REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

STATEHOOD AND STATE FRAGILITY IN SOUTH SUDAN SINCE 2011

MASTER'S THESIS

Brahima BILALI

Department: International Relations

Supervisor: Associate Professor Osama Amour

JUNE - 2020

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	**:**	Addis Ababa Agreement
ANR	**:**	Anya Nya Rebellion
CPA	**:**	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDR	**:**	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
GoS	**:**	Government of Sudan
GoSS	**:**	Government of South Sudan
IGAD	**:**	Intern-Governmental Authority on Development
NCP	**:**	National Congress Party
NDA	**:**	National Democratic Alliances
NIF	**:**	National Islamic Front
SALW	**:**	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SRG	**:**	Southern Regional Government
SPLM	**:**	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLA	**:**	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SSLM	**:**	Southern Sudan Liberation Movement
SSP	**:**	South Sudanese Pound

Sakarya University
Institute of Social Sciences Abstract of Thesis

Master's Degree ■	**Ph.D.** ☐
Title of Thesis: Statehood and State Fragility in South Sudan Since 2011	
Author of Thesis: Brahima BILALI	**Supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Osama AMOUR
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The post-independence period revealed a decaying South Sudanese state. In this regard, this study aims to determine the possible dynamics or factors underlying state fragility in South Sudan after independence. The findings of the study reveal five main factors underlying state fragility in South Sudan. Firstly, the South Sudanese state became greatly challenged in the maintenance of its internal sovereignty. It failed to exert control of some parts of its external borders and remained unable to properly organized its internal boundaries. It showed an incapacity to provide basic services to its population without external assistance and was confronted with internal divisions due in part to the lack of national consensus over the form of government to adopt. Secondly, it suffered from a security fragility in the sense of an incapacity to control means of violence, failure of security sector reform, and high susceptibility towards cyclical acts of violence. Thirdly, from an institutional and political perspective, it lacked stable and reliable structures mainly because of the predominance of patronage practices, the constant power struggle between elites, and the inimical impact of the legacy of past liberation struggle on accountability and good governance. Fourthly, the economic structures of the country became tainted by a resource curse, which transformed the existing oil wealth into a source of economic dependency and conflict, by practices of rentierism and economic patronage and by a very low level of underdevelopment. Finally, the social foundations of the country became confronted with vertical and horizontal vulnerabilities. Horizontally, there was an identity crisis due to the lack of social harmony between citizens who tended to identify themselves along with their ethnicity rather than according to a common citizenship. The absence of harmony displayed a fragmented social structure within which ethnic hostilities became common between communities. Vertically, state-society relations were marked, on the one hand, by elites' incapacity or unwillingness to invest in social development to guarantee the provision of basic services and, on the other hand, by a disillusioned population in face of their shattered social expectations and hope.

Keywords: South Sudan, Statehood, State Fragility, Post-independence, Instability

Sakarya Üniversitesi
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Yüksek Lisans [■]	**Doktora** [ ]
Tezin Başlığı: 2011 Sonrası Güney Sudan'da Devlet ve Devlet Kırılganlığı	
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Bağımsızlık sonrası dönemde Güney Sudan devletinin çökmekte olduğunu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma bağımsızlıktan sonra Güney Sudan'da devlet kırılganlığının altında yatan olası dinamikleri veya faktörleri belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları, Güney Sudan'da devlet kırılganlığına sebep olan beş ana faktörü ortaya koymaktadır. Birincisi, Güney Sudan devleti iç egemenliğinin sürdürülmesinde büyük zorluklarla karşılaşmıştır. Dış sınırlarının bazı kısımları kontrolünü edemezken iç sınırlarını da düzene koyamamıştır. Ülke, dışarıdan yardım almadan vatandaşlarına temel hizmetler sunma konusunda yetersizlik göstermiş ve benimsenecek yönetim biçimi konusunda ulusal fikir birliği bulunmadığı için iç bölünmelerle karşı karşıya kalmıştır. İkincisi, şiddetin kontrol altına alınamaması, güvenlik sektörü reformunun başarısızlığı ve döngüsel şiddet eylemlerine karşı sürekli mağdur kalması sebeplerinden dolayı bir güvenlik çöküşü yaşamıştır. Üçüncüsü, kurumsal ve politik açıdan bakıldığında, esas olarak kleptokrasi yönetim biçiminin ağır basması, ulusal liderler arasındaki devamlı güç mücadelesi olması ve geçmiş kurtuluş mücadelesinin mirasının hesap verebilirlik ve iyi yönetişim üzerindeki kötü etkisi nedeniyle ülke, istikrarlı ve güvenilir yapılardan yoksun olmuştur. Dördüncüsü, ülkenin ekonomik yapıları kaynak laneti, rantçı ve kleptokratik uygulamalar ve çok düşük bir azgelişmişlik ile lekelenmiştir. Son olarak, Güney Sudan'ın sosyal temelleri dikey ve yatay zayıflıklar ile karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Yatay olarak, kendilerini ortak bir vatandaşlıkla ilişkilendirmekten ziyade etnik kökenleriyle birlikte tanımlama eğiliminde olan vatandaşlar arasındaki sosyal uyum eksikliğinden dolayı ülkede bir kimlik krizi yaşanmıştır. Dikey olarak, devlet-toplum ilişkileri, bir yandan, elitlerin temel hizmetlerin sağlanmasını garanti etmek için sosyal kalkınmaya yatırım yapma yetersizliği veya isteksizliği ve diğer yandan da karşılanmamış sosyal beklentileri karşısında hayal kırıklığına uğramış vatandaşlar tarafından kötü yönde etkilenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Güney Sudan, Devlet, Devlet Kırılganlığı, Bağımsızlık Sonrası, İstikarsızlık

INTRODUCTION

General Perspective and Problem Statement

From the perspective of societies in non-Western world, the second half of the 20th century represented the beginning of their juridical existence in the international system as independent and free states. The rise of nationalistic and anti-colonialist movements and the promotion of the principle of self-determination contributed to the emergence of multiple nation-states. While these new states' influence in shaping international politics remained inconsequential, internally and externally, they benefited, for the most part, from a relative stability. Throughout the Cold-War, most probably because of superpowers' support, most of the newly independent nations' existence as independent actors within the international system were secure from external military hostilities, as opposed the prevailing dynamics during the first half of the 20th century. The Cold-war wasn't tantamount to total peace for these independent states which, occasionally, were subject to low-intensity conflict and political violence such as military coups, but it constituted a period of controlled tensions and indirect confrontations for powers, and secured existence for small states.

However, the end of the Cold War, which gave way to the total predominance of the western liberal order in the international system, was immediately followed by the abrupt yet devastative intrastate instabilities. Genocides and civil wars became the new face of the challenges facing nations, especially those from the Third-World. The nature of the threats was no longer based on mutual antagonisms between nations but was rather determined by prevailing internal dynamics of states. This situation has been particularly true for most of the countries that gained their independence in African during the second half of the 20th century. The end of global bipolarity coincided with, or rather contributed to expose, the inherent vulnerability of many African states. They were confronted by many internal contradictions, ranging from political violence to economic crisis to interethnic conflict. The exacerbation of this particular condition of these states contributed to the emergence of the concept of state failure or state fragility as a new dynamic of the international system. That is to say, (African) states were confronted to

internal situations that greatly undermined their stability, causing their dysfunction as entities supposed to properly govern their populations.

The late 20th century and early 21st century put state fragility at the forefront of global security and development challenges, as the internal dynamics of states continued to result in civil wars, humanitarian crises, proliferation of terrorist networks, etc. African states became particularly at the center of global policy-making strategies, security and development visions for the continent started being oriented towards strengthening these states' capacity in terms of economic and political rule. State fragility represents a major obstacle to stability and continuously has exposed the dire limitations of governance in the African context. Against this backdrop, it became crucial to analyze and understand fragility, its development and implications in African country in general and, in our case, South Sudan in particular.

Our research case focuses on South Sudan because of two main reasons. First, the country represents the newest African state to gain its independence as a result of armed struggle that lasted for a long time. This achievement constitutes one of the fewest exceptions in the post-colonial history of African nations, as, while internal conflicts have been widespread in the continent, secessionist ideas and actions have most of the time struggled to materialize themselves because of the prevalence of ideology of political unity and pan-Africanism. South Sudan achieved its secession from Sudan, making it the sole African state to have succeeded that in this 21st century and one of the very few in the entire post-colonial African history. For that reason, understanding the dynamics of statehood in the country appears crucial. Secondly, the inherent contradictions, and mainly, the outbreak of civil war in 2013 have appeared as well-founded reasons that could push analysists to interrogate themselves about the inherent struggle and challenges of statecraft in South Sudan.

After decades of violent armed struggle, South Sudan gained its independence in 2011, as a fruit of self-determination and a project of nation-building based on the promise of peace, freedom and stability. The financial support of the international community, the high level of participation of the South Sudanese population to a referendum on their

political future, and the national leaders' apparent commitment to national liberation all-together represented immediate factors that led to the emergence of an independent South Sudan. As the newest independent African nation, the country immediately benefited from an international recognition and assistance, both the population and their new leaders showed an eagerness to start anew a chapter of political, social, and economic change that would benefit to all citizens. Being a resource-rich country, it also had a material advantage that could allow it to be less independent to external partners in the financing and implementation of its strategies of development.

However, within a short period after its independence, the country started to show internal dynamics that progressively made it appear as a failing state. The apparition of disruptive internal dynamics made the question of fragility very relevant in the new state. Decades of national liberation struggles, years of political maneuvers, and international support favored the emergence of South Sudan as a country ready to rule itself. Yet, in the years that immediately followed independence, the country became more and more associate to situations of fragility, especially with the sudden outbreak of civil conflict in 2013.

Research Question and Purpose

South Sudan fought for decades for its national freedom and political autonomy. After an interim period during which it prepared a referendum for its political future, the country decided to secede from Sudan, becoming the newest independent African nations. Yet, after its independence, it emerged as a weak and fragile state, falling into an internal armed conflict and a severe humanitarian crisis. Hence, why did South Sudan end up turning into a fragile state, despite all the past years of state-making efforts that preceded the independence? In other terms, what are the underlying structural factors of state fragility in South Sudan after its accession to independence?

Throughout this research problem, this work aims to explain the core elements associated to weak statehood in South Sudan. Taking from this specific angle, we will exclusively shed a light on issues and not solutions related to governance, security, and development in the post-independence South Sudan. The exploration and explanation of the challenges

disrupting the South Sudanese state' stability or contributing to its incapacity to properly function will be undertaken from a multidimensional perspective, as the understanding of complex phenomenon such as state fragility would require a meticulous analysis.

Determining the core causes of fragility will help understand the fundamental internal disruptions of that country. Although proper strategies of state-making or state-building are crucial in overcoming structural problems confronted by the South Sudanese state, the first and most important condition in bringing about durable and reliable state structures deals with exhibiting the root factors of weak governance and statehood.

Research Methodology and Data Collection

Our research problem deals with the structural factors of state fragility in South Sudan. In order to find answers to our research problem, we adopted a qualitative method of research and analysis. A quantitative method offers a numerical or statistical analysis of collected data, but overall it doesn't fit our approach here, given the nature of our research problem. Instead, we focus on an explanatory case study which offers the possibility to demonstrate, through a throughout analytical approach, the reasons why South Sudan appeared as a fragile state.

For the collection of data, the study used multiple secondary sources. In this regard, we used different types of sources available in the literature. We made use of books and articles for the most part of our research. Sources dealing with elements in connection to instability, conflict, governance, security, and underdevelopment in South Sudan constituted the major part of our inquiry. The analysis of these sources helped explore the important factors that appeared to have contributed to the fragility of the South Sudanese State.

Relevant Background Literature and Significance of the Study

The literature on fragility is abundant as the subject has been, since the late 90s, a very-discussed topic among policy-makers and researchers. After the end of the Cold War, the fact that more small and independent countries appeared in the international scene with

specific problems related to their internal stability, international organizations started focusing more on the matter of state failure as a challenge to security and development. Scholars also begun to analyze the subject with more academic depth as many nations were facing instability due more to domestic dynamics than external factors.

From the start of struggle for national liberation until the secession from Sudan, the Southern Sudan region has been the object of academic curiosity regarding its politics, its statehood and nation-building efforts. And after the region access to independence, the challenges that were awaiting its state-building efforts and not much later the internal armed conflict and political crisis have been subjects of analysis in the literature.

Richard Cockett (2016) examines the political history of Sudan, which is very complex and has been mostly been dominated by violent conflict and social unrest. The different civil wars that occurred in Sudan, the nature of the political regime adopted, the failure of building a national unity and the adoption of state repression in national issues all represent crucial elements in the understanding of statehood in Sudan. It is also from that unstable political climate that South Sudan was born, inheriting in the same time of the social, political and economic challenges that existed during the Sudanese rule. But despite gaining its independence as a ‘’new nation’’, South Sudan continue to face challenges of the ‘'old ways’' of political unrest determined this time by internal dynamics.

Clemence Pinaud (2014) tackles the question of the instability of the South Sudanese state and links it to the predatory methods of the military elite ruling the country. The political institutions and the economic resources serve the personal interests of the military class in power, creating an unreliable and corrupted system of governance based on kinship networks and prebendalism. As the existing system only serves a minority and their extended networks, the state fails one of the most important functions of its creation, the inclusive delivery of basic services to citizens. For Pinaud, the existence of this military aristocracy and its kin-based networks of state resources exploitation constitute the main factor of the failure of the state in South Sudan, rendering the country vulnerable to conflict and instability.

