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Bridging research across the subfields of international relations and comparative politics: The case of a secessionist movement in Southern Sudan

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This article demonstrates the potential for rigorous and systematic bridging research across the subfields of comparative politics and international relations. Examining the issue of secessionist movements and a detailed case study of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the article contends that understanding both 'domestic' and 'international' issues are crucial for such a study. In the case of Sudan, it is found that external forces significantly influenced the direction of the secessionist movement and the conflict itself. In particular, the paper documents the involvement of Kenya, Egypt, the United States of America, Multinational Corporations extracting oil and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) concerned with human rights violations. The article concludes by asserting that it is imperative to incorporate tools of analysis from both subfields in order to comprehensively understand and explain the case study at hand and international issues such as secession more broadly.

Key words: Secession, Sudan, civil conflict, comparative politics, international relations.

INTRODUCTION

Within the discipline of Political Science, distinctions and divisions between the subfields of Comparative Politics (CP) and International Relations (IR) are in many ways blurry and at times even appear arbitrary. The common method of distinguishing between the two areas relies on an understanding of CP as the study of that which takes place within states, while IR addresses that which takes place among, or between, states. Although scholars within both subfields have challenged this distinction to a certain extent, the dividing line between IR and CP remains steadfast in many regards. While it has become obvious to most scholars that studying politics within a state cannot be done properly without some understanding of global/international factors and vice versa, systematic attempts to bridge the subfields remain limited. The purpose of this article is to further problematize the division between the aforementioned areas of study by critically examining the complex issues of secession and secessionist movements. In addition, the goal is to use this case study in a way that demonstrates the potential to bridge the two sub-fields. It will become evident that beyond the domestic factors

influencing the formation of a secessionist movement, it is imperative to thoroughly analyze the influence of external actors on the goals, objectives and ultimately the outcomes, of secessionist movements. Thus, studying a secessionist movement requires an approach that bridges CP and IR and also tools of analysis from both subfields. For example, tools from CP used in the study include analyzing comparative literature on secession and comparative political economy, while tools from IR include analyzing foreign policy of states and issues of security between states. Overall, by analyzing the intersection of domestic and external factors influencing the activities of a secessionist movement, this article aims to call into question the rigidity of the boundaries between IR and CP and by extension the differentiation between „domestic“ and „international“ levels of analysis. Furthermore, the article provides a compelling example of systematic, bridging research between the two subfields.

The article will begin by introducing the issue of secession and placing this study within the context of broader literature in the discipline that seeks to bridge CP and IR. The case of Sudan and the Sudan People's

Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) between the years of 1983 - 2005 will then be examined in order to elucidate the intersections and complexities of external and domestic actors surrounding the secessionist struggle in that country. This will involve a brief history of the struggle in Sudan and an examination of selected external actors wielding influence on the secessionist movement's goals and objectives. The five external elements or actors that will be discussed are: (1) the neighbouring African state Kenya; (2) the Egyptian state; (3) the United States of America; (4) the multinational corporations involved in the exploration and extraction of oil; and (5) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as Amnesty International and Christian Aid. The final section of the article will critically assess the implications of this case study as a bridging exercise, and reiterate the necessity of working across the subfields when approaching such research.

BRIDGING RESEARCH: WHERE DOES SECESSION FIT IN?

Scholars within the subfields of both CP and IR have periodically challenged the rigidity of the boundaries between them. For example, an entire issue of the *international studies review* was dedicated to questioning the separation of the subfields in December 2003. The introductory piece in this journal not only denied that the subfields should be separate modes of inquiry, but argued in favour of using a single theory to study politics, which would effectively collapse the „domestic“ and „international“ distinctions (Werner et al., 2003). In addition, certain topics of research have appeared more susceptible, or attractive, to bridging scholarship than others. European Union Studies is a perfect example of an area of study that has attracted a healthy debate regarding where it „fits“ within the discipline, and how tools from both CP and IR are required to conduct rigorous research in the field (Hix, 1994, 1996; Hurrell and Menon, 1996; Pollack, 2005; Warleigh, 2006). Scholars investigating the issue of „democratization“ have also explored multiple avenues for conducting innovative bridging research between CP and IR (Cavatorta, 2005; Schmitz, 2004).

