur sultanate in the 19th century. Dar Fur was an independent state for three centuries before the British came in 1917. The kingdom of the Fur was one of diverse ethnicity, integrating different tribes of Arabs and Black Africans and donating land to immigrating Arab tribes (Flint and de Waal 2005: 9). The long history of Darfur as an independent political entity and the many tribes with a specific Darfuri connection has established the region of Darfur as a well-known concept for Darfuri and non-Darfuri alike in Sudan. Indeed, Darfur has a shorter history than South Sudan as a part of Sudan; while South Sudan has been

regarded as Sudanese for 170 years Darfur was included in Sudan less than 100 years ago (O'Faye 2006: 29). In their report on the conflict in Darfur, the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD) stated that Darfur has had a remarkably stable continuous identity as a locus for state formation over several centuries, and that it is a recognisable political unit (AUPD 2009: 10).

The main counter argument to a regional Darfuri identity is the simplified Arab-Africa dichotomy often attributed to the region. But from the viewpoint of Darfur "Arab" is merely one subset of "African". Darfurians had no difficulty with multiple identities, and indeed would have defined their African kingdom as encompassing indigenous Arabs, both Bedouins and culturally literate Arabs (de Waal 2004b: URL). Along the same lines the AUPD notes that ""Arab" and "African" are complimentary rather than contrasting labels, referring to overlapping and complementary identities rather than opposing alternatives" (2009: 11). There are few credible arguments against a common Darfuri identity based on centuries of existence as a political entity. A more controversial point is the concept of the Darfuri rebel movements as regional. The main arguments against this are: first, that the rebel groups are organized along ethnic and tribal lines; second, that the conflict is not regional, but racial, between Africans and Arabs; and third, that it is intra-Darfuri tribal and economic competition for resources between farmers and nomads.

While it is true the rebel groups are mostly organized along tribal lines, it is crucial to keep in mind the nature of the tribal system in Sudan. The tribe is a strong political entity, strengthened by centuries of the tribe as the central unit for issues such as land rights and settlement of disputes. The original Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) was a mostly Zaghawa and Fur – but also with some Masalit and some Arab commanders – movement. But this must not be understood as a somewhat primordial connection, but rather cooperation between commanders from a large number of tribes. As the movement suffered considerable exhaustion it fragmented among mostly tribal lines[28]. Indeed, this awkward coalition fragmented along tribal lines as the conflict turned graver than they had ever imagined. JEM, on the other hand, is more of a tribal movement consisting almost exclusively of Zaghawa Kobe. Paradoxically, they are the ones who have had the strongest regional and national (and even inter-state regional) agenda among the movements[29]. Both groups have consistently stated marginalization of all of Darfur as the reason for their rebellion and their military activities have mostly

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[28] By tribal lines with respect to the SLA/M we are discussing small units within the larger tribal networks

[29] Recall that JEM have considerable ties both to the regime in N'djamena and to national power struggles in Khartoum

been towards the government forces. Their struggle appears to be not against other groups in the region but on behalf of the region against the central government. In 2003, the two rebel movements cooperated in their military campaigns, most famously against the al-Fasher airport, despite their tribal differences.

The Khartoum-sponsored Janjawiid militia consists dominantly of Arab Aballa Rizeigat soldiers and mercenaries from other countries. Their tactics are the most prominent reason for why the conflict has been perceived as ethnic: Together with the conventional armed forces they have lead a counter-insurgency with considerable elements of cleansing of civilians based on ethnicity. While their motivation is mainly economic and rooted in the long history of marginalization of the Aballa within Darfur through the *Hakura* land tenure system and other mechanisms and their threatened situation with ecological degradation in the region (Young *et al*. 2009), their target population has largely consisted of African tribes, and the pattern of killing the men, raping the women and destroying their livelihoods has strong resemblance to ethnic cleansing campaigns in Rwanda and Yugoslavia. Still, the Arab-African conceptualization of the conflict is weakened when one considers the action of the majority of the Arab population. While some have joined the rebels and others the Khartoum-sponsored militias the great majority of Arab tribes have stayed away from the conflict. Indeed, the largest Arab tribal network – the Baggara – has despite previous connections with the Sudanese army stayed almost completely neutral. Thus, while SLA/M – AW today generally represents the largest ethnic group – the Fur – and SLA/M – MM and JEM largely consist of and has support from Zaghawa communities, Khartoum-sponsored militia only represent a small fraction of Arab groups in Darfur.

Furthermore, while notions of Arab and African have been used in this thesis, the discussion on ethnicity demonstrated how unsuitable such concepts are for Darfuri identity and tribal organization. Young *et al*. (2009) argue that "rather than a region populated by distinct 'African' and 'Arab' tribes, Darfur can be regarded as being inhabited by a number of interconnected African tribes, some of whom speak Arabic as their mother-tongue" (2009: 28), and that "ethnicity (…) is a historical construct that has limited value in understanding the conflict and groupings in Darfur" (2009: 36). Indeed, as Young *et al*. (2009) focus on pastoralist groups and such attribute an economic classification system they categorize the Zaghawa, a group normally considered African and dominant both in SLA/M and JEM, as Aballa – a concept most commonly attributed to Rizeigat nomadic groups from North Darfur. The

argument that the conflict is based on economic cleavages between nomads and settlers cannot explain the participation of most Zaghawa, and in particular the Zaghawa Kobe associated with JEM.

It is difficult to dispute that there is a strong regional Darfuri identity based on Darfur's long tradition as a political entity. While the rebel movements have not included all tribes, or peoples, of Darfur, they have had a clear regional agenda, a claim that has been manifested in the regional nature of the DPA. The possible exception is JEM, as it has the clearest national – and (intrastate-)regional – character of the Darfuri movements.

4.2 Regional inequalities in Sudan

> *It is important to see the regional conflicts in the Sudan, including those in the Western region of Darfur and in the Eastern region, as all interconnected. The root cause of these conflicts is encapsulated in the marginalization of the mostly non-Arab peripheral regions by an Afro-Arab central government. (…) [The regions] were kept separate and given disparate opportunities for development, with some groups privileged and others neglected, resulting in severe disparities in the levels of political, economic, social and cultural development* (Deng 2007: 92).

This part presents the empirical evidence for the occurrence of gross regional multidimensional inequalities in Sudan. It will illustrate that the central riverine elite, consisting mostly of representatives from only three tribes – Ja'aliyyin, Shayqiyya and Danaqla – from an area including the northernmost part of the Central region[30], but dominantly within the Northern region, has had a near monopoly of political power post-independence. According to Collins (2008) the domination of the Northern region "has resulted in conspicuous political racism in which just three ethnic groups (…) have monopolized virtually all positions in the government, from cabinet ministers to the most junior civil servants, during the past fifty years of independent Sudan" (2008: 8). As Ylönen (2005) observes "it was this inter-group and inter-regional relationship that resulted in peripheral grievances during the preparation for independence, since the Northern elite exclusively inherited political control" (2005: 106).

The socioeconomic result has been the unequal distribution of government funds and subsequent inequality in regional social development. The cultural effect has been the domination of militant Islamism and an Arab supremacy ideology that has led to regional cultural inequalities in terms of

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[30] Gezira and Khartoum

racism and religious discrimination.

Some of the evidence[31] presented in this thesis suggests that in geographic terms the privileged areas consists of the former Northern region, today's Northern and River Nile states, and parts of the former Central region, most notably in Gezira state. The rest of the Central region and North Kordofan is in a somewhat middle ground and has seen more government spending and have better score on social indicators than their neighbours to the east, west and south. Blue Nile and South Kordofan states and the Darfur, East Sudan and South Sudan regions are marginalised along all dimensions of RIs. These inequalities are constant along most indicators and thus correlate with the occurrence of political violence as the Blue Nile and South Kordofan populations were involved in the second civil war.