As the South Sudanese state is built on a neopatrimonial political system, which enables the domination of the state institutions and resources by a minority through networks of patronage, conditions that contribute to state weakness are hence created. It is from this perspective that Øystein H. Rolandsen (2015) analyzes the factors of the political atmosphere which contributed to the fragility of the state in South Sudan. According to him, the political deterioration in South Sudan can be explained by the intra-party divisions over share of power and wealth, the failure of security reforms, institutional weakness fueled by the centralization of power.

The existing literature doesn't pay much attention to statehood in South Sudan from the specific perspective of fragility. Analysists are more focused on understanding phenomena such civil conflict, state-building or weak institutions as prevailing dynamics in the country. The few studies related to fragility in South Sudan are also very limited in their scope, as they usually take the form of articles. The gap we intend to fill is to analyze the dynamics of fragility in a broad, all-encompassing perspective. By doing this, we will analyze all the relevant factors, the contextually relevant ones. In terms of their outcome, some factors may appear to be more influential than others, but what remains our priority is to be able to study, from a multidimensional standpoint, state fragility in South Sudan.

The particularity of our study is that it does not focus on the outbreak of the civil war and its underlying factors as means of explanation of state fragility. Rather, we adopted a rather all-encompassing approach allows to go beyond the armed conflict, in order to analyze governance, state capacity in a way that explain state fragility with its multiple layers.

By focusing exclusively on state fragility to understand the challenges of statehood in South Sudan, we intend to depart from analyses that mostly focus on single phenomenon, such as civil conflict or military rule, to explain instability in the country. Instead, we bring a new contribution to the existing literature on studies of South Sudanese politics by using an approach that encompasses different yet relevant elements, such as resource curse, institutional weakness, or loss of violence monopoly, in order to demonstrate fragility of statehood in South Sudan.

Structure of the Research

Our thesis is articulated around three main sections. The first part consists in the building of a theoretical framework. We made a thorough analysis of state fragility. First of all, we focused on explaining the concept of fragility in rather simply terms by giving an overview of the major definitions existing in the literature. Afterwards, we tackled different theoretical perspectives on the factors of fragility. In the second section of our work, we built a historical background of state-making, of the major events that determined the emergence of a South Sudanese state. The aim of this section is to help us understand the historical dynamics that shaped statehood in South Sudan up until the independence. The last section, the most important one, is related to the different yet relevant dynamics and factors that could help explain and understand weak statehood in South Sudan.

CHAPTER 1: THEORISING STATE FRAGILITY IN INDEPENDENT AFRICA

1.1. Definitional Approaches on State Fragility

Defining state fragility is a difficult task not only because of the complexity of the phenomenon, but also due to the existing multiple perspectives on the matter. There are as many definitions of fragility as scholars in the literature, creating a confusing analytical landscape. What we envision here is to focus on the main ideas pertaining to the definition of state fragility, the existing conceptual approaches on its nature as explained in the literature. Hence, what characterizes state fragility?

State fragility expresses a situation in which the predominance of the authority of the state is either weakened or lost. The authority of the state is characterized by its entitlement to the political administration of the society, its maintenance of law and order through different legitimate channels. A state faces fragility when it fails to preserve its dominance in the society as the existing highest authority.[1] There are two dimensions of state authority. The first one is a moral authority and is related to the idea of the state, the perception of the state as the legitimate and rightful authority administrating social life and providing different services to the population. The second one, an administrative authority, is relative to the physical nature of the state, the existence of institutions and political actors. The type of fragility or failure involved in a state's loss of authority is a moral decline. The administrative dimension of the state may not be necessarily involved.[2]

The decay of authority is also expressed through the physical inability of the state to assure the security of the population against various threats. The loss of authority does not necessarily imply the total loss of the entire territory of the country. It could be a partial loss of authority in some areas of the country. The widespread presence of criminality in the society and the state's incapacity to bring about solutions to maintain

[1] Woodward, Susan, ''Peacebuilding and "failed states": some initial considerations'', In Peacebuilding and Failed States: Some Theoretical Notes, ed. Pureza, José Manuel, Mark Duffield, Robert Matthews, Susan Woodward, and David Sogge, Oficina do CES 256, (2006):22.
[2] Ibid.

order and enforce the law is considered to be a sign of the decaying authority of the state.[3] Therefore, in situations of fragility, the dimension which appears as very crucial to the survival of the state is authority. The collapse of the state capacity means that the state cannot properly function and unable to exert its authority. The decline of the state's authority can also be linked to its degree of legitimacy before the population, that is to say, the more illegitimate it becomes it is likely to see its authority declined as a consequence of its lack of popular support.[4]

State fragility is characterized by the lack of political authorities' responsibility and concern towards the assurance of human security. As the political unit maintaining order in the society and providing basic services, the state is supposed to serve as a means of fulfillment of humans' life in society. Even the Hobbesian conception of statehood, which could appear authoritarian at first, implies the idea that state must maintain social order and preserve the security of the citizens. However, fragile states can appear as the very opposite of that situation. In situation of fragility, it is the state itself that constitutes a danger for the society. A fundamental mission of the state is to preserve the society from threats of every nature, yet fragile states can turn to be a source of peril to their own citizens.[5] Beyond the possible perception of fragile states as a weak link of global security as a whole, the implications of fragility from the standpoint of human security are crucial. Because, regardless the nature and the degree of weakness of a state, what appears as one of the most significant features of fragility is its inadequacy with the accomplishment of human security's necessities.[6] By pursuing violent policies that undermine profoundly the stability of the society, the state becomes then a barbaric one. The instruments of coercion are used to cause a severe insecurity among the citizens and, in worst case scenario, the means of forces could be used to execute plan of mass destruction.[7]

[3] Stewart, Frances, and Graham, Brown, 'Fragile States', Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE), Oxford (2009):3.
[4] Holsti, Taming the Sovereigns, p56.
[5] Ibid, p58.
[6] Ikpe, Eka, "Challenging the discourse on fragile states", Conflict, Security & Development 7, no. 1 (2007): 86.
[7] Miller, Paul D, Armed state building: confronting state failure, 1898-2012 (Cornell University Press, 2013), p65.

An important feature of fragility is that, rather than being a static phenomenon, it's a dynamic condition in which states evolve or regress along a spectrum of capacity. Facing the terminological confusion about whether or when a state should be considered weak, fragile, failing, failed or collapsed, political scientists have put forward the idea that state fragility is a changing situation made up of different phases.[8]

Fragility is not a simple and linear condition within which a state finds itself. It is a long process constituted of various degrees ranging from the moderate level of weakness to the extreme condition of collapse.[9] In that sense, variability is an essential aspect of fragility and helps understand the phenomenon as part of the natural course of states along a continuum of phases. That's to say, states go through progress and decline in the course of their history.[10] This particular conception of state fragility has some similarities with the cyclical theory of Ibn Khaldun on the rise and decay of societies. Ibn Khaldun perceives states and societies as part of a cyclical process of birth, strength, defeat and downfall.[11] He compares the rise and fall of states to the evolution of human life which, after birth, has to experience growth and/or death.[12] But the difference between Ibn Khaldun's theory and the contemporary conception of state fragility is the question of temporality. While there seems to be a fatalistic aspect in Ibn Khaldun's view of states, fragility, as understood today, is a temporal condition in which a state may stay for a short or long time.[13]

However, analyzing fragility through the phases of weakness, failure and collapse may reveal a problem of practicality when it comes to the empirical cases of countries.[14] Each degree of fragility along a continuum of capacity shares with one another some

[8] Boege, Volker, Anne Brown, Kevin Clements, and Anna Nolan, "On hybrid political orders and emerging states: state formation in the context of 'fragility' ", In Building Peace in the Absence of States: Challenging the Discourse on State Failure, ed. Martina Fischer and Beatrix Schmelzle, (Berlin: Berghof Research Centre, 2009), p16.
[9] Chiara Giorgetti, A Principled Approach, p48.
[10] Holsti, Taming the Sovereigns, p55.
[11] Önder, Murat, and Fatih Ulaşan, "IBN KHALDUN'S CYCLICAL THEORY ON THE RISE AND FALL OF SOVEREIGN POWERS: THE CASE OF OTTOMAN EMPIRE", Adam Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi 8, no. 2 (2018):233.
[12] Murat and Ulaşan, IBN KHALDUN'S CYCLICAL THEORY, p234.
[13] Giorgetti, A Principled Approach, p51.
[14] Howard, Tiffiany O, "Revisiting state failure: Developing a causal model of state failure based upon theoretical insight", Civil Wars 10, no. 2 (2008): 127.

similarities, such that differences between weak states and failing states or between failed and collapsed states are hardly distinguishable. Degrees of fragility, therefore, seem to be more like a qualitative attempt to differentiate the situation of states than an exact account of actual country cases.[15]

Furthermore, state fragility is associated with the outbreak of violence which can take different forms, armed conflict being undoubtedly the most common one. The nature of the connection of fragility to violent conflict is opened to discussions, but it seems difficult to analyze fragility without involving situations of violence. Is fragility an outcome of a violent conflict or the cause of it? A closer look reveals that there may be a circular relationship between state fragility and conflict. The outbreak of violent conflict can be an indication, a factor or a result of state fragility. A state incapacity to fulfill its core responsibilities towards the population can lead to violent unrest, and by trying to consolidate order, state may use instruments of force which ultimately result in widespread violence. In this regard, state fragility can be a situation in which violence becomes widespread in the society, and as violence carries on, fragility becomes extreme.[16]

Situations of fragility can be identified through the ineffectiveness and illegitimacy of the rulers. The ineffectiveness of the incumbent government is characterized by its inability to respond to the needs of the population and to carry out its main functions. Among the duties of the state, as the highest authority in the society, figure the preservation of order through the exclusive legitimate possession of the means of violence, the dynamization of economic life, the organization of the society through legitimacy, the provision of basic services to the citizens.[17] The duty of the state as service provider implies its obligation to use the means at its disposition to satisfy the population's needs. The needs of the population are multiple and diverse and involve every aspect of social life. The state, then, has to be able to deliver at least the most fundamental services needed, such as creating a

[15] Tiffiany, Revisiting state failure, p128.
[16] Mata, Javier Fabra, and Sebastian Ziaja, ''Users' Guide on Measuring Fragility'', German Development Institute, (2009):7.
[17] Graf, Timo Alexander, "Measuring state failure: development of a new state capacity index", In 4th ECPR Graduate Conference, vol. 4, no. 6, (2012):9.

healthcare system or providing means for basic education. An incapacity to do so is considered to be a situation of fragility or a service failure.[18]

Fragility is defined as absence of legitimacy when the state is perceived to be unlawful and lacks support from the majority of the population. In such a case, the only factor helping the ruling power to survive can be the backing it benefits from the military or the fact that the army itself is the ruling regime.[19] Moreover, it is possible to conceptualize state fragility in the sense of the loss of both legitimacy and effectiveness. A state is hence fragile when it experiences a double lack of an ability to fulfill its main duties and support from dominant elite groups or citizens. In this regard, legitimacy and effectiveness are considered to be two inseparable and interrelated dimensions. The absence of one undermines the presence of the other in a reciprocal way. That is to say, a state can be effective at onset, but the lack of crucial support from an important segment of the population could ultimately hinder its capacity to properly carry out its responsibilities. Conversely, a legitimate rule that cannot provide public goods can lose in the process its legitimacy, as its incapacity to deliver services could be perceived as a form of injustice.[20]

State fragility can also be defined as a violation of the social contract by the ruling incumbents. When a state fails to provide basic services, it becomes an incapable state and the immediate implication is that it failed to fulfill the contract binding it to society. Social expectations presuppose the idea of a social contract in which citizens require the delivery of a certain number of public goods from the government.[21] In political theory, at the core of the existence of states lies an implicit agreement, forged between rulers and citizens, which dictates the accomplishment of each party's entitlements and duties. In that regard, the ruled follow the authority of the officials and in return the latter provides basic services to the former.[22] So, the occurrence of fragility points out to the fact that the state is unable to fulfill its part of the social contract.[23]

[18] Stewart, and Graham, 'Fragile States', p3.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Goldstone, Jack A., "Pathways to State Failure," Conflict Management and Peace Science 25, no. 4 (2008): 286.
[21] Miller, Armed state building, p62.
[22] Giorgetti, A Principled Approach, p47.
[23] Ibid, p48.

1.2. Perspectives on the Factors of State Fragility in Africa

How does one explain the origins of state fragility in general and particularly in the African continent? The question of the factors of weak statehood experienced in many African states opened an endless discussion in the literature. The existence of diverse and opposing perspectives suggests the complexity of the question. The discourse of state fragility is mostly focused on African states, therefore an attempt to understand the factors of the phenomenon in general would be unavoidably related to the political situation of the continent. While this part of our work focuses on the theoretical framework of state fragility's factors, it nevertheless gives a particular attention to how the question is related to the political context of Africa.

In the attempt to explain the possible factors relative to fragility in Africa, we focus on one particular tendency existing in the literature. This tendency, as an inward-looking perspective, imbeds the factors of fragility in the internal dynamics of the state. That is to say, situations of fragility are the consequence of how the state has been ruled and are therefore the results of multiple yet intertwined internal factors that prevailed in the state.

1.2.1. Fragility as Absence of Empirical Statehood: The Problem of Sovereignty

Sovereignty confers to states an independence in the ruling of their internal affairs and an external recognition as an independent member of the international system. The process of consolidation of states' sovereignty in the European continent required from states the centralization of their authority, the extraction of resources, and the acquisition of the monopoly of power in the society.[24] However, the same process didn't occur with most of the states born after the Second World War.