The academic literature on secession and secessionist movements has traditionally been firmly rooted within the subfield of CP. Although scholars such as Horowitz (1994) have acknowledged that „Secession lies squarely at the juncture of internal and international politics...“, most research on the topic has focused largely on the internal elements giving rise to secessionist movements. This research is essential in order to understand both the origins of secessionist claims (Bartkus, 1999; Heraclides, 1991) and also to formulate theories of secession to help explain when a secessionist claim may, or may not, be legitimate (Buchanan, 1991; Lehning, 1998; Moore, 1998;

Welhengama, 2000; and Wellman, 2005). However, understanding external, or international, factors is also imperative in assessing the goals, objectives, strategies, tactics and potential successes of a secessionist movement. Moreover, in order to conduct rigorous and systematic research on a secessionist movement, tools of analysis from both CP and IR must be used, as this case study will demonstrate.

SUDAN AND THE SPLM/A

The civil war in Sudan that lasted from 1983 - 2005 has often been described as an ethnic and religious conflict between the Arab Muslims of the North and the African animist/Christian believers in the South. Yet this deeply divided society is more complex than a simple dichotomy based on ethnicity and religion. Thus, it is important to provide a brief historical context to the conflict and to the formation of the secessionist movement(s) in the South. Studying the complex history of Sudan leads one to understand how the northern and Southern Regions of the country have developed along paths almost entirely isolated from one another. Furthermore, the contact that did occur was essentially counter-productive in establishing a relationship based on mutual respect between the two regions. Whether governed by the Egyptians, British, or Northern Sudanese, the relationship between North and South has historically been based on the subordination, oppression, and/or neglect of the Southern peoples.

Although frontier raiding by the Egyptians into what is now Sudan began in the seventh century (Holt, 1961: 16), it was not until 1820 that the Egyptians, under the Ottoman Empire, took formal control of Sudan. At the time of conquest, the borders drawn by the Turco-Egyptian rulers only roughly resembled those that currently define the state of Sudan. In addition, not all of the territory under the claim of this empire was fully pacified or subjected to their rule. Not only were certain ethnic groups such as the Dinka providing stiff resistance to the conquest (Holt, 1961), but some of the more remote territories that were of no use to the Turks were not tightly governed by the centre. Glickman (2000) summarizes the relationship between the North and South during this period by asserting that, „In the Sudanese economy of the time, Arab northerners and black African southerners generally stood on opposing sides of the flourishing slave trade“. This relationship between centre and periphery, North and South, which was established by the Turks would leave a lasting impression on many people of Sudan. Khalid (1990) expresses this well: What evidence we possess shows that the southern regions of the Sudan exhibited from these times onwards a profound distrust of the Northerners, based largely on the excesses on which the slave trade thrived. The Turks were not intent on developing the region; like Australia to

the Edwardians, the whole Southern lacustrine region was, to the Turks, a territorial acquisition to be plundered and an outlandish belt to which sinners were banished.

While the advent of Turco-Egyptian rule formed the beginning of a Sudanese state, it also marked the genesis of a deep cleavage between the Northern and Southern regions of this new state.

After a brief period of independent rule under the Mahdist state (1881-1899), the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium governed Sudan from 1899 until independence in 1956. Although the forces that took control of Sudan in 1899 were commanded by the British under Kitchener, this was a joint project between the British and the Egyptians, as Egypt had become a British protectorate in 1882 (Khalid, 1990). While the British were unwilling to allow Sudan to be governed exclusively by the Egyptians, it was convenient for the British to use the Egyptian claim to all the territory of Sudan against the claims of other European colonial nations. Hence by agreeing to govern Sudan jointly with the Egyptians, the British were able to maintain all of the territory that defined the Sudanese state during the Turco-Egyptian period. That being the case, the British appointed the governor general for Sudan and ruled with little or no influence from the Egyptians for the remainder of the period before Sudanese independence (Khalid, 1990).

While British rule in Sudan had a profound impact on the division between the North and South of the country, it is important to understand that the Southern Sudanese continued to resist the occupation of their land by the British as they had under previous foreign rulers. For example, "the Nuba Mountains formed a series of pockets of resistance to the Sudan Government as they

had to the Mahdist and Turco-Egyptian regimes previously" (Holt: 41). In addition, the Dinka, who figure prominently in the modern conflict, also resisted British conquest on a number of occasions in the early twentieth century (Khalid: 47). Woodward (1990: 26) notes that "...it was not until 1927 that the last major uprising among the Dinka was put down". This points to the fact that many southerners were still intent on resisting foreign rule, and were not prepared to be part of this country called Sudan.