This part will use numerous sources, but three stands out: The first, the 1990 Sudan Household Survey, is an official government document; the second, the 2006 Sudan Household Survey is approved by the UN, the GoNU and GoSS, while the third, the *Black Book,* is produced by author(s) at least closely linked to the JEM rebel movement. In the opening paragraph of the *Black Book,* the author(s) state:

> *«This book is an exposé of the injustice that was visited on the Sudan by successive governments which ruled it since independence (1956). They all displayed blatant favouritism of one particular circle in the Sudan to detriment of all others. The favoured part of the Sudan attracted disproportionate attention, care, services and developmental resources from those successive governments. That favoured part of the Sudan is the Northern Region where most of the ruling elite come from»* (anonymous 2000).

In the following sub-chapters I will investigate inter-regional inequalities from available cross-regional sources for all the conflicts, before I go into a more detailed discussion on regional-specific inequalities.

4.2.1 Political power inequalities

There are gross and consistent RIs in political power. In addition to legislative power the Northern region has monopolised executive power since independence and dominated the army. An important part of this picture is the lack of political freedom in Sudan. In the reports on *Freedom in the World*

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[31] Not all the data is available on state level

from Freedom House from 2002-2010 Sudan scores the least free score on both political rights and civil liberties for every single year[32]. This indicates a lack of possibilities for those not in power positions to influence decision-making. *Table 4* shows the regional representation in governments from 1954 to 1999.

Table 4. Regional representation in government, %

Region	1954-64	1964-69	1969-85	1985-86	1986-89	1989-99	Population[33]
Northern	79	68	69	70	47	62	6
Eastern	1	2	3	0	3	3	11
Central	3	6	17	10	15	8	28
Southern	16	17	8	17	13	14	21
Western	0	6	4	3	22	17	33

Source: Data presented in Anonymous 2002, population data compiled by author from 2008 census

The East has had virtually no representation, while the West (Darfur and Kordofan) went from East's levels to increased political representation from Sadiq al-Mahdi's second government and onwards. This is particularly related to the increased strategic importance of Darfur, the support from Darfur for Sadiq al-Mahdi and Hassan al-Turabi in particular and the rise of some Darfurians in the army as a result of the use of Darfuri soldiers in the second civil war. However, this also includes representation from relatively well-off North Kordofan – and marginalized South Kordofan – and as such does not truly represent the political representation of Darfur. The South has had a considerable representation compared to the West and the East throughout Sudan's independence, but with questionable legitimacy considering that it has been during a period of civil war in the South.

The dominant pattern is the disproportionate representation from the region with only around six percentage of the population; the Northern region. It is also important to keep in mind in this setting that while parliamentary representation reflects influence within the regime there has been a varied yet, for most of the period, marginal influence from parliament on decision-making, and executive powers has in the period been restricted to the Northern region; every president in independent Sudan has been from that region. Sudan has never had a functioning democracy, and Sudan political control is strongly linked to the economic prosperity of groups that provide constituencies for those exercising political

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[32] See www.freedomhouse.org for all publications

[33] Region of birth according to the 2008 census

power (Ylönen 2005: 107).

4.2.2 Economic inequalities

A similar trend is visible for economic spending from the government, and demonstrates the connection between political power and economic and social goods. The link between political and socioeconomic inequalities is also underlined by Jok Madut Jok (2007), as he argues that due to (racial) inequality in political power "Arabs occupy the top of the ladder in the socioeconomic hierarchy and that racial hierarchy is therefore also reflected in the governing process, the control of the state power and resources" (2007: 12).

Table 5 gives an overview of the distribution of regional spending per capita in the North Sudanese regions in the pre-war years of 1996-2000. The values are calculated with the Northern region as the reference at 100, thus the values for the other regions represents percentages of spending in the Northern region. Government spending in the same period in South Sudan is not available.

Table 5. Government spending and regional revenue

	Khartoum	**Northern**	**Central**	**Kordofan**	**Darfur**	**East**
Expenditure	161.5	100	60.6	49.9	40.6	73.7
Revenue	213.7	100	70.9	47.6	41.5	98.4
Effective Subsidy	13.3	100	23.8	57.5	35.1	1.6
Development expenditure	532.9	100	35.5	15.5	17.2	79.5

Source: Cobham 2005

The Northern region has a considerable spending advantage on all other regions across all indicators apart from the capital Khartoum. The government spends considerably more on development in the Northern region – around six times the amount it spends in Darfur and Kordofan – despite the region having the second largest per capita revenue in the North. The clearest example is that of the effective government subsidy per capita, which indicates government per capita spending controlled for the region's own revenue. The effective government subsidy per capita in the Northern region is 62.5 times higher than in East Sudan, 7.5 times that in Khartoum, 4.2 times that in the Central region, and 2.8

times that in Darfur. The only region that receives more than half of what the Northern region receives is Kordofan with 57.5 %.

Medani (2008) argues that distribution of funds to the regions and social spending has not been a priority for Sudanese governments. Investigating government spending from the first oil discoveries in 1978 to the signing of the CPA in 2005, Medani (2008) concludes that "social development ranked very low as government priorities in the Sudan" (2008: 17). This view is strengthened by a recent study by Khalid (2006) identifying the 1990s as standing out in Sudan's postcolonial history for the growth of poverty and inequality as it pursued an agenda of economic liberalism based on IMF precepts (Young 2007: 114). Consequently, in a period of economic growth social spending is not prioritized and the little there are is grossly unequally distributed among the regions.

4.2.3 Social inequalities

The inequalities in political power and economic spending are also reflected on social indicators across Sudan's regions. It should be noted, however, that there are just a few reliable sources that include all of Sudan and they are of newer date and as such post-conflict for South Sudan and mostly during the conflicts for East Sudan and Darfur. This has both a positive and negative effect: It is natural to assume that conflict has had a negative effect on the social indicators in affected areas, but it is on the other hand likely that international humanitarian and developmental assistance has had a positive effect. While the data should be treated with caution, they do show a clear tendency.

Table 6. Scores on social indicators, 2006

2006	Khartoum	Northern	Central	Kordofan	Darfur	East	South
% Improved WASH[34]*	66	71	20	14	17	13	4
% Delivery assistance**	85	82	72	34	46	61	10
% Child mortality rate	9	8	11	12	11	12	13
% Primary school attendance	86	89	68	61	57	59	17
% Secondary school attendance	38	40	20	13	14	16	2

* Percentage of households with both improved drinking water sources and sanitary means of excreta disposal
** Assistance during delivery by doctor, nurse or midwife
Source: Compiled by author based on data from Sudan Household Survey 2006

The general trend is that the South lags far behind on all indicators, followed by Darfur, East, and Kordofan, with the Central region somewhat occupying a middle position and Khartoum and the Northern region far above the rest. While the RIs in the South, the East and Darfur are clearly demonstrated, the Kordofan and Central region scores hide large intra-regional inequalities: For instance, the Central regions comparatively high child mortality rate (11 %) consists of the lowest rate in the country in Gezira (6 %) and the second highest rate in Blue Nile (18 %). Similarly, the Kordofan average (12 %) hides large intra-regional inequalities between North Kordofan (9 %) and South Kordofan (15 %). Similarly, a combined rural survival deprivation index based on data from the Multi-Indicators Clusters Survey (MICS) for different states, shows that the highest level of poverty in North Sudan is found in the rural areas of the Red Sea, Blue Nile, Kassala, South Kordofan and North Darfur states. For urban areas the combined index of deprivation shows that the highest level is found in Blue Nile, Malakal, Red Sea, Southern Kordofan, and Kassala (Medani 2008: 8).