As a result of the decolonization project, different tools of popular sovereignty, constituted of democratic system, constitutional order, international recognition, were all given to newly independent states. Many of those countries, before their independence, were administrated as colonies by foreign powers. Although they later accessed

[24] Holsti, Taming the Sovereigns, p54.

independence, they were artificial at their essence. They had all the material characteristics of statehood such as, national symbols, administrative cities, legislative and diplomatic bodies. However, they were dysfunctional in terms of institutional stability and effectiveness. In the international system, these fragile states benefit from a legal status that put them in an equal footing with stronger states, despite their inherent lack of sovereignty.[25]

Robert Jackson qualifies the condition of those new independent states as quasi-statehood. Requirements of effective statehood were fundamentally lacking in the new nations. Their fragility resides in their inability to achieve basic internal functions. They possess a negative sovereignty because of the international recognition they were granted in the international system, but lack notoriously a positive sovereignty as they are unable to manage properly their internal affairs.[26] With the conception of quasi-statehood, there is a departure from the traditional conception of sovereignty. A classical approach of sovereignty entitles right of self-rule to state, regardless their internal conditions. But from the perspective of quasi-statehood, there is a fusion of the legal right of self-rule with state performance, leading to a hierarchy of sovereignty between strong states and fragile states.[27] This classification of sovereignty is justified on the basis of the fictitious nature of governance in Third World states. In those countries, sovereignty is weak not because of the continuing influence of former colonial powers but due to their incapacity to manage themselves properly.[28]

Quasi-statehood is perceived in the inability of African states to meet the requirements of empirical or de facto statehood. Empirical statehood suggests that a state possesses a permanent community and delimited borders under the condition of social stability and effective governance. An important number of African states lack stable community, because violent conflict appears along with ethnic lines. The politicization of ethnicity,

[25] Ibid, p55.
[26] Inayatullah Naeem, "Beyond the Sovereignty Dilemma: Quasi-States as Social Construct," in State Sovereignty as Social Construct, vol. 46 (Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 60-61.
[27] Chandler, Empire in Denial, p33.
[28] Ibid, p34.

and the internal armed conflict that it enables, disrupts the social and political order in many African countries.[29]

Authority in Africa is also challenged by internal frustration against the regime in power, a situation which ends up mostly in violent outcome such as military coups. It is a dynamic characterized by disloyalty against the government. Another aspect of statehood in Africa is defined by the limited resources and incapacity of the governmental entity to rule properly. An underdevelopment characterized by insufficient financial resources or administrative inexperience conduct to inefficiency.[30] The argument of quasi-statehood refers to this situation of African states which appear as unable to meet the criteria inherent to contemporary statehood.

It is therefore the international recognition of the legal status of African states that sustain their existence, despite their situation of quasi-statehood. That international recognition, known as de jure sovereignty, is the expression of the juridical dimension of statehood and is based on the legal existence of states as independent members of the international system.[31] The contemporary international relations are regulated through a democracy-like system in which every state is granted a political independence and full membership rights.[32] The political independence of African nations came into existence in a proper era of international relations and law, as worldwide and international organizations are now well structured and organized such that every existing nation benefits of their proper sovereign rights. The membership of independent African nations in the international community conferred them legitimacy crucial for their political survival.[33]

1.2.2. Institutional and Political Weakness

In their book *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity, and poverty*, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson attempt to explain the factor(s) underlying the failure of

[29] Robert H. Jackson, and Carl G. Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," World Politics 35, no. 1 (1982):5.
[30] Jackson, and Rosberg, Why Africa's Weak States Persist, p8.
[31] Ibid, p12-13.
[32] Ibid, p16.
[33] Ibid, 20.

some states into becoming prosperous nations. According to them, the most fundamental reason of fragility is the presence of extractive institutions in states, that is to say, the existence of unjust and unfair instruments of state apparatus.[34]

The extractive institutions contributing to failure of nations have an economic and a political articulation. Economically, extractive institutions do not contribute to the creation of a dynamic economic life in the society. As a consequence, the population would tend be marginalized from wealth creation. Politically, extractive institutions are used to sustain the continuation of the economic conditions of the society by consolidating the rule of the elites profiting from the status quo.[35] It is the conflation of the impact of extractive economic and political institutions that ultimately leads to state fragility.

The existence of such institutions has caused in some African states state collapse, resulting in conditions in which the core functions of the state were impossible to be fulfilled.[36] This situation of state fragility has been common in the recent political history of the African continent for diverse factors among which figure the ‘’vicious circle of extractive institutions.’’[37] The extractive institutions have created conditions in which it became difficult for African societies to build viable institutional order that would consolidate state stability. The reality of fragility in these states is not the outcome of geographical or cultural conditions. Rather, the existence of exploitative institutions constitutes the actual cause of situations of fragility, because it favors a minority's prosperity as the expense of the majority, opening a door to social unrest, violent conflict and ultimately to an extreme state fragility.[38]

The institutional weakness that occurs in fragile states can be the result of the conflicting interaction between formal political institutions and informal structures. The coexistence of competing forces driven by different interests in the society has the potential to create

[34] Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, Why Nations Fail: the Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty (London: Profile Books, 2013), p368-369.
[35] Acemoglu and Robinson, Why Nations Fail, p372.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid, p376.
[38] Ibid.

a situation of fragility. As non-state actors, informal political orders seek to exert an influence on the dynamics of society, challenging, in the process, the social authority of the state. The incapacity of the state to impose its norms and authority in face of competing informal actors reveals an institutional failure.

One of the effective ways of escaping the trap of fragility is for the formal institutions to be able to accomplish an institutional domination in the society. Because, for some political scientists, the predominance of informal structures or neopatrimonialism constitutes a factor that disrupts the achievement of an effective institutional order in states already facing fragility.[39] While the state capacity to maintain its institutional dominance is crucial for its stability, the lack of basic services would unavoidably lead the population to rely on informal structures and their ability to deliver assistance that the formal institutions are unable to provide. In some cases, it can be the state itself, aware of its limited capacity, that builds networks in which non-state structures operate in spaces where formal authority is absent.[40]

Political institutions based on personal rule or kleptocracy creates conditions that undermine state stability. Kleptocratic system of ruling is based on the exclusive control of state resources by a ruling elite. The extraction of resources benefits that a minority while the population is left without economic incentives. In such a system, existing institutions transform state wealth into personal properties of the ruling regime.[41]

The conditions of emergence of kleptocratic regimes can be related to the weakness of state institutions. As the institutional capacity of the state becomes fragile, personal rule is likely to appear as an outcome of the situation. The eventual predominance of neopatrimonial system as a mode of governance ruins, in turn, mechanisms of vetting the ruling power's practices. In other words, as a result of the fragility of formal institutions, the elite capacity to seize state resources increases while its accountability to the citizens

[39] Mcloughlin, Claire, "Fragile states", Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (2009):20.
[40] Boege, Volker, Anne Brown, Kevin Clements, and Anna Nolan, "On hybrid political orders and emerging states: What is failing-states in the global south or research and politics in the west? ", Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series 8, (2008): 22.
[41] Daron Acemoglu, Thierry Verdier, and James A. Robinson, "Kleptocracy and Divide-and-Rule: A Model of Personal Rule," Journal of the European Economic Association 2, no. 2-3 (January 2004):1.

decreases.[42] The most impressive aspect of kleptocratic regimes is their ability to stay in power over a long period, despite their ill-fated strategies of governance and their lack of popular support or legitimacy.[43]

From a historical perspective, after the withdrawal of the colonial powers' support, the newly established regimes started facing challenges regarding the consolidation of their power which, at onset, was fragile.[44] With the purpose of stabilizing their rule, they ultimately decided to rely on informal practices of governance through the creation of networks of patronage and violent practices. The political strategies of these regimes resulted in the creation of a neopatrimonial system of ruling defined by wealth distribution and gain of social status based on personal links and loyalty. The informalization of state policies compounded with the emergence of non-state actors, as a consequence, created conditions of the fragility of formal institutions and the inability of the state to function properly.[45]

Moreover, political transitions in states already fragile can exacerbate the conditions of fragility. One of the most significant features of a democratic system is to allow citizens to choose their rulers in a periodic way. But in situations of fragility, that political process can have a destabilizing impact on the state. Political transitions can be associated to unpredictable outcome, political risks and fears, mainly because of the possible emergence of competing actors and their struggle for power. In such a case, organization of elections, which represents an essential feature of democratic rule, could produce a disrupting effect by enabling violent competition and contributing hence to state fragility.[46]

The question of political transitions becomes even more complex in a system of authoritarianism. Political change in authoritarian regimes usually occurs when the ruler's reign ends suddenly or as an outcome of an expected event. A political crisis emerges

[42] Ibid.
[43] Acemoglu, Verdier, and Robinson, Kleptocracy and Divide-and-Rule, p2.
[44] Eriksen, Stein Sundstøl, " 'State failure' in theory and practice: the idea of the state and the contradictions of state formation," Review of International Studies 37, no. 1 (2011): 241.
[45] Eriksen, State failure'in theory and practice, p242.
[46] Mcloughlin, Fragile states, p22.

when the potential successors are unable to meet criteria of legitimacy and effectiveness related to governance.[47] In other terms, if a successor is perceived to be ineffective or simply lacks support from elites or dominants groups, violent political competitions for power emerge as a result of the authority vacuum. If one of the competing actors manage to seize power, it would be perceived as unlawful by the other actors, creating conditions for rebellion. A political compromise through power-sharing strategy could be decided in order to satisfy each group. However, it would also undermine state effectiveness as each party would seek to operate along with its own interests.[48] In short, political transitions in fragile situations can potentially create succession crisis, disrupt the already-weakened institutions and ultimately deepen state fragility.

Institutional or political breakdown in a state can also stem from a political choice. A ruling power can decide to base its state policies on means of violence and coercion or choose to do otherwise by promoting democratic values and state stability. The citizens also can choose to contest the authority of the state through violence and rebellion or to live in peaceful conditions in the society.[49] While these cases are observable in the contemporary history of African states, they reveal the idea that choices states make regarding their policies determine their sociopolitical trajectories. In other terms, institutional strength or stability occurs in a state when both the ruler and the ruled choose to fulfill their responsibilities and duties with the aim of developing the society.[50] The political choice of the ruler and the ruled also implies that state fragility occurs when one party or both parties choose to side with violence or other destabilizing means.

In the context of the definitional approaches of statehood, Barry Buzan perceives the idea, the institutions and the physical base of the state as the main features of statehood. For him, state weakness stems from the fact that the idea and institutions of a state become fragile. The possibility for a state to become strong is related to its capacity to have a strong idea and institutions.[51] The strength of a state doesn't refer to its brute force or

[47] Goldstone, Pathways to State Failure, p291.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Robert H. Bates, "The Logic of State Failure: Learning from Late-Century Africa," Conflict Management and Peace Science 25, no. 4 (2008): 298.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Buzan, People, States, and Fear, p66.

military capacities. From a military perspective, a state could appear powerful. But it is the weakness in its organizing principles and institutions that makes it a fragile state. Conversely, a state with less significant power is considered to be a strong one because it is stabilized through strongly hold national ideology and institutions.[52]

Legitimacy represents the core of state strength and its absence can lead to fragile situations. From an empirical perspective, state strength seems to reside in the state capacity to fulfill its main functions, such as resources extraction, consolidation of social order, provision of service, enforcement of law and order. However, the assessment of state strength or fragility needs to go beyond the material dimension of statehood. In this regard, the most critical aspect of the stability of a state is its legitimacy. The structures of the state appear strong when they benefit from a popular sovereignty, the support of the citizens. It is then the lack of legitimacy that creates state fragility or contributes to it.[53] When the state lacks support from the population, it could then appear as an illegitimate state. In such a situation, the state is associated with sentiment of injustice or wrongfulness. Legitimacy is undermined when the ideals of justice displayed by the state are perceived to be contradictory to the ones held by the population, or when the actions of the state do not coincide with its announced and widely-accepted policies. As a result of the illegitimacy of the state, violent conflict could emerge, leading to state fragility.[54]

1.2.3. Economic and Developmental Failure

Historically, the discourse on the question of economic development in Africa started becoming preeminent from the 1970s when many African states begun to experience severe economic crises. Consequently, theories on the decay of state in the continent were being developed on the basis that African nations are unable to perform as proper states.[55] The incapacity of countries in Africa to achieve developmental purposes led to the idea of downsizing their role in their national policies. In order to tackle the core factors underlying the underdevelopment of African statehood, the World Bank released in 1981

[52] Ibid.
[53] Holsti, Taming the Sovereigns, p55-56.
[54] Miller, Armed state building, p61.
[55] Ahluwalia, Politics and post-colonial theory, p53.

the report of *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa.*[56] Whether or not the report rightly pointed out to fundamental causes of the crisis African nations were facing, what matters, in the context of our study, is the different issues it raised. The report highlights what it considered to be key characteristics of state crisis in the continent. Among the main factors of fragility cited figured the existence of infrastructural weakness and bad economic management. The lack of effective infrastructures and appropriate economic policies were considered to be absent in the states in question. Besides, the internal policies conducted by those states were considered to be devoid of adequacy, as strategies related to their social and economic visions and their overall methods of governance were deficient.[57]

Trapped in an underdevelopment and economic crisis, the state appears then as an unproductive one. Situations of economic fragility are defined by the state incapacity to extract resources which, in turn, may be caused by an institutional disorder or an inability to collect revenues. As its economic conditions worsen, the state becomes less and less unable to stabilize itself. The existence of widespread corruption, bad economic governance and other faulty activities such looting, and rent-seeking further aggravates the economic fragility of the state.[58] The advent of violent conflict is undoubtedly the worse-case scenario regarding the economic conditions of a state. Violent conflict greatly contributes to the devastation of the existing economic sectors. It creates an economic chaos, such that sectors of economic productivity are ruined. Conditions of a proper economic revival becoming impossible, illegal forms of economic activities, such as smuggling, arms trades or unlawful labor markets, could start emerging in consequence.[59]