The British recognized the existence of serious inequality in the political and economic development between northern and southern Sudan. They also recognized the significance of cultural, linguistic, and religious barriers to the integration of these two regions. Their solution, however, was to govern the two regions nearly in isolation from one another (Holt, 1961). Glickman (2000) notes that "...the British promoted Christian missions in the south and established a native administration that followed the pattern of Britain's East African territories of Kenya and Uganda". This served to strengthen the southern identity as an African nation.

Glickman (271) encapsulates the influence of the British in Sudan by asserting, "The British did not create the differences between north and south, but in almost sixty

years did little deliberately to moderate them and much to sharpen them".

The approach of the new government in Khartoum immediately following independence is summarized by Heraclides (1991: 111) as follows:

When the Sudan became independent there was no genuine attempt to redress the striking imbalance between North and South and the extreme inequality and under-representation suffered by the Southerners. Soon it became obvious that in independent Sudan the Southerners were inexorably cast in the role of second-class citizens. Even the educated among them felt the brunt of discrimination and found their opportunities for social mobility decidedly stifled for the foreseeable future.

There was also an attempt by the government to pursue a policy of Arabization and Islamisation throughout southern Sudan. The government started by nationalising mission schools in the South, and eventually changed public holidays from Sunday to Friday in order to bring them in line with the rest of the country (Woodward: 106). Overall, southern goals of separatism at the time of independence have been attributed to the following three factors by Heraclides (112): "(1) the extreme level of inequality, (2) the threat of assimilation posed by the Arab Northerners, and (3) the intransigence of the regime in Khartoum to the claims of the Southern Sudanese for federal status, non-discrimination, and more equitable participation in the country's affairs". The first civil war in Sudan began in 1955, a few months before independence was granted on January 1, 1956, and lasted until 1972 when a peace agreement was signed that granted the South regional autonomy.

Several developments in the late 1970s and early 1980s provided the impetus for a second rebellion in the South against the Sudanese state. These developments include the following actions taken by the government of Sudan: (1) the decision to divide the South into three subdivisions in order to reduce the strength of the dominant ethnic group, the Dinka; (2) the decision to ship oil out of the South to Port Sudan, rather than refine it locally; (3) the development of the Jonglei Canal that was perceived by the southerners to benefit the North and have adverse effects on the South; and (4) the implementation of certain aspects of Islamic Shari'a law (Allan, 2000: 1094). These decisions by the Sudanese government triggered the uprising in 1983 and the second major secessionist war in Sudanese history.

The guerrilla movement that took up arms in 1983 is called the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and is accompanied by a political arm called the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Colonel John Garang, an Iowa State University graduate with a PhD. in economics, led the SPLM/A from 1983 until his death in 2006. It should be mentioned that the SPLA/M from its inception was a diverse collection of interests and factions from the southern region of the country. Splits and wars within the movement took place often throughout

the years, and the politics of southern resistance to the central government constitutes an incredibly complex and multifaceted area of study. See Johnson (2004), especially chapters five through eleven, and Hutchinson (1996) for further reading on this topic. The war claimed approximately two million lives and displaced over four million people (Johnson, 2004: 143). A peace agreement was ultimately reached between the Sudanese government and the SPLM/A in 2005, which promises a referendum on self-determination for the South in 2011.

EXTERNAL ACTORS

On the 17th anniversary of the creation of the SPLM/A, leader John Garang (2000) stated, "At the international level, the SPLM/SPLA will continue to cultivate friendly relations with all the countries of the Region, both in Africa and the Arab World, and with the international community in general". While the response of the international community has ranged from fierce antagonism to active support, Garang has always devoted time and effort to fostering these relationships. He would agree with Horowitz's earlier statement regarding the importance of international support in order to create a legitimate oppositional struggle, and the drive to foster solid relationships with external players has been a major focus of the secessionist movement in Sudan. Remaining broad in scope, I will assess the influence of several external forces in order to express the complexity of their involvement and the manner in which these forces intermingle and sometimes collide. The first state – Kenya – was chosen in order to provide one example of the importance of surrounding African states in the conflict. Egypt was selected in order to demonstrate the role of geopolitical factors, such as the location and strategic importance of the Nile River, in assessing this case. The third state under investigation – The United States of America – is included due to the significant role played by the global hegemon in influencing conditions on the ground. The oil companies and oil development in general, have a profound impact on the scope and scale of the conflict, and thus constitute the fourth external actor in this study. Finally, the place of NGOs as additional non-state actors is included in order to demonstrate the complexity of human rights monitoring in zones of conflict.