As already stated, the effects of warfare in South Sudan could perhaps make it difficult to compare it with, say, the Northern region, and the South scores the lowest on all indicators; most of them a mile away from the second lowest. But East Sudan, the Northern region's neighbouring region, did not experience anywhere near the same sort of conflict intensity as in South Sudan or Darfur. Nonetheless, their scores on social indicators are weaker than the Northern region across all indicators. For instance,

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[34] Percentage of households with both improved drinking water sources and sanitary means of excreta disposal.

the proportion of the population that has access to improved water sources and sanitary means of excreta disposal of the population in the Northern region is almost six times higher than in East Sudan; the child mortality rate in the Northern region is 75 % of that in the East; eight out ten births are assisted by trained personnel in the Northern region compared to six out of ten in the East; and school attendance rates are 150 % and 250 % of that in the East in the North for primary and secondary school respectively.

When investigating social indicators at state level in the 2006 Sudan Household survey one pattern is relatively consistent among most indicators. The Northern region, Khartoum and Gezira state have consistently high scores; the Central region states Sennar, White Nile and North Kordofan occupy the middle range; while the Central region's Blue Nile state, South Kordofan state and all Darfuri, Eastern and South Sudanese states have the lowest scores. The World Bank's unpublished *Country Economic Memorandum* for 2009 has visualized the state-level inequalities as shown in *Figure 5*.

Figure 5. Regional inequalities on social indicators
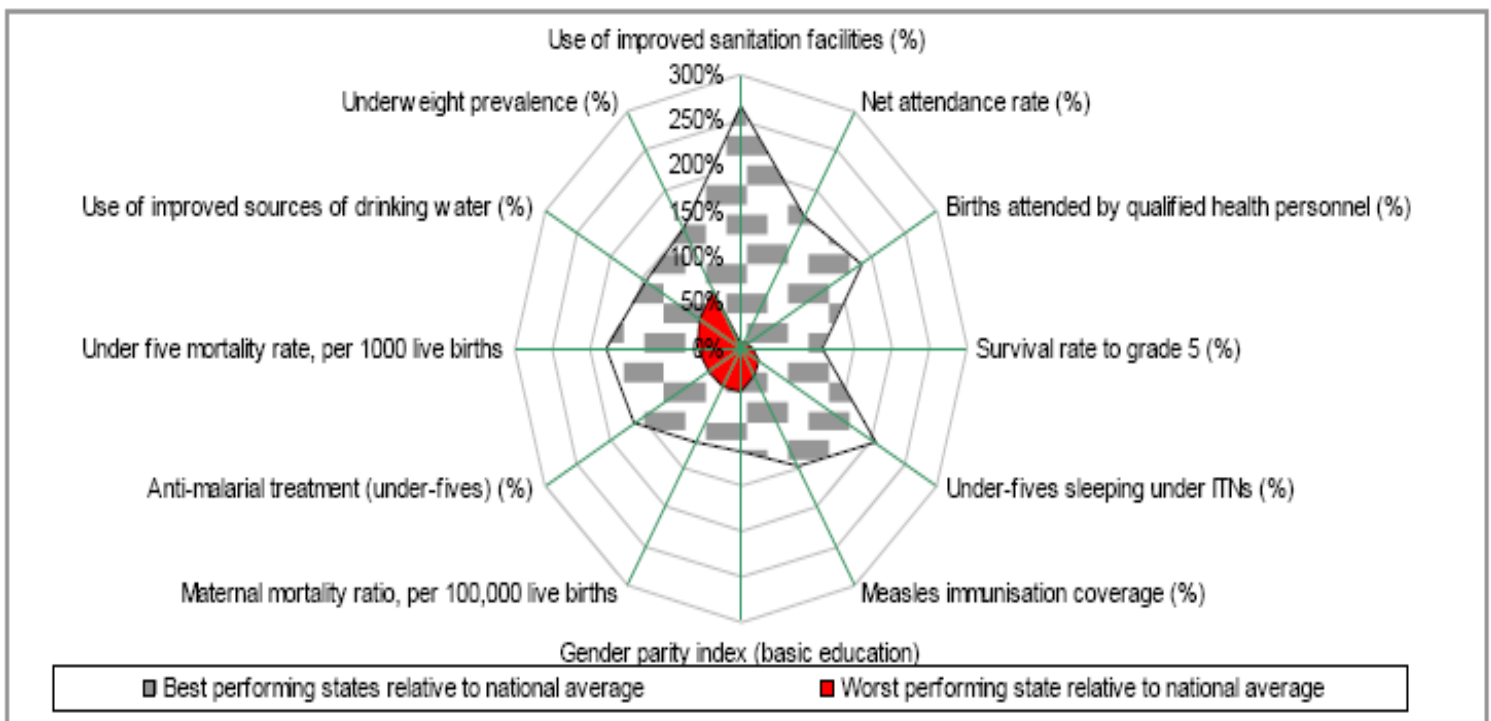
Source: Figure presented in World Bank 2009: 5

The grey area marks the percentage of national average for the best performing state, while the red area marks the percentage of national average for the worst performing state. The distance from the inner to the outer area thus visualize inequalities between the worst and best performing states, while the distance from these areas to the 100 % mark illustrates distance to the national average.

The figure illustrate gross inter-state inequalities, and for all these indicators the worst performing state is from the marginalized areas while the best-performing state is from the Northern region, Khartoum or Gezira state. The report states that Sudan's growth has been "historically unbalanced" with "huge disparity in the development indicators" that "indicate the persistence of large spatial, regional and ethnic disparities within Sudan" (World Bank 2009: 5), and concludes that the greatest priority is to ensure that further growth "is broad-based and inclusive" (ibid.: 7)

To complement the picture painted by the 2006 survey I have included the 1990 survey as well, as with the 2006 equivalent it is approved by the government. A key reason for including this is that it is pre-conflict in Darfur and the East. As with government spending, this is only for the regions of North Sudan due to the civil war.

Table 7. Scores on social indicators, 1990

	Khartoum	**North**	**Central**	**Kordofan**	**Darfur**	**East**
% Any Education, males (all)	82 (67)	78 (58)	69 (49)	62 (42)	51 (34)	52 (35)
% Secondary education, males (all)	54 (48)	40 (33)	30 (20)	20 (13)	17 (11)	20 (13)
% Child Mortality*	11	11	12	13	16	18
% Delivery assistance**	88	99	76	65	40	55

* The probability for a child born in the region to die before the age of 5
** Assistance during delivery by doctor, nurse or midwife
Source: Compiled by author based on data from DHS 1990

The pattern from 2006 survey is confirmed in the 1990 survey. The regions that are worse off with respect to education are Darfur, Kordofan and the East; and Darfur and the East in particular have remarkably high child mortality rates at 16 and 18 % respectively, against 11 % in Khartoum and the Northern region. For delivery assistance by trained personnel, this is provided for virtually every birth in the Northern region (99 %) but only for about half in the East and four out of ten in Darfur.

Consequently, while I have already demonstrated that Darfur and the East were suffering from considerable RIs in the decade leading up to the conflicts along the political and economic dimensions the 1990 Household survey confirms that these inequalities are also reproduced along the social dimension as well.

4.2.4 Cultural status inequalities

The political, economic and social inequalities in Sudan and cultural status inequalities are mutually strengthening phenomena. Arguably, Sudan's grossly unequal distribution across regions and cultures are unjustifiable on any ethical platform but one of racial supremacy; cultural status inequalities are consequently possibly among the causes for the occurrence of multidimensional inequalities in the first place. On the other hand, marginal access to political power and economic resources for whole cultural groups with the resulting social inequalities have led to widespread feelings of discrimination among the Darfuri, Nuba, Nubian, South Sudanese and East Sudanese in particular. The Khartoum-centred Sudanese state has for most of its existence had an Arab, Muslim identity, despite the fact that only a minority of Sudanese are of Arab descent and a large minority are not Muslim. These issues of identity are closely connected to a tradition of extraction of minerals, cattle and human resources from the Sudanese peripheries in general and specifically from South Sudan, as well as constant patterns of discrimination against non-Arab and/or non-Muslim groups.