Kleptocratic type of economic governance appears as a challenge to African states' stability. Because, the economic articulation of neopatrimonial mode of governance creates conditions for the extraction of state resources for the exclusive benefit of the ruling elite. In order to sustain their wealth accumulation, neopatrimonial regimes rely on the coexistence of informal and formal structures, leading to the creation of parallel

[56] Ibid, p54.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Miller, Armed state building, p63.
[59] Ibid, p64.

economic orders.[60] Groups in the society could be tempted to topple the ruler of a neopatrimonial regime, but it may be only through collaboration that they could be effective enough to achieve their goal. In the face of the possibility of such a scenario, rulers would tend to use their accumulated wealth to consolidate their power by undermining the potential partnerships of contending actors. Through the divide-and rule strategy, the kleptocratic regime draws on extracted resources to buy off loyalty among groups, undermining possibility of contestation and, in the process, stabilizing its rule.[61]

Natural resources appear at first as a valuable economic asset for a state, because they have the potentiality to create opportunities for creation of wealth and, through the flow of revenues they can enable, they can make development strategies easier to achieve. In conflict-affected zones, resource wealth can give various groups the incentive to favor a political stability and reverse the conditions that contributed to state fragility.[62] Yet, the existence of natural resources can also contribute to fragility because they can lead to an economy confined in rent-seeking incentives. As a consequence, a state based on rentierist practices can undermine the democratic foundations of the society. Rentierism removes the necessity to rely on political compromise or cooperation with various social actors and can even create resources necessary for the creation of a system based on patronage politics.[63]

Besides, the high dependence on resources removes or reduces the necessity of the rentier state to have recourse to taxation to collect revenues. The non-reliance of the rulers on a taxation system can result in a political unaccountability towards the citizens. Because of the rentier nature of the economy, the state's main focus would tend to be on the national or international economic partners involved in the resource extraction business. In this situation, the economic relationship that link state and citizens to each other becomes fragile.[64]

[60] John Idris Lahai and Nenneh Lahai, "The History and Representations of the Challenges of Governance in the Fragile States of Sub-Saharan Africa," in Governance and Political Adaptation in Fragile States (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 20.
[61] Acemoglu, Verdier, and Robinson, Kleptocracy and Divide-and-Rule, p28.
[62] Dibeh, Ghassan, Resources and the political economy of state fragility in conflict states: Iraq and Somalia, No. 2008/35. WIDER Research Paper, 2008:13.
[63] Mcloughlin, Fragile states, p18.
[64] Miller, Armed state building, p63.

Paul Collier and Anthony Venables tackle the question of the impact of resources on state stability and advance the idea that, for three main reasons, a resource-dependent economy hampers ''the quality of governance'' and creates conditions of the emergence of situations of fragility.[65]

First, the presence of natural resources can contribute to the emergence of looting, because the wealth created through resource extraction can incentivize groups to compete against state authority over the control of rents. Economic profits resulted from resources become targeted through various methods, such as fraud, robbery and even violent conflict.[66] The motivation of profiting from the economic asset generated by resources leads to the deterioration of the political system and even to the demise of the ruling power through violent means. While resource wealth increases the opportunity for contesting state authority, it also gives to the state the means to consolidate its power.[67]

Secondly, the rentier system enabled by resource wealth can create a political opportunity that allows the ruling state to be less accountable to its citizens. In a democratic state, it gives the ruler the means to bribe opposition groups. In that way, even in the advent of elections, those in power can manage to extend their rule. In an authoritarian system, resource wealth can contribute to make the regime unaccountable to the population, hence allowing the former to be less inclined to provide services to the latter. Resource wealth can even constitute a factor in turning a democratic rule into an autocratic regime.[68]

Finally, the dependence of a state to natural resources can lead to an economic instability and, in the process, contribute to a political unrest. The disruptive effect of resources on the economic situation of a state occurs mainly because of ''the high levels of volatility''. The impact of an economic volatility can be particularly strong when the state already

[65] Collier, Paul, and Anthony Venables, "Natural Resources and State Fragility," *European University Institute, RSCAS Working Papers*, 2010:1.
[66] Collier, and Venables, Natural Resources and State Fragility, 2.
[67] Ibid, p3.
[68] Ibid, p5.

suffers from fragile financial institutions. Because of the negative price fluctuation of the resources, the state may start facing a situation of political fragility.[69]

1.2.4. Social Dimension of State Fragility

The existence of neopatrimonial regime has a disruptive social implication that can eventually lead to fragile situations. As a patronage system becomes consequential, it may start exerting considerable weight on the limited public resources. It is a system that needs material resources to sustain itself, therefore one of its immediate survival strategies would be the appropriation of state resources. In consequence, the diversion of limited state resources would hamper the state's ability to bring out real social transformation. The idea of providing at least basic services or fulfilling strategies necessary for the transformation of the society may therefore be difficult, or even impossible, to realize.[70]

If the state reaches a point where its relationship with the society only operates through a patronage system, then the institutional demarcation between state and society, within the context of the idea of the state, becomes inexistent. Modern statehood presupposes the idea that public affairs, administrated by the incumbent power, be separated from the private realm. In the same logic, a clear distinction has to be made between the political dimension of statehood, which refers to the state apparatus itself, and the society, comprised by the population. However, the emergence of mode of governance based on patronage networks can blur the distinction between state and society.[71] The kind of state-society relations that emerge from this situation, compounded with other internal dynamics, can constitute an obstacle to the state's ability to properly function and fulfill its developmental policies.[72]

State-society relations is at the center of our conception of statehood, such that attempts to understand a state would require in the same time understanding the nature of the society it rules. In this regard, it is also indispensable to base our apprehension of state

[69] Ibid, p7.
[70] Eriksen, 'State failure' in theory and practice, p242.
[71] Ibid, p242.
[72] Ibid.

fragility in terms of state-society relationships. The policies and principles constituting the state's mode of governance can appear, at outset, disconnected from the society. For the state to avoid fragility, it must be able to establish a social dominance so that it becomes a vitally-important aspect of the citizens' life.[73] The achievement of state's social hegemony necessitates the mobilization of human and material resources and the imposition of an organized body of norms.[74] But such an accomplishment would require from the state the domination of competing non-state structures driven by different motives and interests in the society. It is therefore the state's capacity or inability to achieve social hegemony that determines its strength or fragility.[75]

For different reasons, states that are already experiencing situations of fragility are likely to be characterized by a social polarization between groups based on their identity. At the same time, close linkages between state-society is weak in these states. One of the underlying factors of this social weakness of the state is relative to the inexistence of major social values such as social partnership, reciprocal sentiment, trust and collective welfare that are all critical in shaping a reliable social contract.[76]

Beyond the framework of citizenship, identity in society can take the form of class, religion, gender or ethnicity. Exclusion based on these identity differences can contribute to fragility. The perception of social injustice, of being excluded from the use of state resources gives incentives to frustrated groups to contest the rule of those in power. The inability of the state to find peaceful ways to tackle the challenge can further lead to a violent outcome. The more the society becomes marked by abuses of rights and discrimination, the more likely the state is to fall in the fragility trap.[77] Because, social, political and economic discriminations, known also as horizontal inequalities, create an unequal status in society between groups. The existence of salient disparity incentivizes groups to mobilize themselves to call for a change in the status quo. It is the failure of finding an appropriate resolution that can eventually create a situation of fragility.[78]

[73] Mcloughlin, Fragile states, p23.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid, p24.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid, p25.

As much as the culmination of inequalities and tensions in identity fragmentation conducts to situations of fragility, the support of the state by high social groups, in terms of status, power and wealth, contributes to strengthen state stability. Frustrated groups may attempt to challenge state authority for a change, but endorsement of elites of the society to the ruling regime ultimately helps counter violent contestation. Elite groups' motivation to oppose change in the status quo is defined by the possibility of losing their position.[79] In this regard, the longevity of an autocratic regime can be dependent on its legitimacy before the privileged class' eyes. The state' use of instruments of violence or force is sustained by the elites' moral and financial backing.[80] The state's loss of support from these groups means that its survival ability becomes weakened. The elites' financial and material resources, in that situation, may even be used to overthrow the ruling power[81]. What may motivate privileged groups to oppose state authority is their perception of rapacious state practices that undermine their interests and positions in the society. Therefore, through a cooperation, they may join other groups to form a collective insurgency in order to bring out a change in the status quo.[82]

When the state starts experiencing fragility, the possibility of an emergence of a dynamic civil society becomes considerably reduced. As civil society weakens and appears incapable of effectual actions, political scrutiny of those in power decreases and, as a result, conditions of escaping fragility turn out to be more demanding.[83] In other words, effective civil society groups, through dynamic political engagements, can help forge a political stability. But since the existence of fragility undermine the flourishment of a potent civil society, the state is more likely to continue to be trapped in instability. Because, a weak civil society cannot contribute to the creation of conditions necessary for escaping from state fragility.

1.2.5. Military and Security Fragility

[79] Clément, Caty, "The Nuts and Bolts of State Collapse: Common Causes and Different Patterns?," In annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, Hawaii, (2005):10.
[80] Goldstone, Pathways to State Failure, p290.
[81] Clément, The Nuts and Bolts of State Collapse, p11.
[82] Goldstone, Pathways to State Failure, p290.
[83] Mcloughlin, Fragile states, p25.

Military or security fragility refers to the different violent factors and situations conductive to state fragility. It helps understand how dynamics relative to security dimension of statehood can undermine a state stability, leading to fragile situations. One of the most common yet unsolved question related to the security perspective of fragility is whether violent conflict is a cause or consequence of state fragility. There is an idea that the occurrence of violence is a distinctive feature of situations of fragility in the sense that fragile states usually face internal armed conflict. In this regard, it is even possible to qualify the fragility-conflict nexus to be of a circular nature: the outbreak of violent conflict is an outcome and/or a contributing factor of state fragility. From that perspective, it is not surprising to see in the literature similarities between causes of state fragility and causes of civil conflict.[84] One of the main reasons of conflating dynamics of conflict with dynamics of fragility is the fact that in both cases the state loses its ability to function properly. An incapacity marked by social breakdown, institutional failure, subversion of human security.[85]

There are lines of reasoning that justify the idea of violent conflict occurring first and then causing afterward state fragility. Conflict, here, is perceived as a distinct destructive event that a state experience and, as a consequence of that violent event, the state eventually losses (some of) the core elements of its strength. Ethnic civil wars, for example, can be conductive to state fragility in two possible ways.[86] First, those in power can appear illegitimate because of their unjust policies yet be able to maintain their rule. The moment they start being unable to fulfill core responsibilities, discriminated groups may then form an alliance to end their reign. Second, a ruling regime may appear just in its governance but unable to materially provide services. In that condition, if the regime starts favoring a group at the expense of others, then a rebellion can emerge in the sole purpose of overthrowing it.[87] In each scenario, despite its flaws, the state appears first relatively stable, but it is after the beginning of perceived severe political mismanagement that fragility becomes apparent with the occurrence of armed conflict.

[84] Ibid, p18.
[85] Aliyev, Huseyn, "Precipitating State Failure: Do Civil Wars and Violent Non-State Actors Create Failed States?," Third World Quarterly 38, no. 9 (December 2017): 1975.
[86] Goldstone, Pathways to State Failure, p289.
[87] Ibid, p290.

The profound effect of civil violence can transform a state into an anarchic one, even after the end of violent confrontations. Post-conflict conditions do not mean recovery from the impact of civil war. On the contrary, the damaging effect of the conflict could still persist, creating a security fragility that reduces or eliminates state authority.[88] The security system of the state becomes direly weakened in regard of its military capacities and the emergence of non-state violent groups. While state authority erodes, the fragmentation of the social fabric of the state may follow, making conditions of proper conflict resolution difficult to meet. The absence of strong institutional mechanisms of governance creates environment in which unaccountability regarding past war crimes prevails, creating conditions for a resurge of violence. In this prevailing anarchic context, the security failure of the state undermines human security with widespread violence, acute instability, and the predominance of informal armed groups.[89] In short, whether the conflict ended or not, its impact can lead to extreme state fragility.