KENYA

For both the government of Sudan and the secessionist movement in the South of Sudan, relations with neighbouring African states have been a high priority. Many states surrounding Sudan have oscillated during the conflict between overt support for the secessionist movement and a pledge to support peace talks with the

government of Sudan. Yet overall, the support of African states has been more with the SPLM/A than with the government of Sudan. This has enabled the secessionist movement to prosper by supplying it with military and diplomatic bases, and also the legitimacy required to continue armed resistance (or peaceful negotiations). By the late 1990s President Bashir of Sudan realized this and began devoting more time and effort to fostering better relations with African countries in the region. In December 2000, Bashir claimed: "We have made considerable steps in our relations with Africa which once used to listen only to (rebel leader John) Garang but now it listens to the (Khartoum) government" (Sudan delays..., 2000). While efforts by Bashir have succeeded in improving some of Sudan's relations in Africa, most African states have played a large role in keeping the SPLM/A alive and well throughout the war.

One example of a neighbouring state with an active interest in the conflict is Kenya. The Kenyan government has played an important role in mediating between the warring parties in Sudan and attempting to initiate a lasting peace. Former President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya took a leadership role in the formation and pursuit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiative to realize peace in Sudan. IGAD is a body comprised of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan that has a mandate to promote development and economic cooperation among its members. While Moi has initiated much of the discussion in IGAD related to the conflict in Sudan, he has also worked one-on-one with President Bashir of Sudan. In these discussions Moi has suggested that "...the Sudanese government include freedom of religion and worship in its constitution and that southern Sudan be granted autonomy, within an acceptable non-federal or federal structure" (Moi Calls for..., 2001). Both of these suggestions have been made by the SPLM/A on various occasions without success, yet the fact that Moi also represents these interests adds legitimacy to Garang's demands. The path for accepting a lasting peace becomes more possible to the SPLM/A when states such as Kenya are promoting a peace that may be acceptable to the movement. Therefore the shape of the secessionist movement can potentially turn towards a peaceful resolve if the right issues are discussed and accepted by both parties. However, this process is rendered helpless if sufficient outside pressure and direction are not given by reputable third parties such as the Kenyan government. In this way, the Kenyan efforts helped steer the SPLM/A in a direction of peace that was not previously available.

Aside from participating in various peace talks and initiatives, the Kenyan state has influenced Garang's movement in one other crucial way. Garang resided in Nairobi and was free to conduct the activities of the SPLM/A from Kenyan soil. The fact that he was permitted to reside in Kenya once again adds legitimacy to the movement. The Nairobi base provided Garang with a

respectable venue in which to host guests from other countries that may have been sympathetic to the movement. Influential members of the international community would be much more apt to give an audience to a rebel leader residing in Nairobi, than to one who has been denied entrance into a countless number of countries. This circumstance has influenced the shape and goals of the secessionist movement by providing them with the legitimacy to be heard in the international community.

The example of Kenya is intended to provide a glimpse into the complexity of relations between surrounding African states and the secessionist movement in southern Sudan. Other African states in the region have played an equally important role in shaping the goals and objectives of the SPLM/A. Moreover, a comprehensive analysis of these actors would include details regarding the actions of the Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Ugandan states vis-à-vis the protracted conflict in Sudan. For example, the Sudanese and Ugandan governments supported rebel forces on either side of the border for years, and Ugandan material support for the SPLM/A was crucial throughout much of the conflict. Overall, the point should be clear that neighbouring states in the region play an important role in determining many of the challenges and opportunities faced by the secessionist movement.

THE EGYPTIAN STATE

The second external factor of importance to the secessionist movement in southern Sudan is the state of Egypt, and by extension, other Arab states in the region. The Sudanese government's close ties to the Arab world, in particular Egypt, have presented the SPLM/A with an immense obstacle to fulfilling their goal of statehood. Khartoum's allies in Egypt are strongly against southern secession in Sudan, which has forced Garang's movement to alter their strategy significantly. Although space does not permit, a more detailed analysis of Sudanese relations with Arab/Islamic states would extend beyond a discussion of Egypt. However, as the Egyptian state has been most deeply invested in the conflict, and is historically more connected to the Sudanese state, this will be sufficient for providing an introductory glance at the complexities involved.