As already noted, racial-religious discrimination – leading to cultural inequalities – are at the core of Jok (2007) and Deng's (1997) understanding of the North-South conflict, and discrimination against Black Africans in particular also figurate strongly in Flint and de Waal's (2007) account on Darfur and Pantuliano's (2005) on East Sudan. In the case of the second civil war in South Sudan in particular, cultural status inequalities are widely considered to be among the immediate causes for the new conflicts – as the Bor rebellion occurred shortly after the introduction of Sharia law in the whole of Sudan in September 1983. While the importance of this move is questionable relative to the reduction of political influence and revenue through Khartoum's partition of the Southern region and claim on profits from petroleum it seems clear that cultural discrimination through the introduction of Sharia law affected conflict occurrence in South Sudan in 1983. While the forceful introduction of Islamic law in non-Muslim parts of Sudan can be view as an indicator of identity conflicts similar to Huntington's

(1993) *Clash of Civilisation* argument, it appears more appropriate to consider it another dimension of RIs. The introduction of Sharia Law in non-Muslim areas is both a manifestation and widening of RIs in Sudan, and as such worked in tandem with the other dimensions of inequality as causes for the second civil war.

4.2.5 Summary: Regional inequalities in Sudan

In sum, Sudan has a web of interconnected RIs along the different dimensions of political, economic, social and cultural inequalities and these inequalities represent the root causes for its numerous regional conflicts. The measureable RIs highlighted in this part of the thesis are summarised in a highly simplified scoring system in *Table 8*[35].

Table 8. Regional inequalities summarized

	Political power	Government spending[36]	Social indicators	Net score
Northern	1	1	1	3
Khartoum	3	5	2	10
Central	3	4	3	10
Darfur	4	3	4	11
Kordofan	4	2	6	12
South	2	7	7	16
East	6	6	5	17

In the table each region is ranked according to relative position along the different political, social and economic indicators. For instance, since the Northern region has the best political representation it gets a score of 1, as East Sudan has the least it gets a score of 7. Only indicators with scores for all regions are included, though for political power and government spending Darfur and Kordofan jointly constitutes the Western region and for political power Khartoum is included in the Central region. For government spending it is, despite lack of adequate data, considered highly likely that the South has received the least.

This part has shown that there are multidimensional RIs in Sudan and that there is a correlation between RIs and conflict occurrence. The two only regions in Sudan that has not seen political violence

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[35] Cultural status inequality is not included

[36] Effective per capita government subsidy

directed against the government – the Northern region and Khartoum region – are also those with the highest scores on political power, economic goods and social indicators, and the cultural values expressed by the state is closer to their own. This is particularly so for the Northern region, as it scores best across all dimensions.

But the data on the social indicators revealed large intra-regional differences within the Central region and Kordofan. The social indicators, from several different sources, indicates significantly more development in the Northern state, Khartoum, Gezira state and to a lesser degree in North Kordofan and the other states of the Central region with the exception of Blue Nile state. Indeed, these two areas have, in addition to Abyei, a special status as marginalized areas in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). They are posed to hold popular consultations on whether to remain within North Sudan or join South Sudan before January 2011.

When intra-regional inequalities are taken into consideration for the Central region and Kordofan there is a strong correlation between RIs and conflict occurrence. The most marginalized areas of the Central region – Blue Nile – and Kordofan – South Kordofan – on the social dimension have both engaged in conflict in Sudan, in addition to the two most marginalized regions – South and East Sudan – and Darfur.

4.3 Regional-specific inequalities

While the previous sub-chapter presented the evidence for RIs across the different dimensions based on data from the same source, this part presents regional-specific inequalities that due to differences in time, space and data available was unsuitable for the comparative analyses presented above. It is designed to complement the data presented in 4.2, but it offers a more nuanced and detailed approach for the three cases.

4.3.1 Regional inequalities in South Sudan

4.3.1.1 Regional inequalities at the time of independence

"The rapid increase of Northerners in the South as administrators, senior officers in the army

and police, teachers in government schools and as merchants, increased Southern fears of Northern domination and colonization" (Johnson 2007: 27).

When identifying RIs, this thesis is trying to use data for the time of the rebellion. For the South Sudanese civil war, that presents some difficulties as accounts on the start of the conflict differ from 1954 to 1964. Furthermore, there are little systematic and reliable data, from only a handful of sources. Most accounts focus on skewed development as a result of colonialism, where South Sudan was excluded from the rest of Sudan due to cultural factors, and that the British favoured elites primarily from a few smaller tribes from the northernmost parts of Sudan. This led to the aforementioned establishment of a regime of "internal colonialism" dominated by the three tribes dominantly from the Northern region that constitute the central riverine elite. Already at the 1947 Juba conference the Southerners noted the discrepancies between them and their Northern neighbours. The Southern leaders argued that the salary gap between the regions was unjustifiable and divided the communities, that religious discrimination should be stopped, and Southern rights safeguarded (Marwood 1947). Indeed, the general sentiment of both Juba Conferences (1947, -54) was that the South demanded "accelerated socio-economic development (…) the ending of exploitation and recognition of a special status for the South" (Alier 1990: 41). Thus, the concept of RIs were strong already pre-independence.

Following Sudan's independence in 1956 the riverine elite took up administrative positions in the towns and employed indigenous inhabitants who were fleeing the crisis in the rural economy (Young 2007: 18). This extended to the civil servant positions within South Sudan, which were in general taken over by Northern Sudanese at independence. *Table 9* provides an overview on the distribution of government positions.

Table 9. Political and economic inequalities at independence

	North	South
% of population	75	25
% of constitutional seats	93	7
% of parliament seats 1954-64	84	16
% of army commissions	97	3
% of police officers	96	4
% of administrative posts	99	1

Source: Horowitz 1985; Taisier and Matthews 1999; Cobham 2005

Table 9 demonstrates that the Southerners were grossly marginalised at independence. In newly independent Sudan the Southerners, estimated to be a quarter of the population, held 3 of 44 seats on the constitution-drafting committee; 16 % of seats in parliament the first decade; had less than 3 % of post-independence army commissions; 4 % of newly gazetted police officers; and so on. Although by 1954 eight hundred administrative posts had been "sudanised", only six junior level positions were filled by Southerners. The British civil servants in the South were normally replaced by Northerners, thus leading to the conception that "the administration, the army, the police, the judiciary and the trade in the South are all in Arab hands" (Deng and Oduho 1963: 14) and that independence for the South was just another name for colonisation. Deng (2007) argues that "independence was to prove merely a change of outside masters, with the northerners taking over from the British and defining the nation in accordance with the symbols of their Arabic-Islamic identity" (Deng 2007: 484).

The economic causes of the first South Sudanese rebellion are intimately linked to the political marginalisation of the South since it brought economic deprivation and fears of renewed northern domination (Ylönen 2005: 114). Inequalities in the South come from "a combination of colonial neglect and older practices of exploitation" (Johnson 2007: 16), that led to a situation where "the South Sudanese lagged far (…) in education, economic development, and involvement in the government" and as a consequence without "any real or potential voice in the direction of the country's affairs" (Johnson 2007: 17).

The relative weakness of the region led to a growth of political sentiment to strengthen it. Indeed, the first Southern political force post-independence, winning virtually all the seats in the 1957 elections, was the federalist Federal Party (Johnson 2007: 30). The concept of federalism to strengthen the underdeveloped regions in Sudan led to political cooperation between Southerners, Westerners and Easterners in the Sudan against the dominant Central Nile valley elite.

In the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement (AAA), the original South Sudanese goal of self-determination was replaced by regional autonomy for the South. The agreement addressed some of the key issues and it demonstrates the importance of South Sudan as a geographical and political entity. Through the agreement the Southerners were granted a regional government with the power to elect the president of the High Executive Council and to veto national legislation, and powers to raise revenues from taxation

in addition to funds from the central government. The AAA became law with the Southern Provinces Self Government Act, Act No. 4, 1972. It defines South Sudan as the provinces of Southern Sudan according to the 1956 borders, "and any other areas that were culturally and geographically a part of the Southern Complex as may be decided by a referendum" (art. 3 (iii)), and states that these areas "shall constitute a self-governing region (…) known as the Southern Region" (art. 4). Cultural inequality also played its part. According to Abel Alier (1990) cultural inequality intensified the rebellion when General Abboud's rule led to "Islamisation and Arabisation of South Sudan" (Alier 1990: 39) in South Sudan in the mid-60s.