Some political scientists put forward the view that the process of fragility occurs independently from the outbreak of conflict. The relationship between the occurrence of war and the state' falling into fragility is not necessarily based on an absolute causality link. Armed conflict may have an effect on fragility, but the process of fragile situations occurs regardless the advent of violence.[90] Compared to other states, fragile states are more vulnerable to the breakout of violence. There is a possibility that presence of civil conflict contributes to fragility, but even in such as a case, violence would appear just as a factor among others. More importantly, the occurrence of state fragility can be perceived as an independent phenomenon in itself that appears regardless the emergence of armed struggle. A state can even fully experience situations of fragility without the appearance of conflict whatsoever.[91]

Ethnic differences can be perceived as one of the underlying factors of state fragility in the sense that they can cause civil war outbreak, leading hence to the state's loss of capacity. From a historical perspective, that perception seems to be justified because,

[88] Miller, Armed state building, p59.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Aliyev, Precipitating State Failure, p1982.
[91] Ibid.

starting from the post-Cold-war era, widespread civil wars occurred simultaneously with a growing state fragility phenomenon. Yet, according to Chiara Giorgetti, there is no necessary relationships between armed conflict and ethnic tensions. In other words, the presence of ethnic differences doesn't equate the occurrence of state fragility.[92]

The inherent functions of statehood entail a state the ability to protect and defend its physical base from disruptive factors that originate from domestic and external dynamics. The political history of Europe even shows that the formation of modern statehood was the product of rulers' capacity to centralize their authority through the abolishment of competing armed actors in their territories. In that sense, the monopoly of legitimate violence represents one of the very essential sources of state strength. The loss of state capacity to have an internal military hegemony is conductive to fragility. Because, as the state losses its authority, it becomes vulnerable to threats, creating hence conditions for its instability.[93]

There is also a relationship between the emergence of informal armed structures and situations of fragility. The appearance of non-state violent groups is not in itself a direct factor of state fragility, it is rather a contributing dynamic of the decline of state strength. These groups are conductive to the spread of violence and conditions that hinder economic development and the state's ability to provide services.[94] As the state sees its strength decay, informal armed groups can start making their appearance in order to contest the former's authority, worsening the situation of fragility. The incapacity of state to regain its strength encourages informal groups to increase their social dominance. In a worst-case scenario, non-state armed groups can take segments of state territory under their control and eventually overthrown the ruling regime.[95] The presence of armed militias in favor of the state can also contribute to fragility. These armed groups may appear as instruments of stabilization of state power, but in reality, their presence can be symptomatic of the beginning of state decay. Whatever the nature of informal armed

[92] Giorgetti, A Principled Approach, p54.
[93] Michael T. Klare, "The Deadly Connection: Paramilitary Bands, Small Arms Diffusion, and State Failure," in When States Fail: Causes and Consequences (Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 117.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Aliyev, Precipitating State Failure, p1976.

groups - pro-regime or rebellion – their predominance in a society represents a decline in state capacity and a sign of state fragility.[96]

The rise of informal armed organizations constitutes in itself a paradoxal and refractory condition to the consolidation of modern statehood. The paradox lies in the fact that modern statehood means the centralization of instruments of force by the state. The predominance of armed militias is antithetical to the core function of state's monopoly of force. As for the refractory nature of these informal structures, it resides in their subversive actions that can potentially destroy the state's foundations and place them as predominant power in the society. The objective of some of non-state armed groups are to, first, eliminate state authority, and then, implement their own mode of governance.[97] In other cases, the violent practices displayed by these organizations contribute to the acceleration of state fragility. Their actions conduct to acute humanitarian situation that the state's limited capacity cannot bear. Moreover, the state can be dispossessed of the productive segment of its populations as more citizens become displaced persons and refugees. The combination of these disruptive outcomes further leads to a social breakdown and extreme fragility.[98]

Closely related to the emergence of informal armed groups is the pervading presence of small arms in context of fragility. Small arms and light weapons can be as conductive to state fragility as paramilitary groups.[99] They can be very effective against state's armed forces. Their flexibility lies in the fact that their usage is opened to most people. The use of these arms doesn't require in fact a military background or professional ability. It is possibly of one the reasons that explain non-state armed groups' preference of these arms during violent conflict.[100] When small arms and light weapons start becoming easily accessible, state becomes vulnerable to instability. In this regard, opposition groups, through the easy access to these weapons, can disrupt state authority, compromising the state's survival.[101]

[96] Ibid, p1985.
[97] Klare, The Deadly Connection, p117.
[98] Ibid, p119.
[99] Ibid, p121.
[100] Ibid, p122.
[101] Ibid, p123.

Finally, the involvement of the military into politics in fragile democracies can be considered as a contributing factor to state fragility. New-coming democracies may benefit a popular sovereignty and support from citizens and appear, in the same time, ineffective in their capacity to fulfill their core functions. The inability of these states is particularly felt in their ineffectiveness to build and maintain a stable security structure. While they appear ineffective, fragile democracies fall further into fragility when the ruling party is overthrown by a military coup[102]. The army can justify its actions on the basis of state ineffectiveness, but their presence in power expresses an institutional collapse, hence a situation of fragility.

[102] Goldstone, Pathways to State Failure, p291.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE MAKING OF THE SOUTH SUDANESE STATE

2.1. Isolation: Southern Sudan under External Influence

The events predating the independence of South Sudan were essentially characterized by external forces dominance in the region. From the perspective of South Sudan's political history, the patterns of state-making process were shaped by the Turko-Egyptian rule and the British colonial administration, both separated by a transitional period of internal structuration of power epitomized by the Mahdist rule. All these events constituted some of the most fundamental seeds that created a context of a necessity of struggle for national liberation much later. The Southern Sudan found itself caught in a dynamic of extractive institutions that transformed it into source of social marginalization and economic exploitation. The people of the Southern Sudan were objects not only of history itself during these periods but also of dominant power structures' interests.

This period that we call an isolation period is dominated by patterns of exploitation and marginalization. For these reasons, it is important to understand the main dynamics that shaped each period and analyze their relevancy to the process of statehood formation in a territory that will be known almost a century later as the Republic of South Sudan.

2.1.1. The Turko-Egyptian Presence in Sudan

A historical analysis of South Sudan shows two predominant structural patterns that impacted profoundly its political and historical foundations, at least initially. The first structural pattern represents a structure of marginalization. The southern Sudanese region was relatively closed to the outside world, its relations with its surroundings neighbors weren't based, over a long time, on an opened communication dynamic.[103] The second pattern is relative to a system of exploitation and economic extraction. The region has been throughout its history dominated by external powers that extracted its resources in

[103] Lobban, Richard, "National Integration and Disintegration: the southern Sudan," in, "Three Studies on National Integration in the Arab World," Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Information papers, No. 12, March, (1978): 14.

a systematic way. The southern Sudanese region has been subject to the dynamics of subjugation and exploitation that profoundly influenced its history. When exploitation tended to increase, the region would become insolated, and in a condition of marginalization, it would become vulnerable to external players' dominance.[104]

The year 1820 constitutes the formal beginning of the Turko-Egyptian presence in the Sudan. Despite being under the Ottoman political control, Egypt's decision to take Sudan under its control was pursed in accordance to the personal political goals of its ruler, Pasha Mehmet Ali. The military campaign that led to the takeover of the Sudanese region, rather than being tied to an Ottoman expansionist strategy, was the result of the Turko-Egyptian ruling power's political and economic vision of regional control.[105]

It was the prevailing power vacuum in the region that facilitated the Egyptian regional ambition and opened a door to an economic opportunity of external rule. The absence of a dominant power structure at a local and regional level helped the Turko-Egyptians to become the predominant force in the Sudanese territory. At the beginning of the 19th century, the progressive loss of authority and later the downfall of the Funj dynasty created a vacuum that gave an opportunity to slavers to increase their economic activities in the region. It was in the aftermath of the Turko-Egyptian presence that an economic transformation occurred, changing, in a systematic way, economic and trade dynamics in the region.[106]

Western interference occurred in the region through the French invasion of Egypt. As the French afterward ended their Egyptian occupation, the Turko-Egyptian ruler Mehmet Ali set up his political reign there. His political ambition of modernizing the Egyptian society, however, required the possession of important economic capitals.[107] Despite the fact that the French invasion was short-lived, it contributed to undermine local power dynamics by destabilizing the Mamluks' dominance and facilitating the rise of Mehmet Ali to

[104] Ibid.
[105] Sharkey, Heather J, "Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel?," Afrique contemporaine 2 (2013): 22.
[106] Sharkey, Heather J. "Luxury, Status, and the Importance of Slavery in the Nineteenth-and Early-Twentieth-Century Northern Sudan." Northeast African Studies 1, no. 2 (1994): 188.
[107] Amir Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.28.

regional power.[108] So, at the time that the Turko-Egyptians were emerging as dominant players in the region, there was not, either at an internal or an external level, a power that could undermine their growing authority.

The economic dynamics prevailing during the growing of his political authority required Mehmet Ali to pursue alternative economic sources that would help him consolidate his regime. The need of financial and human resources became a necessity for the Turko-Egyptian ruler in his desire to stabilize his power in the northeast region of Africa. The economic situation of his reign and his expansionist policies pushed him to base its Sudanese military campaign on acquisition of men and search of economic profit. There was also an increasing demand of basic commodities that needed supply.[109] Besides, the military crusades that Mehmet Ali conducted in the Eastern Mediterranean led considerably to the weakening of his military and financial resources. These factors, among others that we will mention, made the conquest of Sudan an economic necessity for the Turko-Egyptian rule. One of the first actions of the Egyptian regional ambition was the overpowering of existing local political structures of Sudan, probably in order to hinder possible local resistances. What followed afterward was the systematic organization of workforce and human labor. The Egyptian presence radically led a profound change in the structural order upon which slavery was based on in the Sudanese society. It was the beginning of a rigid institutionalization and organization of an economic practice based on a rigid acquisition of human capital on a large scale.[110]

The Egyptian presence of Sudan aimed also at creating conditions that would help stabilize the economic interests of Egypt through the monopolization of the Nil river. The Nil waters have always been central to Egypt's survival as a society and it was therefore logical that power consolidation in the region be inseparable from the control of that natural resource. The Turko-Egyptian administration, in the course of its expansionist strategy, perceived Sudan as a territory with an enormous geostrategic importance and wasn't therefore motivated by any other factors but preserving its interests.[111] Mehmet

[108] Robert O. Collins, "Slavery in the Sudan in History," Slavery & Abolition 20, no. 3 (1999): 74-75.
[109] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p15.
[110] Collins, Slavery in the Sudan in History, p75.
[111] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p16.

Ali Pasha, as ruler of Egypt, was convinced of the fact that ruling Egypt required a control over the geographical area in which lies interests he wished to profit from. From the perspective of the Turko-Egyptian rule, the unity of both Sudanese and Egyptian territories was a legal right of ownership it could claim, but was also a military, economic, and cultural necessity for both societies. Detaining the monopoly of the Nil river would help also contain external threats against the economic interests of Egypt. Conquering Sudan therefore was for Egypt a vital necessity for the preservation of its interests, locally and regionally.[112]

The Turko-Egyptians based their Sudanese project on the procurement of workforce with the purpose of strengthening their military capacity. Mehmet Ali Pasha was said to be impressed by the physical quality of black men from Sudan. As he needed consolidating his reign, he was convinced that acquiring a workforce in the region would represent a considerable means for achieving his military and economic power.[113] The control of Sudan was related to an ambition of power consolidation that, in turn, required a strong army and a source of economic extraction. The Sudanese territory offered that opportunity to the Turko-Egyptians as it was a place where, once under control, manpower resources could be acquired low-costly. In result, the army would have a cheap supply of captured men for its solidification.

During the Turko-Egyptian rule, through a farming system based on slaves' labor, the northern Sudan benefited from an economic transformation. This situation created, in the language of Wallerstein, a center – northern Sudan - that profited from all the fruits of the new system and a periphery - southern Sudan – that became disadvantaged regarding the outcomes of the imposed order. The Turko-Egyptian contributed as well to the transformation of the nature of social relationship between members of the Sudanese society. The identity of the population of the South came to be associated with slavery and subjugation, creating the perception of their lower social status in comparison to the Northerners.[114] In this regard, the mode of governance that the Turko-Egyptian adopted

[112] Warburg, Gabriel R, "The Turco-Egyptian Sudan: A Recent Historiographical Controversy," Die Welt des Islams 2 (1991): 201-202.
[113] Warburg, The Turco-Egyptian Sudan, p198.
[114] Edward Thomas, South Sudan: a Slow Liberation (London: Zed Books, 2015), p78.

was systemically at the disadvantage of the southern part of Sudan. The region was transformed into a zone of economic extraction and marginalization. Historically, slavery was already present in the region, but it was conducted by individuals or social class specialized in slave hunting. It was the aftermath of the Turko-Egyptian presence that forced procurement of human workforce became radically transformed, as it became institutionalized under the control of the state.[115]

Compared to the South, the North of Sudan greatly profited from the Turko-Egyptian presence. The dependency system that presence created did transform the North into a center where political power was concentrated. Politically, the northern Sudan became more organized and benefited from a centralization of state authority. It also started becoming a modern society during that era, as the Turko-Egyptian administration established an innovative local development program that brought about educational infrastructures and advanced technology of communication and transportation. At the same time, the South was plunged into a systematic system of subjugation and served as source of acquisition of human labor for the development of agricultural sectors in the Sudanese society.[116]

As the Turko-Egyptians' presence was motivated by economic ambition, they had to design the conquered territory along their interests. Northern Sudan was organized around an institutional order based on the extraction of economic profit while the South was built on an administrative system that focused on the sole acquisition of human capital.[117] This approach of the Turko-Egyptians set up the origins of what will be later a racialized Sudanese society. In a system based on an extraction of human capital, fortified buildings came to represent the economic and political symbol of the ruling power. The forts' system created during that era contributed to an uneven and unequal developmental level between the North, as the center, and the South, as a peripherical zone.[118]

[115] Kebbede, Girma, "Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective," Contributions in Black Studies 15, no. 1 (1997): 16.
[116] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p28-29.
[117] Edward, South Sudan: a Slow Liberation, p57.
[118] Ibid, p58.