The Egyptian influence in Sudan is a phenomenon that possesses deep historical roots. In addition to the historical ties described above during the pre-independence period, between 1958 and 1972 Cairo steadfastly supported the Sudanese government in their war against the southern Sudanese seeking to secede (Prunier, 1998). Egyptian concerns with Sudan have continued to the present day, due in part to the fact that Sudan shares the Nile waters with Egypt. Egypt maintains that the unity of Sudan is integral to the national security of Egypt, as security on the Nile River is a vital component of Egyptian

foreign policy (Egypt's Moussa..., 2001). Egypt is eager to ensure that they are not dealing with an additional party with respect to the Nile, which would be the outcome of southern Sudan attaining statehood. Hence Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has stated in discussions with George W. Bush that the "partition of Sudan was not an option" (Partition of Sudan..., 2001). This stance taken by Mubarak carries weight in the international community and has been a constant impediment to the secessionist goals of the SPLM/A.

The SPLM/A has devoted a considerable amount of time and energy attempting to convince Egypt, and other members of the international community, that they are not a secessionist movement. Garang has written and spoken extensively concerning the SPLM/A's objectives of maintaining a unified Sudan. Yet the contradictions in Garang's literature between seeking self-determination and creating a new, unified Sudan have not been overlooked by Mubarak. Analyst Prunier (1998: 11) summarizes the attempts by Garang to soothe the fears of Egypt as follows:

The visit by SPLA leader John Garang to Egypt in November-December 1997 was presented at the time as a significant breakthrough for the SPLA. In fact, it was almost the opposite. In spite of his efforts at reassuring his hosts, Garang scared them. They did not believe his pledge to keep the Sudan united and "respect Islam" and they almost immediately moved towards Khartoum after he left.

Garang's tactical ploy of presenting his movement as one that favours a united Sudan has not fooled any conscientious observers of events in Sudan; nevertheless, this strategy has been employed diligently in an attempt to appease external forces such as the Egyptian state.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Before the rise to power of Bashir in 1989, the US government had been generally favourable to the government of Sudan, especially under former president Nimeiri. It was during this period that the SPLM/A was positioned solidly in the socialist camp, to use Cold War terminology, while the government of Sudan was on the side of the USA (Garang, 1992: 23). Yet with the ascent to power of Bashir in 1989, US policy towards the government of Sudan took an abrupt turn. Since that time, the US state has been one of the severest critics of the Sudanese government (Allan, 2000: 1102). It is now common knowledge that wanted terrorist Osama bin Laden has had close connections in the past to the Sudanese government in Khartoum, and that the base of his organization al-Qaeda was working out of Khartoum for a number of years in the 1990s. While Sudanese officials adamantly deny any involvement in helping bin Laden's group (Sudan Denie, 2001), this did not affect the stance

of the USA in their approach to Sudan until the post 9/11 period, at which point the Sudanese state became slightly more cooperative in the „War on Terror“.

During the years of the Clinton administration, US foreign policy towards Sudan consisted of repeated attempts to isolate the regime in Khartoum by way of diplomatic and economic sanctions, pressure on the UN to punish Sudan, and military aggression. A number of actions have been taken by the USA in order to achieve this end: (1) Sudan was placed on the US list of state sponsors of terrorism; (2) in November 1997 severe economic sanctions were placed on Sudan by the USA; (3) in April 1998 a resolution introduced by the US was adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights which called on Sudan to improve its human rights record; and (4) the US launched a missile attack on a factory complex near Khartoum that was suspected of producing chemical weapons (Allan, 2000: 1102). The pressure on Sudan continued in late 2000 when Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice visited southern Sudan without the permission of the Sudanese government. Rice's secret foray led to her condemnation of Sudan's record on human rights:

The Government of Sudan has said on many occasions to the United States bilaterally, to many other international actors, and in many international fora, that it is changing its behavior, that it's reforming its policies, that it is improving its human rights record. But I am afraid to say that I saw precious little evidence of that over the last two days. On the contrary, I saw stories and people and evidence of abuse after abuse. (Rice Arrival..., 2000)

The second Bush administration re-ignited concerns over the manner in which the Sudanese government was conducting the war. President Bush asserted in 2001 that "We must turn the eyes of the world upon the atrocities in Sudan...Sudan is a disaster area for all human rights, but the right of conscience has been singled out for special abuse by the Sudanese authorities" (Sudan Slams..., 2001). In addition, Secretary of State Colin Powell (McGrory, 2001: B01) posited: "There is perhaps no greater tragedy on the face of the Earth today than the tragedy that is unfolding in the Sudan" (McGrory, 2001: B01). Several members of the US House of Representatives have also joined the fight against Khartoum by proposing restrictions on access to US capital markets for corporations conducting business in Sudan (Alden, 2000).