The act thus acknowledges the existence of a South Sudanese political unit, it establishes South Sudan as one region instead of three, it acknowledges – in line with previous statements from then President Nimeiri – the cultural aspect of North-South differences, and it acknowledges the relative marginalisation of South Sudan. Thus, the agreement specifically addresses RIs in terms of political power, socioeconomic development and cultural status. The sparse data available supports the general sentiment of marginalisation in the AAA, as the South Sudanese were largely excluded from political power and employment opportunities at independence.

4.3.1.2 Regional inequalities at the start of the second civil war

The AAA faced a number of challenges as it was poorly implemented and Sudan faced a grave economic crisis. Peter Kok (1992) has demonstrated how the central government transferred only 23.2 % on average of allocated funds to the region through the special development budget during the first government (Kok 1992: 106; Johnson 2003: 42). Yongo-Bure (1986, 1989) argues that the actual amount from 1972-77 was only 20.1 % of budget estimates. The trend continued in the second period; from 1977-83 only USD 45 million out of 225 million had been transferred by 1982 (Johnson 2003: 43). Furthermore, Yongo-Bure (1989) also points out that a considerable amount of development funds were spent at providing the minimal infrastructure and salaries needed to set up the South Sudanese administration. Similarly, other areas of the agreement were left unimplemented; for instance, despite accords in the agreement stating that 30 % of new recruits to the army should be Southerners only 5 % of total recruits in the period were from the South – all of them enrolled in the first two years of the agreement (Alier 1990: 282).

The oil discovery in Bentiu in 1978 put significantly pressure on an already fragile agreement. In the terms of the agreement, all central government revenues originating from the South were to be distributed to the regional government. Thus, all taxes, fees and other income from petroleum exploration would go to the South. But while extracting oil from the ground is costly, processing and selling it is lucrative. Consequently, the locations of the oil refinery and export port became the most contested issues. Tensions grew as Khartoum tried to withdraw boundaries and exclude the Southerners from the petroleum adventure. On top of a weakly implemented agreement to begin with the oil discovery meant the beginning of the end for the AAA. In the 1983 Khartoum dismantled the agreement. By presidential decree in Republican Order No 1 of June 5th 1983 the Southern Region was replaced by three separate regions with relative weak autonomy, the financial arrangements securing the Southern Region its own generated revenue removed, and the cultural and religious freedoms and recognitions taken away. Soon thereafter the so-called September Laws imposed Islamic Sharia Laws on the whole of Sudan. As already pointed out, lack of religious freedom for non-Muslims constitutes inequality along the cultural dimensions, and, as non-Muslims in Sudan are almost exclusively located in South Sudan and example of RIs in the cultural inequalities dimension. With reference to the four dimensions of RIs, then, political, economic, social and cultural RIs widened with the collapse of the AAA, the discovery of oil and introduction of Sharia Laws. With the benefits of the AAA removed, and the core issues of RIs widening a consequence a new rebellion was in the making.

The Sudan's Peoples' Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) grew out of the failure of the agreement and was specifically concerned with the inequalities within Sudan. The eleven grievances specifically referred to in the SPLM manifesto covers political, economic and social inequalities. It does not mention cultural inequalities explicitly, though it does refer to issues of nationality and religion obscuring the common battle against inequality (Chapters 4-6). That RIs were a central part of the SPLA/M conflict motivation and a continued concern is illustrated by their approach to regional distribution within the South. Since the signing of the CPA in 2005 South Sudan has had a semi-autonomous government – the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) – largely dominated by the SPLM. GoSS has followed a strict regional equity policy with equal distribution of funds across the ten South Sudanese states (ITAD (2010)). A potential concern is that this has been done without consideration to needs and services available and the policy has consequently not addressed current RIs within South Sudan. With the probability of South Sudanese independence from 2011 now high this yields a potential for future conflicts on RIs within South Sudan.

4.3.2 Regional inequalities in East Sudan

> *«Whether the problem is conceptualized as one of exploitation of the periphery by the centre, internal colonialism, or marginalization, the poverty of the many and the enormous wealth of a few—who are invariably linked to the state—form the background for most conflicts in the region.»* (Young 2007:15)

The problem of marginalisation of East Sudan was not recognised by scholars or the international community before the last decade, and is still largely ignored today by the few academics that focus on East Sudan. However, it has been a long-standing issue in East Sudanese political thoughts. As early as 1953 the Beja intellectual Suliman Salih Dirar claimed that the political problem in East Sudan was not just an ethnic problem concerning the Beja, but a regional problem as other groups "are also suffering like the Beja from marginalization, underdevelopment and shortage of supply and welfare (quoted in Ati 2009: 27). As the strongest political forces in the region, the Beja Congress (BC) and coalition movement Eastern Front (EF) claim that the East suffers from political, social, economic and cultural inequality (Ati 2009).

In an unpublished NGO paper that is widely referenced among the international community in Sudan, Sara Pantuliano (2005) presents the argument that deteriorating environmental factors and dire socio-economic conditions led long-standing discontent and grievances to erupt into conflict. According to Pantuliano, the resilience of the livelihood systems in the East have been significantly weakened due to external factors, many of which date back to misguided policies in colonial times. Such policies continued after independence, resulting in systematic underdevelopment and marginalisation (Pantuliano 2005:7). Pantuliano interviewed rebel leaders and government officials, and their responses were strikingly similar. JEM leaders interviewed by Pantuliano (2005:18) emphasised that the nature of the problem in East Sudan is similar to that of Darfur and other marginalised areas. Government officials that met with Pantuliano (2005:18) emphasised that the government is aware of the problem of East Sudan's chronic underdevelopment and marginalisation. From her work Pantuliano (2005) concludes that:

> *«historical grievances, feelings of exclusion and marginalisation, demands for fair sharing of power between different groups, inequitable distribution of economic resources and benefits, underdevelopment, the absence of genuine democratic process and other governance issues are at the heart of the Eastern rebellion"* (Pantuliano 2005:21).

The EF leaders emphasised lack of development, basic services and employment in East Sudan, which they claimed was a "direct result of the concentration of power in the hands of a restrictive elite, which has resulted in political marginalisation and lack of attention to the peripheries" (Pantuliano 2005: 23). Indeed, the authors of the *Black Book* – connected to the Darfuri rebel movement JEM – argue that East Sudan is the most marginalised region in Sudan along the political dimensions, and that it also has some of the lowest levels of education and access to resources. The argument is backed by available data, based on political representation (1989-99), government spending (1996-1999) and social indicators (1990).

Table 10. East Sudanese regional inequalities

	Northern	East	Khartoum
% of population*	4.7	11	36.9
% of parliament seats*	60.1	3	6.6
Revenue per capita**	100	98.4	213.7
Government expenditure per capita**	100	73.7	161.5
Government subsidy per capita**	100	1.6	13.3
Development expenditure per capita**	100	79.5	532.9
% Delivery assistance	99	55	88
% Any Education, males	78	52	82
% Child Mortality**	11	18	11

* As population data and pre-conflict data on political power includes Khartoum in the Central region the data for Khartoum are for the whole of the Central region
** With Northern regions as reference group = 100
*** The probability for a child born in the region to die before the age of 5
Sources: Anonymous (2002), Cobham (2005), Sudan Household Survey (2006), Sudan Household Survey (1990)

Despite having around twice the population the Eastern region have had only between 0 and 3 % of the parliamentary seats since independence; the Northern region has in the period had between 20 and 79 times larger proportion of the seats. Furthermore, recall that the Northern region has monopolised executive power thus excluding the East Sudanese from political influence. Along the economic dimensions the period of 1996-2000 saw an effective government subsidy per capita 62.5 times higher in the Northern region than in the East. Unsurprisingly, then, the East have scores along the social dimension of around half the values of the Northern region. As already noted, the Eastern region comes out as the most marginalised of all North Sudanese regions.