The Turko-Egyptian rule brought a radical change to the economic dynamics in the South. As the created economic system was based on acquisition of human workforce, the southern Sudanese population, however diverse it was, was incorporated into a monetary system, a global economic order designed by global powers and based on financial and trade relations.[119] And generally speaking, the Sudanese region as a whole was introduced to world economy, as it became regulated through centralized mode of governance and monetary institution. And while the supply of captured humans was achieved through massive military deployments in the southern zone of Sudan, the North, as already mentioned, benefited from new forms of communication such as lithography press.[120]

Ultimately, in 1877, after at least half a century of practice, slave trade came to an end officially during the Turko-Egyptian rule. The institutionalized practices of slavery became the core of the economic structure of the Sudanese society. The official banning of these practices subsequently contributed to the transformation of political dynamics in the region. Ironically, as the Turko-Egyptians adopted towards the end of their rule anti-slavery measures, they soon faced a local insurgent group, the Mahdist movement, which was opposed to their (new) policies. It was the collision of these two major yet conflicting approaches on slavery – on one hand, state policy of slavery banning and, on the other hand, local elites' resistance to change - that contributed to the downfall of the Turko-Egyptian administration.[121]

The rise to power of the Mahdist movement constituted an intermediary era between the Turko-Egyptian rule and the British colonial administration. It was a period characterized by an internal proto-nationalist and theocratic Sudanese system. The movement managed to overthrow the Turko-Egyptian administration and occupied almost the entire Sudanese territory in 1884.[122]

[119] Ibid, p57.
[120] Sharkey, Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel ?, p22.
[121] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p31.
[122] Tounsel, Christopher Gallien, "'God Will Crown Us': The Construction of Religious Nationalism in Southern Sudan, 1898-2011," PhD diss., (2015): 90.

Relatively speaking, the Mahdist power projection in the South was not profound despite the continuation of peripheral situation of the South. While socioeconomic conditions were systematically at the disadvantage of the South during the Turko-Egyptian presence, under the Mahdist rule the region returned to marginalization. It is even possible to make a distinction between the way acquisition of human labor was perceived during these two different periods. The Mahdist state viewed the practice as part of the Sudanese culture in general, whereas the Turko-Egyptians perceived forced procurement of human capital as a material and economic necessity.[123] Despite these differences, systemically, the Mahdist rule maintained much of the essential aspects of the Turko-Egyptian structure. The military and economic order was carried on and the forced extraction, from the periphery, of manpower for the economic needs of the center also continued.[124]

2.1.2. The British Colonial Rule

The British introduction in Sudan didn't start with an official presence. It started with the appointment of British individuals by the Turko-Egyptians as first responsible of the administrative body of the Sudanese territory. These individuals, Samuel Baker and later Charles George Gordon, contributed to the expansionist strategy of the Turko-Egyptian rule but they also served the British interest of banning slave trade.[125]

At the beginning of the Mahdist rule, the British government followed a non-interference policy. The Sudanese territory wasn't on the map of British geostrategic interests at that time. This policy of abandonment indirectly helped the Mahdist state to consolidate its power and last for at least a decade.[126] Towards the end of the 19th century, the British government left its abandonment policy and adopted a proactive military strategy of conquest. As a result, Sudan was conquered, ending the Mahdist rule and opening the chapter of British colonial rule.[127]

[123] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p16.
[124] Edward, South Sudan: a Slow Liberation, p69.
[125] Murad, Hasan Qasim, "BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE SUDAN," Pakistan Horizon 31, no. 4 (1978): 63.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid, p64.

Prior to the beginning of the implementation of their strategy of invasion of Sudan, the British tied, at least in appearance, the fate of the Sudanese territory to the situation of Egypt. For the British, a conquest of Sudan ought to be undertaken when the military and economic conditions of Egypt made that operation possible. The Sudanese territory was perceived to be a lost Egyptian colony, and the British conquest strategy was said to be helping Egypt regain what it had lost.[128] The British government's expansionist strategy was at least developed around this narrative, using the Egyptian economic and military participation as a legal cover-up for its power projection project in that region of Africa. This British-Egyptian alliance in the colonial reconquest of Sudan led to the establishment of a hybrid colonial system, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium.[129]

While the colonial domination lasted half a century, the British pursued the narrative that England didn't conquer Sudan but rather reconquered it for the Egyptian authorities. Another claim was that the conquest of Sudan didn't make it necessarily a colony; instead, the Sudanese territory is a condominium, which is a sort of political system based on a shared sovereignty between England and Egypt.[130] In reality, the conquest of Sudan was part of the British growing expansionist strategy. Egypt and England may share interests in conquering Sudan, but the truth was that, in this geopolitical game, the British were the main players, as they had the most power and means to maintain their influence and presence in the region.[131]

When the British came to power, their attitude towards the practice of slavery in Sudan was varied. The British call for the elimination of slave trade could be perceived as a disguise of their strategy of imperialist project and an insincerity, as their country remained very active in the practice of slavery up until the 19th century.[132] For some, there is not enough evidence that proves that the British anti-slavery measures were driven by an expansionist project. There is a possibility that their actions were motivated by a

[128] Ibid, p79.
[129] Grandin, Nicole, "Après le Mahdī: la politique coloniale chez les pasteurs arabes soudanais (After the Mahdī: Colonial Policy among Pastoral Arabs in the Sudan)," Cahiers d'études africaines (1978): 124.
[130] Sharkey, Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel?, p26.
[131] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan: from One to Two, p16.
[132] Murad, "BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE SUDAN, p66.

humanitarian desire to see the slave trade banned.[133] However, this argument has been debunked by evidence on the ground.

The British colonial administration didn't attempt, at first, to change the economic status quo of slavery practices in the Sudanese society. After causing the demise of the Mahdist rule, the British didn't abolish the economic order that prevailed in the previous administration. On the contrary, they clandestinely restored the farming system based on slave labor, and the use of slaves for economic extraction. The exploitation of slavery came to be at the center of economic productivity of the colonial state.[134] Clearly, the advent of the British rule didn't affect the sociopolitical and economic structure that was prevailing in the Northern part of Sudan. The new colonial state didn't engage itself, at the beginning of its rule, in a systematic suppression of slavery activities. Power consolidation strategy caused them to accept the necessity of slavery and slave trade. There was hence a blatant contradiction between the British call of the ban of slave trade and their actual actions in reality. As a consequence, slavery activities carried on for decades in the Sudanese territories during the British rule.[135] The decrease of slavery practices happened with the emergence of waged employment, which started changing the economic dynamics of the Sudanese society in 1920s. Immigration of West Africans to Sudan offered possibility of cheap labor, creating an alternative to slave labor.[136]

With the goal of consolidating its colonial power in the Sudanese territory, the British sought to take under its total control the southern Sudan and its communities. The colonial state used a strategy of domination made up of two phases. In the first phase, two levels of action were decided. First, a military approach of power projection was to be used.[137] The British undertook numerous military campaigns of ''pacification'' in the South but couldn't achieve their desired goal. Factors inherent to the South, such as geographical conditions or absence of tradition of centralized authority in the southern communities, rendered military actions difficult to bear fruit. As the first level failed, rather than the use

[133] Ibid, p67.
[134] Edward, South Sudan: a Slow Liberation, p69.
[135] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p33.
[136] Ibid, p64.
[137] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p16.

of brute force, they relied, at the second level, on an anthropological research of the local population. It was decided that a thorough study would be conducted on the economic and social life of southern communities. The goal was to understand them in order to be able to rule them. This method contributed greatly to the success of the colonial state control of the southern population.[138] In the second phase of their strategy of domination of the South, the British used the approach of ''divide and rule''. It constituted in drawing a geographical map that divided the region into eight areas of action. This facilitated the access of southern tribal communities to colonial activities such as missionary actions but also encouraged ethnic demarcation between local groups.[139]

Furthermore, the British colonial administration initiated what would be known as ''Southern Policy'' in order to achieve its overall colonial hegemony project in Sudan. This ''southern'' approach was characterized essentially by a deliberate isolation of the South through legal and institutional instruments. The policy of isolation wasn't implemented suddenly, it was preceded by the Milner Report which was released in 1920, a period where slavery practices were in decline. The report suggested a separation between the South and the North so that the Southerners could be drawn away from Northern influence.[140] The Southern policy and its implementation would, later, follow the blueprint designed by the Report which explicitly advocated for a division of Sudan.[141] Afterward, the British issued in 1922 the Passports and Permits Ordinance which, in accordance with the Milner Report, ordered a strict control in the access of the South. It became difficult for the population to go either to the North or the South.[142] The Ordinance gave a legal basic to the separation policy and it was only a limited number of Northerners belonging to a specific professional group (traders, soldiers or domestic workers) that were allowed to travel to the South.[143]

The 1922 Ordinance set up a geographical division of the Sudanese territory and, in the aftermath of that measure, different administrative orders were created. The physical

[138] Ibid, p17.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid, p18.
[141] Tounsel, God Will Crown Us, p121.
[142] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p18.
[143] Tounsel, God Will Crown Us, p121.

separation of the North and the South had the effect of marginalizing the Southerners over decades.[144] The southern isolation through legal instruments contributed to the limitations of the labor activities and the confinement of the population within the region. Local inhabitants became tied to their ancestral lands because they couldn't move outside anymore and had limited access to economic opportunities.[145]

The British motivations behind the adoption of the Southern Policy varied. First, it said to be an approach aiming at preventing the spread of the Northern influence in the South. The policy shut down all interaction channels between the two regions, stopping the Northern cultural influence to reach the South and encouraging Southerners' embracement of colonial cultural values. This strategy served the British colonial administration in many regards. The Southerners would be exempted from the influence of Arabism and be eventually integrated to the British East African Federation. This situation would serve the colonial state's economic interests as it would become able to detain the monopoly of the Nile river.[146]

As the isolation policy contained the South from northern influence, it became easier for the colonial administration to culturally transform the region through the adoption of Western values. Although one of the pretexts of the British was their desire to preserve local cultures of the South, missionary activities increased. The colonial state even went further in its colonial cultural strategy by creating an alternative Southern local armed force, the Equatorial Corps, as a way of preventing them from religious influence of the Egyptian military force.[147] The Passports and Permits Ordinance of 1922 also allowed the British, through legal means, to reform the administrative order of the South. They pursued a policy that favored the recruitment of missionary officers in the southern colonial administration at the expense of all those speaking Arabic.[148]

[144] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p17.
[145] Christopher Zambakari, "' South Sudan and the Nation-Building Project: Lessons and Challenges ," in National Democratic Reforms in Africa, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p99.
[146] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p17.
[147] Tounsel, God Will Crown Us, p73.
[148] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p39.

A colonial argument justifying the southern isolation was that it would help protect the South from practices of slavery that prevailed for so long in the Sudanese society. The 1922 Ordinance gave the legal right to the colonizers to restrict the access to Southern borders, making it difficult to enter or exit southern territory without colonial permission. Another justification put forward was that the colonial administration was following its anti-slavery policy. By strictly controlling southern boundaries, slavery activities would progressively be eliminated.[149] The practices of slavery have been predominant in the South over a long period. In this regard, according to the British, the policy of southern isolation would help prevent the spread of slave hunts.[150] But should the British be given the credit of the abolishment of slavery in South viewing their varied attitude towards the practice? Slavery was, in a sense, officially banned but it is difficult to give the all credit to the British moral principles. Yet, the isolation policy may have played a part in their anti-slavery policy. For some, the elimination of slavery practices was one of the British colonial administrative success stories in Sudan. By prohibiting Northerners free movement in the South, it became difficult to carry on slave trade and slavery in the South.[151]

Finally, the Southern policy can be perceived as a colonial attempt to create a distinct cultural and geographical identity in the South. The introduction and the application of that policy appeared as a point of no return in the political fragmentation of Sudan. The British intent seemed to have been a cultural division that would create two different Sudan, one based on Arabism and the other on Africanism. At least four important measures appeared to corroborate the view that the British determination was to create a southern Sudan culturally distinct from the North. First, there was a progressive ban of the practice of Arabic in the South. Second, the British created an independent southern military body as a counterbalance against an eventual Northern insurgency. Third, Sunday was recognized as the official rest day. Finally, English was set as the official language of communication in the South.[152] These were attempts that clearly showed the

[149] Chevrillon-Guibert, Raphaëlle, "Sud-Soudan: les acteurs de la construction et de la formation de l'État," Afrique contemporaine 2 (2013):57.
[150] Sharkey, Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel?, p27.
[151] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan: from One to Two, p17.
[152] Sefa-Nyarko, Clement, "Civil War in South Sudan: Is It a Reflection of Historical Secessionist and Natural Resource Wars in "Greater Sudan"?," African security 9, no. 3 (2016): 198.

colonial administration desire to build a distinct southern society or a society that would be at least culturally homogenized with Western standards.