The Sudanese government's connections with bin Laden, and its egregious human rights record, both worked to the advantage of the SPLM/A by isolating the regime in Khartoum, particularly with regard to the Western world. Garang repeatedly attempted to publicize these issues, as in 2000 when he stated: "On the political front, the regime has become isolated and condemned both regionally and internationally" (Sudan: Bashir..., 2000). By portraying the government of Sudan in this manner, the SPLM/A gains credibility in the eyes of the

international community as a movement that is fighting a "just war." Consequently, this phenomenon directed the strategy of Garang's movement towards continued armed resistance, rather than pressing for a peaceful resolution. By extensively documenting and condemning the human rights violations committed by the government of Sudan, the US government provided Garang with a morally justified position in continuing the war.

The US government has also provided material and moral support to the SPLM/A. It was the largest contributor to relief operations in Sudan during the 1990s, donating more than \$1 billion (Rice, 2001: 1). Although some of these funds have gone to civilians in government-controlled areas, the majority has been sent to areas held by or fought over by rebels of the SPLA (England, 2000: 3). Moreover, much of this financial support aided the rebels in developing infrastructure, information technologies, and provided basic necessities for the survival of many Sudanese people (England, 2000: 3). With the availability of aid from the global hegemon, the SPLM/A has been afforded the opportunity of continuing their war of resistance to the central government in Sudan. Without this support, the goals of the SPLM/A would have been severely limited.

MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES

American oil giant Chevron was the first corporation to sign a deal with the Sudanese government over the exploration and extraction of oil from southern Sudan. Making the deal in 1983, Chevron pulled out of Sudan shortly thereafter due to unrest in the country, leaving the potentially massive oil reserves dormant until the late 1990s (Garang, 1992: 23). The onset of oil production in late 1999 has caused a great deal of controversy surrounding the conflict in Sudan. Many analysts believe that oil production has fundamentally altered the nature of the conflict, and the objectives of all parties involved.

The Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company Limited (GNPOC) operates the most significant oil production facility in Sudan. This consortium was comprised of Talisman Energy Inc. (25%) until they left Sudan in 2003 and were replaced by India's state oil company; the China National Petroleum Corporation (40%); the national petroleum company of Malaysia, Petronas (30%); and the national petroleum company of Sudan, Sudapet (5%) (Talisman Energy Inc., 2000: 1). The importance of external investors and developers in Sudan's oil sector is immense; without the technology and capital provided from the outside, the oil fields would not be exploited.

Oil wealth has provided the people of Sudan with an unprecedented opportunity for economic development and growth. Yet in a situation of civil war, often times the benefits from such a project accrue only to a fraction of the country's population. Ultimately, this has been the

case in Sudan with regard to the production of oil. The estimated oil revenue received by the government of Sudan during the latter stages of the conflict was roughly \$300 million per year. Since oil production began, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports that Bashir's increase in military expenditure has been approximately equal to the revenue received from oil (Sudan's Oil..., 2000). Thus, it has become increasingly apparent that oil production was directly fuelling Khartoum's war efforts in the South.

Aside from oil revenues financing Khartoum's military campaign against the southern Sudanese, foreign oil companies have been forced to respond to other accusations of complicity in crimes against humanity. The first accusation is that of forced evacuations of peoples inhabiting oil rich land. This accusation has been made by the United Nations and several NGOs operating in the territories under scrutiny (UN Asks..., 2001). The second allegation against the oil companies is that the government of Sudan periodically uses the consortium's facilities to launch aerial bombardments against villages surrounding the oil concessions. This allegation has also been well documented by several reliable sources, including Talisman Energy Inc. Their Corporate Social Responsibility Report for 2000 (Talisman Energy, 2000: 17) concluded that, "...we believe that there were at least four instances of non-defensive usage of the Heglig airstrip in 2000" (Talisman Energy, 2000: 17).

Thus the discovery of oil in southern Sudan, and the participation of foreign oil companies in extracting it, has had important implications for Garang's movement. First, the additional revenues collected by the central government have weakened the SPLM/A militarily. Second, forced evacuations of oil concession land have expanded the war to include new fronts. Third, GNOPC facilities have aided the government of Sudan in conducting the war in the South. Finally, the fact that companies from the West such as Talisman have agreed to conduct business with the regime in Khartoum has lent moral cover to the government of Sudan and their brutal military campaign in southern Sudan. This image competes with Garang's attempts to portray the government of Sudan in a negative light to the international community.