It has not calmed the Eastern frustration that the region is very rich in strategic and natural resources. Gedaref has the largest agricultural areas in Sudan, while Port Sudan has the only port and the strategic importance of having the largest oil refinery.   In stark contrast to the potential prosperity and importance for the national economy, widespread poverty and high malnutrition and mortality rates "have created widespread anger amongst the community, who feel that the region is excluded from the national context" (Pantuliano 2005:7). Ati (2009) makes similar claims when arguing that the effects of the oil discovery – as well as gold discovery, increased focus on mechanical agriculture and hydroelectric dams – and consequent developments of infrastructure in the East were "largely negative" for the local population, thus fuelling feelings of deprivation in the presence of growth in the Sudanese economy as a whole (Ati 2009: 24). This is similar to the mechanisms that led to increased feelings of inequality when oil was discovered in South Sudan.

That the Beja have taken the lead both politically and militarily is also understandable from a marginalisation perspective; Young (2007) argues that the levels of extreme poverty are higher in Beja dominated areas of East Sudan, notably in Red Sea and Kassala states. Young (2007) argues that marginalisation means for the Beja "the poverty of the region; the government in Khartoum refusing to pursue development, or even provide basic services (…); and the government undermining local economies and traditional authorities" (Young 2007: 11). The cultural dimension is also present, as many Easterners do not feel a part of the Central riverine Sudanese identity, and as such is orientated towards Ethiopia and Eritrea (Young 2007). The Beja in particular do not traditionally speak Arabic; but that is the only language available in the public education system. Young (2007) concludes that the conflict in East Sudan is a product of marginalization, uneven development, and the domination of the Sudanese state since independence by riverine-based elites (2007: 44), and the evidence presented in this thesis supports that conclusion. East Sudan experiences RIs across all dimensions and is on the political dimension the most marginalized of all regions.

4.3.3 Regional inequalities in Darfur

> *"The root cause is the marginalisation and underdevelopment of Darfur as a result of policies and practices implemented throughout Sudan during both the colonial and post-colonial periods. This is represented as a gross imbalance between a strong centre and a marginalised periphery, which resulted in political power and wealth being concentrated in the centre, with the consequent negative consequences on the periphery"* (Mbeki 2009).

The marginalisation of Darfur is a consistent theme in Alex de Waal's writing and advocacy on Darfur, and also figure prominently in Daly (2007), among others. In October 2009 the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD), led by the former South African president Thabo Mbeki, made very clear that while the conflict has "political, economic, ecological, security, human rights and humanitarian dimensions", the roots lie in "the historical neglect of the Sudanese peripheries" and is as such a "manifestation of Sudan's inequitable distribution of wealth and power" (2009: xiii). This argument has also been consistently presented by the different rebel movements, in particular from JEM.

As highlighted by AUPD (2009) the marginalisation of Darfur is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, Harir (1994) argues that similar sentiments to those in the South became prevalent in Darfur due to the wide exclusion of the Darfurians from administrative and military positions in the newly independent Sudan (Harir 1994: 155). This appears to have been in line with British policy from the time they included Darfur in Sudan. Daly (1986) quotes Philip Ingleson, Governor of Darfur from 1936 to 1944, as summarizing the education policy in Darfur: "We have been able to limit education to the sons of chiefs and native administration personnel and can confidently look forward to keeping the ruling classes at the top of the education tree for many years to come" (Daly 1986: 107).

As a consequence Darfur had, according to Daly (2007), the lowest level of education in the whole of Sudan by independence, as only 0.2 % of its adult population had attended intermediate school and 0.1 % secondary school; and only 1 % of the female population had received any education at all. Furthermore, in the whole of Darfur – a region the size of France – there were only two professional medical practitioners (2007: 180). Alex de Waal concludes that the Darfuri "have received less education, less healthcare, less development assistance and fewer government posts than any other region – even the Southerners (…) had a better deal" (de Waal 2004a: 26).

While there are some intra-regional differences, all of Darfur is in general marginalized. Indeed, both Flint and de Waal (2007) and Young *et al*. (2009) see the dominance of the Aballa Northern Rizeigat among the Janjawiid militia as a result of intra-regional inequalities. Young *et al*. (2009) argues that as a result of "marginalization, impoverishment, and militarization" the Aballa were left "in a state of deepening frustration, hopelessness, and desperation, fearing for their survival", and consequently they

"are not without claim to being among the victims of a war largely brought about both directly and indirectly by the government of the Sudan" (Young *et al.* 2009: 54). Thus, the RIs experienced by Darfur have relevance not only for the initial rebellion but also for the involvement in the counterinsurgency by the Aballa militias, and appear to be the dominant cause behind the conflict in Darfur. This also indicates, however, the relevance of intra-regional inequalities and puts the Janjawiid militia in a historic perspective of consistent marginalization.

Table 11 presents a summary of the RIs pre-conflict along the political, economic and social dimensions for Darfur. The available data support the argument that Darfur experience gross RIs.

Table 11. Darfuri regional inequalities

	Northern	Darfur	Khartoum
% of population*	5	31	37
% of parliament seats*	60	17	7
Revenue per capita**	100	42	214
Government expenditure per capita**	100	41	162
Government subsidy per capita**	100	35	13
Development expenditure per capita**	100	17	533
% Delivery assistance	99	40	88
% Any Education, males	78	51	82
% Child Mortality*	11	16	11

* Due to Darfur and Kordofan registered as the Western region in the elections, population and percentage of parliament seats are for Darfur and Kordofan Data for Khartoum are Khartoum are for the whole of the Central region
** With Northern regions as reference group = 100
*** The probability for a child born in the region to die before the age of 5
Sources: Anonymous (2002), Cobham (2005), Sudan Household Survey (2006), Sudan Household Survey (1990)

The 1996-2000 pre-war year inequalities in political power, economic spending and social indicators show these gross inequalities. Along all indicators the Northern region has a score of between 1.5 and 6 times higher than Darfur's. The data also illustrate how the different dimensions of inequality are inter-connected. While the direction of the causal relationship is not indicated by the data they do fit the theoretical argument that inequalities in political power are reproduced in government spending and subsequently in social development. The effective government subsidy per capita in Darfur is only 35

% of that in the North, and the Darfuris have significantly higher child mortality, less education and less medical assistance.

4.4 From regional inequalities to conflict in Sudan

So far I have indentified regional identities, regional inequalities and regional conflicts in Sudan's marginalized regions. Based on political, economic, social and cultural inequalities I have demonstrated a consistent correlation between the marginalized regions and conflict occurrence. I argue that the underlying, consistent RIs are the main causal factors for the Sudanese civil conflicts. There is also a consistent pattern of changes in the perceived – real or imagined – RIs that can explain conflict occurrence and intensification. In the different cases this is linked to widening inequalities, increased relative deprivation and changes in cultural status inequalities that have caused ignition and intensification of conflict patterns.

The first South Sudanese rebellion is directly connected with increased expectations that followed independence, and an increased relative deprivation as a result of limited political influence and non-recognition of the Southerners' call for regionalization and self-determination. The Juba conferences of 1947 and -54 were dominated by calls to address North-South inequalities, and the strong results for the Federalist Party in the 1957 elections further demonstrates a political sentiment to address unequal regional distribution. As these hopes faded relative deprivation as a result of the large discrepancies between the South's expectations and the reality from independence increased. This was further fueled by the lack of improvement through regime change in Khartoum. Alier (1990), for instance, links the intensification of the first rebellion in the mid-60s with changes in Khartoum's policies towards Arabisation and Islamisation under General Abboud's rule. Indeed, it was not before Nimeiri acknowledged and addressed the cultural differences and unequal distribution that the foundations for a peace agreement were laid.