During their colonial rule in Sudan, the British followed a dual policy towards local population. The difference in the measures that they adopted in the colonial administration of the North and the South was respectively based their ideological perception of Northerners and Southerners. When dealing with northern Sudan, the British treated the Northerners with a sort of equality. The former's view was that the latter, even if inferior to Westerners, belonged to a glorious civilization and, in that sense, deserved respect from colonial masters. As for the Southerners, they were perceived to be far more inferior to the colonizers. The British considered them to be culturally primitive and savage. There was therefore a necessity to control them under a paternalist and authoritative order. This ideological or racial perception would influence the way the colonial administration conducted its policy in the North and in the South. On one hand, practices of the colonial rule in the southern zone of Sudan were rigid and firm, as local communities were subject to an imperious colonial control. On the other hand, colonial mode of governance in the North relied on diplomatic methods and was far more flexible, as there was fear of resurgence of insurgency or nationalist movements.[153] This attitude of the British confirmed the racialization of their colonial policies in the Sudanese society. In this regard, the colonial state contributed in acknowledging racial prejudices against Southerners.[154]

The isolation policy that the British followed had some implications in the socioeconomic development of both northern and southern Sudan. The colonial administration set a program that contributed to the modernization of the North. It created a modern transportation infrastructure through the building of a railroad system. The purpose was to create conditions that would facilitate the connection of essential economic sectors and the monopoly of the Nile waters. Educational infrastructures were built so that local northern elites and colonial officers' children attended school. The agricultural sector also underwent a reform through the introduction of modern farming techniques. Northern

[153] Grandin, Après le Mahdī, p128.
[154] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p31.

zone of Sudan benefited from all these strategies of development were implemented, while the South was neglected.[155]

The colonial policies that were applied in the South hindered the expansion of economic activities and no strategy was designed to make the region benefit from a colonial development. Most of colonial development strategies were implemented in the North, making the South accessed only to limited economic opportunities.[156] If the British were in favor of Southern well-being, as their justification of the Southern policy would tend to show, why did they adopt approaches that explicitly undermine the development of the South? For some, the Southern Policy clearly maintained the South in a situation of under-development to make it unable to rule itself. Even in terms of representation in the southern colonial administration, local communities were profoundly excluded from political responsibility.[157] The colonial policies purposely created not only a geographical marginalization of the South, but also contributed to an internal identity fragmentation between southern communities. While undertaking this policy of southern isolation, the colonial state, in this modernization project of its colony, only focused on the North.[158] The aftermath of this unequal approach put the South in an uneven developmental situation, creating the basis of a structural socioeconomic disparity in the Sudanese society.[159]

It was evident that, as already shown, socioeconomic disparities between the North and the South systematically begun to appear during the Turko-Egyptian rule. The British colonial rule pursued and even exacerbated that trend, as its Southern Policy accelerated the poor socioeconomic conditions of the South.[160] The southern region became subject to a physical marginalization and state neglect in terms of developmental opportunities.[161] However, after almost three decades of implementation of southern marginalization measure, the British decided to overturn this policy in 1947. Yet, the South wasn't given

[155] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p17.
[156] Sefa-Nyarko, Civil War in South Sudan, p197.
[157] Chevrillon-Guibert, Sud-Soudan: les acteurs de la construction, p57.
[158] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p18.
[159] Tounsel, God Will Crown Us, p122.
[160] Ibid, p125.
[161] Ibid, p126.

any opportunity to gain on the northern developmental level. As much as the isolation policy was reversed, there was an absence of efforts that could help the region escape its backward condition.[162]

2.1.3. Decolonization Process or the Sudanization Project

After the reversal of the isolation policy, the British undertook a unification strategy that would fuse the North and the South into one Sudan. It was the beginning of the decolonial process of the region. That process formally started with the organization of the Juba Conference in 1947. The southern delegation was appointed by the colonial administration itself and was informed of the British unification strategy.[163] During the conference, the colonial state put forward its intention of favoring a political unification of the Sudanese regions. Its argument was that historical and geographical circumstances make southern region association with the North more favorable than a union with any other East-African states.[164]

The Southern elites didn't reject the British plan of favoring a political representation of Southerners in the parliament of the future united Sudan.[165] This decision of Southerners to abide by the British plan wasn't surprising because of the political opportunity they were being offered. One of the factors that caused the British to integrate the South within the North was that the colonial administration was convinced of the political incapacity of Southerners, of their inability to rule themselves. Joining the southern Sudan to other East-African states was also perceived as constituting a potential threat to the stability of these states. The British decided that the best option was an annexation with the Northern Sudan.[166]

The internal dynamics of power struggle in Europe favored the initiation of the decolonization project. For some, the British colonial state's attempt to unify the

[162] Sefa-Nyarko, Civil War in South Sudan, p197.
[163] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p17.
[164] Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence (Oxford University Press, 2013), p10.
[165] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p10-11.
[166] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p18.

Sudanese regions can be perceived as a neocolonial strategy of ''leaving'' the colony and giving political authority to elites in a way that preserve its economic interests.[167] So, as the process of decolonization started towards the end of the 1940s, the British colonial officers transferred the administrative and institutional control of the state to the Northern elites.[168] The isolation policy was replaced by the unification program which was based on a ''Sudanization'' project that aimed at facilitating the decolonization of the Sudanese state. However, the British colonial elites were aware of the unsustainable nature of the unification of two regions that had difficult relations throughout their history.[169]

The decolonization process was marked by the exclusion of southern leaders from political consultations. Before the advent of independence, from 1947 onwards, the transfer of state institutions from the colonial state to northern elites was already secured. The introduction of a national legislative body for the whole Sudan also constituted an important step towards independence. By 1954, it became clear that the fate of the future independent Sudanese state would be entrusted to the Northern elites.[170]

In the year 1952, a meeting was organized in Cairo between the British colonial administration, Egypt, and the Sudanese represented by the Northern elites. Despite the fact that the topic of discussions was about the future of Sudan, Southerners were uninvited.[171] It was becoming clear that the British colonial rule in Sudan was coming to an end, but the Southern elites hadn't been capable, at that time, of playing any crucial role in the consultations that would define the terms of Sudan's independence.

While the political marginalization of southern Sudan was occurring, northern Sudanese elites settled with the British the question of Sudan's right to self-determination.[172] Southern elites, on their side, started organizing themselves politically. They created the ''Southern Bloc'' as part of the formation of a southern political identity and fight for their interests within a unified Sudan. In the national legislative assembly, one of their

[167] Lobban, National Integration and Disintegration, p19.
[168] Sharkey, Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel?, p27.
[169] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p19.
[170] Ibid, p29.
[171] Ibid, p21.
[172] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p13.

first actions was to object an eventual Sudanese independence because of the unresolved political situation of the South.[173]

During the Sudanese legislative elections of 1953, the winning Northern political party took over the ''Sudanisation Commission'' with the task of formally taking over the country's institutions from the British colonial state.[174] Political disagreements between Northern elites and Southern leaders needed to be solved so that the decolonization process be completed. The Southerners were given by the Northern leaders an assurance that once the country access independence, a federal system would be considered.[175] However, as soon as independence was obtained, Southerners were denied the creation of a federal system for the newly independent Sudan.[176] The official accession of Sudan to independence occurred the 1st January 1956. While this can appear as a political victory for the northern Sudanese elites, Southerners' political ambition of seeing a federal independent Sudan ended up being an illusion. The new independent state maintained a centralized administrative order and professed Arabism as the its official identity.[177]

2.2. Confrontation: Southern Sudan in the Independent Sudan: A Post-colonial Quest for Freedom

2.2.1. Independence, New State and Political Ideologies

The historical patterns of past colonial rules shaped identity discourse after the advent of independence. Historical discourses on Sudan tended to paint northern Sudanese and southern Sudanese as having distinct and conflicting identities. The consequence of such perception led the association of Northerners to civilization and Southerners to backwardness. From the Turko-Egyptian rule to the British occupation, to the post-colonial era, the political history of Sudan became defined by these identity patterns.[178] The impact of past slavery practices and subjugation was still persistent at the advent of an independent Sudan. The system of injustice and inequality that prevailed in the past

[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid, p30.
[175] Ibid, p14.
[176] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p18.
[177] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p14.
[178] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p13-14.

created a hierarchized Sudanese society that survived after the independence. The type of state that emerged in the post-colonial era was a racialized Sudanese state, as a result of past legacies.[179]

Sudan started as an independent state facing an identity crisis that, in part, could be attributed to a failed decolonization process. Northern political leaders associated the country's cultural identity to Arabism right from the beginning of the independence. The Southerners didn't see themselves fitting in that identity. In result, clash of distinct identities came to dominate political climate in the post-colonial Sudan. Political struggle was not directed against Western influence, rather the battle was between internal players with conflicting identity claims which, in turn, were products of constructed colonial patterns. The identity fragmentation that took roots during colonization was hence reproduced and institutionalized in Sudanese political competition. Nationalist discourses were addressed based on identities that were originally constructed by past colonial dynamics.[180]

Southern elites were determined to not let subjugation conditions that prevailed in the past re-emerged, making nearly impossible possibility of achieving a centralized Sudanese political system in a unanimous way.[181] These identity divisions clearly show that Sudanese decolonization process wasn't entirely a success. The country did gain its independence, but internally and structurally, the roots of all the Sudanese contradictions weren't addressed, colonial legacies were left unquestioned, opening the door to an identity crisis in the post-colonial Sudan.[182]

Southerners favored a Sudanese society that acknowledges cultural pluralism and varied identities, whereas Northern elites espoused the idea of a homogenized and monocultural Sudanese society. It didn't come as a surprise that Northern leaders, as soon as the country gained independence on 1 January 1956, promulgated Arabism as Sudanese core identity and integrated the country as member of the Arab League of Nations. This Northern

[179] Ibid, p21.
[180] Ibid, p44.
[181] Ibid, p45.
[182] Ibid, p49.

political decision created discontent and idea of partition among Southerners.[183] The Northern preference for Arabism and the Southern desire for Africanism are, in reality, outcomes originating from historical patterns that dominated the Sudanese society for a long period. In the Sudanese historical context, the construction of Arabism, as a Sudanese identity, was a result of slavery legacy, while Africanism was a colonial product created during the British occupation.[184]

In the newly independent state, Northern leaders took the decision to adopt institutions that fit in their political ideology and their vision of Sudanese society. They adopted a political program that transformed state structures into an authoritarian system that caused disorder, violence and discrimination.[185] The policies of Northerners were based on the idea that Sudanese society had to be based on a single identity, common symbols that all citizens must share. So, their nationalist stances were fueled by this political ideology.[186] After the accession to independence, they embarked on a political operation of cultural transformation that would commingle varied identities into one dominant identity. States resources were used to make effective the imposition of a single identity on southern communities. This project was undertaken in disregard to the local southern identities or the idea that the society itself was multicultural in its essence.[187]

The failure of transcending identity contradictions created during the colonial era ultimately influenced state policies in the post-colonial time. The Northern perception of its ‘’dominant’’ culture and the Southern claim of a distinct identity were all, ironically, molded during colonial era. After the advent of independence, Arabism and African went from being ‘’flexible cultural identities’’ to becoming ‘’rigid cultural identities’’ as a result of their institutionalization by Sudanese political leaders’ policies.[188] The colonial state was perceived as one of the factors that caused underdevelopment in the South, yet after the independence, Northern leaders’ strategy of power projection in the South was influenced by practices originating from colonial administration. State policies in the

[183] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p18.
[184] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p110.
[185] Ibid, p11.
[186] Ibid, p15.
[187] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p18.
[188] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p20.

South in terms of power consolidation were based on violent instruments and governance strategies that were predominant during colonial rule.[189]

While Northern leaders took the lead of the new independent state, they were aware of the underdevelopment of southern Sudan and blamed the colonial neglect as the result of the southern situation. They were conscious of the fact that a successful national integration would require a project of modernization of the South. However, they ended up using strategies that were similar to the British neglect of the South.[190]

Northern political leaders disregarded a development strategy for the South. Instead, they focused their political endeavors on cultural assimilation policies through education programs. States policies ignored economic disparities and underdevelopment that were prevailing in southern Sudan. Strategies of forced integration and consolidation of national identity were at center of Northern leaders' southern policy.[191] The overall state policies in the South, based on a strong desire for order and stability, were defined by the political ideology of Northerners which, in a sense, called for a total acceptance of state authority and the idea of a single Sudan. In this regard, no room was left for alternative or divergent political conviction. The southern desire of a federal project that would give them an independent voice in the Sudanese political landscape was perceived as national security threat.[192]

In the early years of the independence, the Sudanese authorities didn't hesitate to nationalize missionary educational establishments in the South. This action could be perceived as sign of Northerners' intolerance towards religious diversity, but from the perspective of these leaders, it was simply an attempt to curtail what they perceived as disrupting foreign agents. For them, it was a matter of national security to have a monopoly on the institutions existing within the state.[193] By contextualizing the policies of Northern leaders, it is possible to perceive their actions, at least from their angle, as

[189] Rolandsen, Øystein H., and Cherry Leonardi, "Discourses of violence in the transition from colonialism to independence in southern Sudan, 1955–1960," Journal of Eastern African Studies 8, no. 4 (2014): 620.
[190] Rolandsen, and Leonardi, Discourses of violence, p611.
[191] Edward, South Sudan: a Slow Liberation, p86.
[192] Rolandsen, and Leonardi, Discourses of violence, p617.
[193] Ibid, p618.

motivated by their anti-colonialist and nationalist ideology. It was a question of national security to assure that ‘’foreign influence’’ through the spread of foreign ideology wouldn’t disrupt national integrity.[194]

2.2.2. The South’s Road to Regional Autonomy

As much as throughout its history southern Sudan suffered from external subjugation and exploitation, it is equally important to mention the importance of these exploitative systems’ legacy in the formation of a distinct southern identity. In the broader cultural landscape of Sudan, colonial history, from the Turko-Egyptian era to the British colonial rule, has transformed the South into a region with a particular sociopolitical structure. The colonial Sudan that Northern leaders inherited from the British had a binary administrative order. Northerners attempted to eliminate the marked distinction between North and South to create a single Sudan. Yet, a southern identity had already taken place, shaped by historical circumstances such as the effect of enslavement, defiance of cultural assimilation, the impact of British colonial policies and introduction of Christian and Western cultural standards in the South.[195]

At outset, Southerners’ political claims were not as radical as it would have appeared. They sought an equal treatment in a united Sudan. They focused their demands on political participation, having a seat at the table of decision. Southern elites measured political equality through their involvement in decision-making process. What appeared crucial for them was to be capable of having their voice counted in the political climate of the independent Sudan. Southern political struggle was not formulated, at least at that time, around an ideology of specific southern identity. The South’s frustration lied in their political isolation and exclusion from state institutions.[196]

After nearly a decade after the independence, as they become more and more organized politically, southern leaders started actively challenging the political status quo that

[194] Rolandsen, Øystein H, "A false start: Between war and peace in the Southern Sudan, 1956–62," The Journal of African History 52, no. 1 (2011):119.
[195] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p15.
[196] Ibid, p15-16.

confined them at the periphery of decision-making.[197] Even if their ambition of a federal Sudan didn't materialize, Southerners became determined to obtain key political responsibilities in the independent Sudan. They demanded a fair representation in Sudanese cabinet positions with the capacity to decide which positions suit their interests.[198]