One of the chief objectives of the SPLM/A since oil began flowing has been to disrupt the production of oil, thereby halting the flow of oil revenues to the government of Sudan. Two methods have been employed to reach this end: (1) attacking and/or threatening to attack oil facilities and personnel; and (2) mounting an international campaign against oil development in southern Sudan. The tactic of using military means to disrupt the flow of oil was first implemented in 1983 by Garang's movement against Chevron. Chevron was forced to suspend operations in Sudan in 1984 after the SPLA executed three of their expatriate workers (Amnesty International, 2000: 10). With the advent of oil production in 1999, the threat and use of force against foreign oil companies has

once again surfaced (Sudan Rebels..., 2001). The second method has been to work with various external actors in mounting an international campaign against oil development in Sudan until there is a comprehensive peace agreement between the warring parties. This campaign has involved working with the United Nations and various NGOs in order to publicize the alleged "scorched earth policy" implemented to remove residents from the oil concessions, and the fact that oil facilities have been used as a launching point for attacks against civilians. This has resulted in the United Nations asking companies operating in Sudan to "reconsider their operations" (UN Asks..., 2000). Overall, the foreign corporations' entry into southern Sudan has directed the SPLM/A to shape their movement in a manner that is hostile to the development of oil reserves.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)

NGOs had an active and eventful presence in war-torn southern Sudan during the conflict, and their influence on the conflict, and subsequently on the goals of the SPLM/A, are many. First, the provision of food aid in Sudan has been vital to the long-term survival of the SPLM/A. Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), operated by the United Nations and 35 NGOs, delivered tens of thousands of tonnes of food each year to Sudan (Scraps in Sudan..., 2000:46). Depending on the year, between one and four million Sudanese were usually dependent on food aid for survival (Allan, 2000: 1106). The influence this had on the war has been considerable: "Foreign supplies of food may well prolong the war in Sudan. Rebels and government soldiers alike have long taken what they needed from deliveries by aid agencies, which can do little about it" (Scraps in Sudan..., 2000: 46)." The delivery of food aid became integral to the survival of both civilians and soldiers in many areas of southern Sudan during the conflict. Without the support of foreign NGOs, Garang's movement would perhaps not have had the option of continuing an armed struggle against the Sudanese state.

The work of many NGOs in southern Sudan also contributed greatly to the outside world's perception of the conflict. Several NGOs have been scrupulous in their attacks on the government of Sudan for human rights abuses such as aerial bombing of civilian targets, endorsing slavery, preventing international food aid from reaching certain areas of southern Sudan, and supporting militia groups that kill, rape, and loot in the villages indiscriminately. For example, the International Committee of the Red Cross reported in January 2001 that their facilities were looted by Arab militia loyal to the government of Sudan (Red Cross..., 2001). In similar fashion, Doctors Without Borders suspended its operations in southern Sudan in August 2000 due to "a wave of bomb attacks by government aircraft, which

narrowly missed one of its health centers" (Allan, 2000: 1107). The participation of these organizations in southern Sudan has created a reliable and internationally respected source of information regarding the conduct of the war. This has lent legitimacy to the cause of SPLM/A, as these reports have discredited the Sudanese government.

Although NGOs operating in Sudan have usually been more critical of human rights abuses perpetrated by the government of Sudan, they have also criticized the rebel movement. For example, Amnesty International (AI) shed light on abuses committed by the SPLA in its 1995 campaign against human rights violations in Sudan (Allan, 2000: 1107). In May of 2000 Amnesty International (2000: 20) called on the SPLA: to publicly condemn human rights abuses committed by their forces in the context of the civil war; to publicly state their commitment to observing Article 3 of the Geneva conventions and Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions at all times and to take active measures to ensure the protection of civilians in the war zones; and to allow unrestricted access for humanitarian agencies and independent human rights monitors, including United Nations special rapporteurs, to all areas under their control.