The second rebellion is directly linked to the unfulfilled promises of the Addis Ababa Agreement. The agreement directly addressed the issue of RIs and gave Southerners hope that they would be reduced. They were not. While the Southerners' frustration increased with low implementation of the agreement, oil discovery in the South in 1978 ultimately led to both the dismantlement of the agreement and a widening of RIs across all dimensions. When Nimeiri claimed oil revenue for the North, divided the

South into three regions and introduced Sharia Laws for the whole of Sudan the South Sudanese RIs were thus increased along the political dimension through reduced regional autonomy, the economic dimension through the removal of oil revenues, the social social dimension as delivery of social services are linked to the availability of funds, and the cultural dimension with the introduction of religious laws a very small minority of the Southerners identified with. Consequently, increased relative deprivation through increased expectations coincided with a multi-dimensional widening of inequalities.

While the South Sudanese case is relatively convincingly argued as there has been continuous rebellion in the presence of persistent inequalities and increased rebellion with widening inequalities, the cases for the Darfuri and East Sudanese rebellions are less clear cut. Both regions have been marginalized since long before independence and experienced little, if any, improvement as the Sudanese were freed of colonialism. Why did these regions not join the Southern rebellion at independence or in 1983, and what are the immediate causes for the changes from the mid-90s and onwards?

The presence of continuous frustration and violent protest has been stronger in the East than in Darfur. Indeed, the Beja Congress (BC) was the first movement to articulate the argument of (ethno-) regional marginalization in North Sudan, and led a political campaign from 1958 that included the use of violence. However, it was not before they joined forces with SPLA/M and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the mid-90s and later with the Rashaida Free Lions (RFL) in 2005 that we can talk of war in East Sudan. There are thus two distinct changes in the East Sudanese rebellion: the 1993 move to join the North-South civil war; and the 2005 move that led to the creation of the Eastern Front (EF).

The change in the 1990s is linked with the relations between Khartoum and Asmara and the latter's support for NDA and the East Sudanese movements. With considerable Eritrean support and the military backing from the SPLA/M the BC, and subsequently EF, suddenly had the possibility to rebel with increased probability of success. However, conflict intensification in the 1990s can also arguably be linked with RIs, however. In a long term perspective, both Nimieri's rule and the subsequent democratization in 1986 came with significant possibility for these issues to be addressed. They were not, however, and from the 1989 coup and onwards it seems clear that the most likely way to be able to tackle the RIs was through violent means. Thus, while the East Sudanese earlier saw the possibility of

reform through political channels they now found that possibility blocked in the aftermath of the 1989 revolution. Furthermore, it was also evident that the new regime had little intention of addressing inequalities in Sudan. The 1990s and onwards witnessed high economic growth rates coupled with decreased social spending and increased poverty in the marginalized regions (Medani 2008), thus representing a widening of RIs. Referring to the 1990s Medani (2008) argues that in a period of "relatively good economic growth rates (…) incidents of poverty are intensifying and spreading all over the country" (2008: 8).

The 2005 change with the formation of EF is also linked to a continuation of this trend as the East was at the centre of economic growth through agriculture, mining and petroleum without seeing any improvement in terms of the multidimensional RIs. Simultaneously, progress on the CPA meant that Sudan's other marginalized regions – Darfur and the East – found their political and economic RIs widening as the South won a considerable share of the cake. With this development the East Sudanese now found themselves not only marginalized from a centre-periphery perspective but also with a drastic change in the political and economic RIs vis-à-vis the South. The CPA also represented a manifestation of the possibility to address RIs through violent means, and the other marginalized regions consequently sought a similar deal.

Similar mechanisms are present with respect to the Darfuri case, as the Darfuris experienced the same deterioration of their livelihoods in a period of economic growth, and widening political and economic RIs as a result of the CPA. But political violence in Darfur is also closely linked to the influence and support from external forces – in particular the rapid militarization of Darfur in the 1980s. In plain terms, the increased military experience and arms flow created an environment where both intra- and inter-regional disputes and grievances were more likely to be addressed with violent means. And they were: From the late 80s and onwards Darfur witnessed a series of intra-regional conflicts – albeit with significant influence from Khartoum – before JEM and SLA/M directed their frustration and arms against Khartoum in a consolidated effort. Again, this is closely connected with the movements' connections with SPLA/M and external backers, and the increased RIs in presence of progression on the CPA. Indeed, SLA/M had extensive contact with SPLA/M and has stated that their rebellion was timed with the breakthrough in the negotiations. Thus, similar fears of widening RIs help explain the timing of both the East and Darfuri rebellions. However, a major difference between the Eastern and Darfuri movements has been their reliance on external forces, as the Eastern Front (EF) has fragmented

and remained inactive in the absence of external support from Eritrea, while SLA/M in particular has remained active militarily and politically despite weak support from external actors in little success on the ground.

For both the East Sudanese and Darfuri movements, then, a perception of possibilities to address their grievances through the political system combined with politico-economic and military weaknesses seem to have delayed their rebellion. A combination of possibility through increased militarization and external backers, decreased opportunities for change through peaceful means and a widening of social, economic and political inequalities throughout the 1990s and with the CPA process occurred just before conflict ignition in both places. This indicates that while RIs as the underlying causes is affected by other conditions to lead to conflict, changes in the underlying inequalities has affected conflict occurrence in all three (four) cases.

5 Conclusions

This study set out to contribute to the further development on the literature on the relationship between inequality and conflict. While its theoretical assumptions are based on at least fifty years of rich literature it is to a considerable degree drawn directly from the theory of horizontal inequalities articulated by Stewart *et al*. (2008). While RIs have a direct and indirect role in the theoretical HIs literature, it remains largely ignored in most studies. One of the aims of this study was to further the scope of literature by strengthening the focus on the identity group rather than the ethnic group by stratifying groups based on geographic sub-units. The first research question, RQ_1, was consequently: *How can the current paradigm of HIs transcend ethnicity and develop a theory of the relationship between RIs and conflict?*

I have argued that identities are flexible and multi-dimensional, and different identities are given different significance at different times. For the Sudanese cases, the complexity and flexibility of ethnic groups in Sudan renders them inadequate for analytical purposes, and ethnic identity has not been the dominant form of identity in the conflicts. Evidence based on the way the Sudanese rebel movements have been organised, the rhetoric they use and data to back up their claims to be regional movements fighting RIs suggests that regional identity has trumped other identities with respect to the Sudanese civil conflicts. This is not to suggest that other identities have been irrelevant or that the movements have been all-inclusive. In general, other identities, notably tribal identities, have a stronger practical and emotional meaning for the Sudanese. Furthermore, all armed movements in Sudan have been dominated by some tribes at the expense of others, and there has been intra-regional violence in two of the three cases. But what it does suggest, however, is that the major armed movements have aspired to represent the region and that their motivations and goals have been regional. They have also been tribally inclusive, and have been able to draw in members from a large number of tribes. The case in point in Sudan is the SPLA/M – a dominantly Dinka and Nuer movement during the war. It should be noted, however, that the Dinka and the Nuer together constitute a majority of South Sudanese tribes. More importantly, SPLA/M have demonstrated an openness to include leaders and members alike from tribes all over South Sudan, and both the army and the political movement today has an inclusive regional, inter-tribal basis.

This thesis consequently provides both support and critique to the HIs literature. It supports the basic

foundations of the literature which emphasizes the multidimensionality of inequalities and an approach based on groups rather than individuals. On the other hand, however, it is critical to the use of ethnic groups as the units of analyses and proposes to widen the scope of the HIs literature to other identity groups – a shift in focus that is easily applicable with the existing theoretical framework that puts considerable emphasis on the fluidity and flexibility of identity groups. The shift from ethnicity to identity and increased focus on RIs is a shift of methodology rather than theory as the current theoretical paradigm of HIs can easily accommodate groups stratified by other definitions than the ethnicity. As such, this thesis argues for increased focus on RIs within the HIs framework rather than a shift away from the basic assumptions made by the HIs literature. It has demonstrated, however, that ethnic groups are inappropriate units of analyses for the Sudanese cases – a conclusion that should affect the HIs literature in the future.

When the theoretical and methodological justifications required for the RIs framework had been established, the next step was to test the theory on the Sudanese Civil Conflicts. The second research question, RQ$_2$, was consequently: *Can the theory of RIs explain the Sudanese civil conflicts?*

While marginalisation and inequality is an integral part of the most influential studies on Sudan – such as Johnson (2003), Flint and de Waal (2005), Daly (2008) and Collins (2008) – it has not received any attention in the HIs literature. Indeed, the use of the ethnic group as the unit of analyses in the HIs framework renders it unsuitable for the Sudanese context[37]. This study argues that identity is fluid and multidimensional. In Sudan, this is manifested by a multi-layered set of identities, ranging from the very local to large regional, racial and religious identities. In most of Sudan, the tribe and confederations of tribes appear to be the dominant political units that provide the strongest identity. Nonetheless, most Sudanese also identify themselves with vaguely defined regions, and South Sudan, Darfur and East Sudan are long-standing entities and identity markers. In the South Sudanese case, the strength of the South Sudanese identity seems to derive from the cultural, racial and religious differences from most of North Sudan. In Darfur, the history and concept of Darfur as an independent political entity seem to prevail. Similar sentiments are found also in East Sudan, where the perceived

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[37] I am not in a position to assess whether or not this holds generally or whether the diversity of Sudan's people makes it a special case. But if lessons from Sudan are to affect the ethnicity literature it is with the message that its assumption appears simplistic when applied on Sudan's complex pattern of peoples, nations, ethnic groups, religious groups, tribes and communities

particularity of the indigenous Beja also plays a strong part in the continued regional identity. In all the cases, the regions have existed but are now divided into smaller units, but in 2005 and 2006 peace agreements were agreed for all of the regions that thus confirmed their relevance.

I argue that the root cause of the Sudanese civil conflicts is multidimensional RIs. Sudan's peripheral regions are politically, socially, economically and culturally marginalised compared to the Central Riverine elite dominantly from the Shagiyya, Jallien and Dangla tribes concentrated in the Northern region. This elite's firm grip on political power since independence has strengthened already existing socioeconomic RIs, and combined with the development of a militant Islamist ideology with elements of Arab supremacy that has introduced discrimination that constitutes cultural status inequalities the result is that political, social, economic and cultural RIs across Sudan have persisted and at times widened from independence until today. This study has shown that while interethnic inequalities have limited explanatory power multidimensional RIs are a common denunciator at the core of the Sudanese civil conflicts. The RIs in Sudan are summarised in *Table 12*.

Table 12. Regional inequalities in Sudan

	Political inequality	**Economic inequality**	**Social Inequality**	**Cultural inequality**
South Sudan	Comparatively little political power pre-2005	Low degree of government spending. Low relative income pre-2005.	Low scores on social indicators	Religious discrimination. Racism. Tradition of slave trade.
Darfur	Comparatively little political power	Low degree of government spending. Low relative income	Low scores on social indicators	Some documented racism.
East Sudan	Comparatively little political power	Low degree of government spending. Low relative income	Low scores on social indicators	Some documented racism. Linguistic discrimination

The final research question relates to how this findings feed back into the theoretical framework. Thus, the final research question, RQ3, was: *How can lessons from the Sudanese cases develop the RIs*

theory?

The first implication for the theory is that inequalities appear to be the major common causal factor to the Sudanese civil conflicts despite their differences in actors, time and space. As such, this thesis supports the argument that group inequalities – Horizontal Inequalities – can lead to conflict. Indeed, the evidence provided in this thesis provides considerable support to at least six of the ten findings produced by Stewart *et al.* (2008). Recall that they are that are: (1) The probability of conflict occurrence rises where socioeconomic HIs are higher; (2) conflict is more likely where political and socioeconomic HIs are high and run in the same direction, or are consistent; (3) inclusive (or power-sharing) governments tends to reduce the likelihood of conflict; (4) citizenship can be an important source of political and economic exclusion; (5) inequality of cultural recognition among groups is an additional motivation for conflict and cultural "events" can act as a trigger for conflict; (6) perceptions of HIs affect the likelihood of conflict; (7) the presence of natural resource can be a significant cause of separatist conflict, as well as of local conflict, often working through the impact this has on HIs; (8) the nature of the state is of enormous importance in determining whether serious conflict erupts and persists; (9) some HIs are very persistent, even lasting centuries; (10) international policies and statistics are too often blind to the issue of HIs, though national policies are often more progressive in this respect.

For all three Sudanese cases the evidence supports the findings from Stewart *et al.* (2008) that conflicts are more likely where there are experienced – real or perceived – multidimensional group inequalities running in the same direction ((1), (2), (5), (6)). This is the main finding both from this study and from Stewart *et al.* (2008). This study has also confirmed that some of these inequalities have been very persistent (9). Furthermore, as inequalities in political power and government spending are argued to have had a significant effect on conflict occurrence, this thesis also supports the findings related to the nature of the state ((3), (8)). It should be noted, however, that the CPA process – including negotiations on a power-sharing government – is argued to be among the causes for the conflict in Darfur. As such, a move to a more inclusive government increased the likelihood of conflicts among groups that were not represented in the new arrangements. While there are both separatist conflicts and presence of natural resources in South Sudan, it can be argued that this thesis supports finding (7). However, while natural resources and its effect on RIs are argued to be among the causes for the second civil war, this thesis has demonstrated the occurrence of separatist conflicts in South Sudan long before petroleum was

discovered. The support for findings (3) and (7) is thus weaker than for findings (1), (2), (5), (6), (8) and (9). This thesis have not directly addressed citizenship issues (4) and only dealt indirectly with the issue of statistics (10).

The second implication, however, lends little support to one of the basic foundations of the HIs literature as it stands today. Ethnic groups are found not to be suitable units of analyses, and it is thus proposed that the HIs literature investigations re-shift their focus to a broader identity approach and consequently identify and test the theory on other identity groups than ethnic groups. It is argued that for the Sudanese civil conflicts ethnicity does not provide an adequate theoretical understanding of Sudanese group dynamics and ethnic groups are not appropriate units of analyses. While this thesis is concerned exclusively with the Sudanese civil conflicts the inappropriateness of ethnicity both as a concept and specifically as conflict-related units of analyses is likely to be echoed in other cases. Hence, evidence from the Sudanese cases suggests a critical review of the use of ethnicity in other case studies is called for. Directly related to the second implication the third implication is that the Sudanese cases have shown that regions have relevance for identity and that RIs have relevance for grievances that lead to political conflict. Consequently, the HIs literature should widen its scope to include RIs in the analyses. While this thesis does not go beyond the Sudanese cases Østby (2008) has found a positive relationship between RIs and conflict occurrence in a large-N study, which suggest the need for more detailed case studies for a more detailed examinations of the different cases and their causal mechanisms.

For Sudan, the arguments presented in this thesis suggest a more equal distribution of political, social and economic resources and an end to cultural discrimination is required for the country to reach peace – a condition the Sudanese have not yet experienced 54 years into its existence as an independent country. At the time of writing Sudan has just experienced its first multi-party elections in 24 years; an exercise that resulted in landslide victories for the ruling NCP in Khartoum and SPLM in Juba. By July 2011 South Sudan may have independence following the referendum posed to be held on January 9 next year. If an independent South Sudan is to enjoy peace and prosperity it has to avoid making to same mistakes rulers in Khartoum have continuously made since independence. Identity is multidimensional and flexible, and with the potential removal of Khartoum as a very significant "other" it is highly likely that new identity groups will gain relevance. If these are coupled with legitimate claims of inequalities – unequal struggles are likely to emerge, once again, in Sudan.

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