The participation of agencies such as AI worked to publicize human rights abuses on both sides of the conflict, forcing Garang to be accountable for the actions of the SPLA. These accusations against the SPLM/A have prompted Garang to alter the shape of the movement in order to defend its reputation among the international community. When questioned about criticism of the SPLA's human rights record, Garang offered the following comments:

As a liberation movement, the SPLA/SPLM is in first place a human-rights movement. We are fighting for the rights of our people. We could never go into the bush to make our people suffer. It is for human dignity, for human rights that we fought. It is true that we have been criticized by some human-rights groups. Some of the mistakes that happen are not mistakes of policy, but rather a war situation in which you have in places outlaws, people who are against anybody, any form of law (Gutman, 2001).

Thus, Garang portrays the objective of the movement as a battle for human rights and human dignity. Moreover, this openly stated goal of the movement has been in direct response to the accusations made by groups such as AI.

The fourth and final effect NGOs had on the shape and goals of the secessionist movement in southern Sudan has centered on the issue of oil development. Ceasing the production of oil until a lasting peace has been accomplished was one of the central goals of the SPLM/A. Yet without the assistance of several outspoken NGOs on the issue, Garang's movement would be helpless in promoting this goal. Agencies such as Amnesty International and Britain's Christian Aid have played a vital role in bringing the issue of oil in Sudan to the

attention of the international community. Both of these organizations have issued scathing reports on oil companies operating in Sudan that call for a moratorium on oil exploration and development in Sudan. Amnesty International states unequivocally: "Government forces have used ground attacks, helicopter gunship and indiscriminate high-altitude bombardment to clear the local population from oil-rich areas" (2000). In a similar fashion Christian Aid asserts: "In village after village, government troops are bombing, strafing and attacking from the ground to empty the land of civilians" (2001). These reports are aimed at establishing a direct line of complicity between the human rights abuses and foreign oil companies operating in Sudan such as Talisman Energy Inc. Moreover, the work done by these agencies has prompted the SPLM/A to actively assist groups such as Christian Aid in establishing the connection between human rights abuses committed by the government of Sudan and the operation of foreign oil companies in the region. Recognizing the potential benefits of the work done by these agencies, Garang has shaped the movement in an effort to facilitate such endeavors.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The case study presented in this article demonstrates the potential for rigorous bridging research between the subfields of CP and IR. Moreover, the complex topics of secession and secessionist movements require tools of analysis from both subfields, as understanding both „domestic“ and „international“ factors is integral to a thorough assessment of the secessionist struggle in Sudan. From the CP tradition, the following tools were utilized in this study: (1) comparative literature regarding the topic (understanding both the theoretical and empirical literature on secession); (2) a detailed case study (assessing the SPLM/A from 1983-2005); (3) taking history seriously (understanding the long and complex history of North-South relations in Sudan); (4) comparative political economy (understanding the political economy of Sudan historically, and in the contemporary period); (5) assessing state and non-state actors (understanding the role of the Sudanese state, rebel forces, NGOs, the private sector, etc.); and finally (6) analyzing political institutions and systems of government (understanding these institutions and structures in the colonial and post-colonial periods).

Yet several tools of analysis traditionally confined to the subfield of IR were also employed in this study, including:

(1) examining the foreign policy of states (the impact of the Egyptian, Kenyan, and US states on the secessionist movement); (2) assessing issues of state security (the importance of Nile waters for the Egyptian state); (3) international political economy (understanding the role of oil development in the conflict); and (4) assessing issues such as the human security agenda and human rights in international politics (understanding the role of

International NGOs in the Sudanese conflict).

None of this is to suggest that scholars within either CP or IR have not been, and are not currently, aware of the importance of understanding the intersections of „domestic“ and „international“ conditions. However, as Lim (273) argues, scholars need to “think explicitly, rigorously, and systematically about the *interrelationship* between the „global context“ and „local conditions“ [his emphasis]” (Lim, p. 273). Overall, the point of this case study is to suggest that in order to undertake a thorough investigation of the secessionist movement in southern Sudan, it is imperative to consider methodologies and tools of analysis from both CP and IR. Furthermore, this implies that the boundaries between subfields may not be entirely appropriate, and could in fact act as an obstacle to conducting rigorous research of international political issues such as secession. If one is encouraged to conform to the traditional divisions of labour between studying „domestic“ and „international“ factors, serious bridging research may be hindered, rendering the research incomplete and lacking a more holistic perspective. Political Science students and scholars should be encouraged to borrow generously, but systematically, across the two subfields in order to understand the important interrelationships described by Lim. The hope is that innovative strategies around conducting systematic and rigorous research addressing concrete issues, such as secession, will continue to be tested and assessed.

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