Southern elites were aware of the multiple challenges the Sudanese state as a whole was facing. Instead, they decided to pursue political power, as they wanted, just like Northern leaders, to benefit from state resources.[199]

Nevertheless, it is equally important to mention that even few years after the independence and before the radicalization of southern political leadership, some southerners called for the implementation of institutions that would recognize the dual nature of the Sudanese society and the necessity of a federal system. That federal vision was based on the recognition of the cultural and religious values of the South and the materialization of distinct administrative order, educational policy and developmental strategy for Southerners. These political claims later constituted the benchmark of the southern insurgent movement, the Anya Nya rebellion, which started on November 1963.[200]

The early years of Sudan's independence were relatively stable, yet the South started, after a decade of post-colonial rule, being subject to political unrest. As frustrations of Southerners were growing, they started organizing themselves and formed an armed rebellion group. They concluded that the marginalization they faced for years needed a radical solution: a separation from Northern Sudan's control.[201]

Looking at the sociopolitical conditions of Sudan, one of the factors that sparked the southern necessity for an armed struggle were the controversial policies engaged by the

[197] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p19.
[198] Ibid, p88.
[199] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p305.
[200] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p50-51.
[201] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p16.

ruling military elites that came to power in 1958, two years after the independence. The military regime was radically opposed to the sociopolitical polarity that existed in the country. It took drastic measures by starting a forced cultural assimilation in the South.[202] Adoption of policies that restricted political freedom undermined Southern voices in Sudanese political landscape, exacerbating the radicalization of Southerners.[203] As the military regime became more and more authoritarian in its Southern policy, southern elites started actively organizing themselves clandestinely to further their political goals.[204]

The ruling Northern elites perceived the previous regime[205] of incapable of solving the southern problem. For them, a political separation of the South constituted a threat to Sudanese political independence and national integrity. The emergence of a southern militarist movement was a national security challenge that had to be solved through the removal of the cultural fence that prevents a true unification of North and South.[206] The 1960s in Sudan was marked by an acute political instability because of the Southern insurgency and the inability of political leaders to find a peaceful resolution. A second military regime came to power in 1969 and, just like the 1958 military regime, blamed civilian elites for their inability to find a solution to the southern problem. But contrary to the previous regime, the new military rulers came to realize that the southern insurgency cannot be resolved through use of military means. In consequence, they opened the door for peace talks.[207] A declaration of ceasefire was decided in order to create a stable political climate for the beginning of an eventual peaceful negotiations with southern insurgents.[208] At the time the new Northern military regime rose to power in 1969, the southern armed opposition gained in power and success and had access to external material support. As it became more organized, the Anya Nya movement rebranded itself in 1971 as the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) with the goal of total southern independence.[209]

[202] Ibid, 12.
[203] Rolandsen, A false start, p118.
[204] Ibid, p119.
[205] It refers to the civilian leaders that ruled the country at the independence (1956-1958).
[206] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p50-51.
[207] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p19.
[208] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p38.
[209] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p26.

Regional mediations opened the door to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. But separatist ideas supported by southern Sudanese leaders weren't popular among some East-African statemen which, influenced by a pan-Africanist ideology in African political matters, figured as key players in the Sudanese peace mediation. Therefore, it was more likely that peace negotiations that were taking place on February 1972 in Addis Abba would lead, at most, to a regional autonomy of the South. One the same date of February 1972, a peace agreement was met between the negotiating parties. It was decided that southern Sudan would be given a regional autonomy administrated through the Southern Regional Government (SRG). Southerners were given an opportunity to manage their internal affairs while remaining part of Sudan. A Regional Assembly and High Executive Council (HEC) would be part of regional institutional bodies that oversee southern matters. The SRG would also be given an authority on local tax collection. Besides, the agreement would allow the integration of rebellion insurgent into the national army.[210]

The ruling military regime that contributed to the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, nearly a decade after, started shifting in a disruptive way its southern policy. It decided to blatantly subvert the autonomous status of the southern region. First, in order to curtail conditions of southern unity, the northern regime adopted what could be perceived as a ''divide-and-rule'' strategy. In June 1983, the South was geographically redevised into three smaller areas, each with separate administrative body. Afterward, the Sudanese government passed on September 1983 new laws that based state institutions on a theocratic system which would serve as legal standards for all Sudanese, regardless their region. This decision, among others, contributed to the collapse of the 1972 peace agreement.[211]

Was Northern elites' political will in the context 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement genuine from the beginning? For some, it was a mere political opportunity of power consolidation for the military elites that were ruling the country. Despite a relatively peaceful political climate that the agreement led to, Northern leaders had remained incapable of finding a favorable outcome to the southern problem.[212] One of the factors that pushed Northern

[210] Ibid, p27.
[211] Ibid, p30.
[212] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p51.

elites to abrogate the 1972 peace deal was the discovery of oil in the South. After a US oil company had discovered in 1979 enormous oil reserves in a southern location, Northerners became determine to gain a total ownership of the newly found energy resources. This situation pushed the Sudanese government to redraw southern map as strategy of incorporating oil fields within Northern boundaries.[213] The failure of that strategy pushed Northern leaders to use more effective instruments to achieve their goals. They decided to formally abolish the legal autonomy of the South and redraw it into smaller administrative divisions.[214]

The discovery of oil did in a sense change the conflict's dynamics in Sudan. Because, not only political power was at play, but acquisition of wealth came to place itself as a crucial factor of contention. The way Northern leaders handled their southern policies after oil discovery showed that political compromise on wealth and power would be difficult to meet.[215]

2.2.3. Failure of Regional Autonomy and Resurgence of Violent Conflict

2.2.3.1. Competing Ideologies: A Northern ''New Sudan'' Versus a Southern ''New Sudan''

History of military coups, most of the time, shows that those who undermine a regime are more motivated by their frustration against the status quo than an ideology of radical change. This perspective is particularly true for Sudan, especially with the question of southern problem. After the advent of the two previous military coups that happened both in 1958 and 1969, the Sudanese army seized power for the third time in 1989 with a radical yet familiar vision of a ''New Sudan''. So far, the country hadn't been able to realize a national unity, it was therefore time for bringing about change.[216]

Military regimes that came to power had so far used civilian leaders' incapacity of resolving the southern problem as a pretext of power seizure. Their mode of governance

[213] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p21.
[214] Ibid, p23.
[215] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p114.
[216] Collins, Robert O., "Africans, Arabs, and Islamists: From the conference tables to the battlefields in the Sudan," African Studies Review 42, no. 2 (1999): 106.

shows that the radicality of their policies either contributes to the intensification of political tensions or leaves way to possibility of peaceful negotiations. This situation in a sense shows that, what appears first as their frustration against the lethargic status quo of unresolvable southern issue ends up causing them to take decisions that favor either a violent outcome or peaceful conflict resolution. The 1989 military coup brought to power an ideologically theocratic party known as the National Islamic Front (NIF). The NIF's southern policy wasn't new, as it envisioned a unitary Sudan culturally and religiously. Its imposition of radical measures aimed at creating the desired cultural and religious homogeneity in the Sudanese society.[217]

The NIF's vision of a New Sudan was based on an assimilationist program. As a political party run by military elites, it based its policy on the institutionalization of sociopolitical and economic aspects of the country through a coalescing vision of religious and cultural congruity. It also gave, in the context of its southern policy, priority to the use of military means associated with religious connotations.[218]

The New Sudan was to be based on strict religious principles. The political philosophy of the state would reside not only in the implementation of strict theocratic order, but also in the promotion of a cultural unity. A unitary ideology of governance would hence constitute the source of institutional order in the New Sudan. In this regard, to be a citizen is to obey to the logic of prescribed state ideals. The strategy of Northern elites envisioned a single society based on common values, eliminating in the process discordant voices capable of hindering national unity.[219]

The introduction in 1991 of a Penal Code, inspired from religious sources, helped justify, on legal grounds, crusade against those who didn't show conformity to the order established by authorities. All the institutional machinery of the Sudanese state came to be defined by religious laws.[220] As a result, state ideology closed to the door to divergent

[217] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p53.
[218] Ibid, p88.
[219] Collins, Slavery in the Sudan in History, p88.
[220] Ibid.

movements and voices in Sudanese political landscape. Those who didn't fit in that state ideology, especially Southerners, became therefore marginalized.[221]

Contrary to the political agenda of Southern insurgency during the First Civil War (1969-1972), the emerging new southern armed opposition had a less radical political program, at least at outset. Southern elites, through Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), adopted a strategy of change that hinged on broader and inclusive goals. The Anya Nya rebellion sparked the first insurgency against Northern rule because of economic, political and cultural factors that contributed to the backwardness of the South. It was an insurgency that was exclusively focused on southern struggle for the betterment of Southerners. The SPLA/M strategy was to struggle against the political status quo but with a vision that would go beyond southern issues.[222]

The SPLA/M emerged, first, in reaction against Northern elites' unilateral decision of abrogating the regional autonomous status of the South and the implementation of a theocratic order in 1983. Progressively, it became apparent that the SPLA/M was the most serious threat against the Government of Sudan (*GoS*). In their political agenda, southern leaders did not claim to seek a separation between North and South. According to them, their struggle was for the whole Sudan, as they envisioned a rebirth of a Sudanese society that would be based on inclusivity and equality, regardless citizens' background. In this regard, the SPLA/M appeared as a southern armed movement with a political and socioeconomic vision for the entire country.[223]

In their political philosophy, Southern elites advocated for a ''New Sudan'' based on inclusive values, shifting identity discourses – *who is a Sudanese?* – from racial and ethnic arguments to a question of citizenship and nationality.[224] This political vision would require a necessary reform that would redraw Sudanese identity upon new structure. In this regard, attempts to confine Sudanese identity within a single, unitary,

[221]Collins, Africans, Arabs, and Islamists, p110.
[222] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p10-11.
[223] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p53.
[224] Ibid, p105.

and exclusive would be subject to rejection.[225] The ‘’Old Sudan’’ was discriminatory in its essence and denied the existence of a plurality of identities within Sudanese society. The ‘’New Sudan’’ would therefore acknowledge not only the multitude of identities, but also transcend them to embrace the most essential value: *to be a Sudanese.*[226]

Southern elites' political agenda for their New Sudan's vision made them put at the center of their ideological struggle the multicultural nature of the Sudanese society. In that sense, Africanism would be part of the national identity of Sudan because of Northern elites' tendency to confine, in an exclusive way, Sudanese society into a rigid unitary cultural ideology.[227]

A political revolution became necessary for the achievement of the New Sudan's vision. Southern armed opposition wanted a genuine national reform which would encompass the whole Sudan, beyond the southern region. In this regard, the SPLA/M didn't perceive itself as leading an armed rebellion against the Sudanese regime. Rather, it saw itself as a revolutionary movement with the mission of achieving a profound structural transformation of the whole Sudan. From that perspective, what Sudan was facing wasn't exclusively a Southern problem, but rather a Sudanese issue. The country was in conflict with itself and needed therefore a political revolution that would lead to the resolution of the entire problem.[228]

It is through the emergence of a New Sudan that the historical patterns of domination and subjugation that created an equal society would be erased. While the political leadership of the SPLA/M, through Dr John Garang de Mabior, advocated actively for the materialization of the New Sudan project, there were Southerners that didn't share that vision, making it, in a sense, a controversial approach.[229] The inclusive political strategy of the Southern armed movement pushed them to build a formal collaboration with other Northern oppositions through the Asmara Declaration in 1995. The Declaration

[225] Ibid, p106.
[226] Ibid, p72.
[227] Sharkey, Le Soudan, un pays indivisible, dual ou pluriel ?, p30.
[228] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p32-33.
[229] Ibid, p17.

ultimately led to the creation of National Democratic Alliances (NDA), representing a conflation of northern and southern opposition groups. The NDA political agenda resided in the necessity of a confederative system and a referendum that would settle the question of Southern self-determination.[230] This coalition was a necessity for Southern leaders in their project of societal transformation. It was crucial to reach a national consensus with other northern opposition movements against the status quo that maintained so far Sudan in instability. In this regard, the NDA sought the demise of the National Islamic Front (NIF) rule and a resolution of the southern conflict.[231]

The southern opposition movement formulated, in its statehood project, the nature of the political system of the New Sudan that it desired. Its armed struggle aimed first to achieve a peace deal that would allow the creation of a confederal Sudan in which an autonomous Northern and Southern region would coexist. The confederal system would be conducted on a temporal basis to prepare the country to its ultimate test: unification or separation. Confederation would give an opportunity to reach the ultimate goal which is to realize a united New Sudan based on principles of democracy and secular rule. However, would the confederation system fail to be transformative, the North and the South should have the legal right to choose separation.[232] However, the decision of northern elites to base national institutions on a theocratic model constituted a blow to southern opposition leadership's New Sudan project. It represented a situation that gave more reasons to Southerners to seek at least an autonomous status, or at most a complete separation. It also pushed Southern leaders to envision an alternative to their New Sudan vision by advocating for an independence for Southerners.[233]

2.2.3.2. The Second Civil War: The Last Armed Conflict for a United Sudan

Armed struggle was for Southerners the most important means to attain their political goal. Despite the structural factors that so far underlined the Sudanese conflict, at least

[230] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p72.
[231] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p34.
[232] Ibid, p35-36.
[233]Collins, Africans, Arabs, and Islamists, p112.

three immediate causes can be perceived as sparking the second southern armed insurgency.

About a decade after the end of the First Civil War that took place between 1969 and 1972, the Sudanese political climate started becoming unstable, leading to a growing mistrust between Southerners and Northerners. This situation was particularly marked in the Sudanese military sector. A dynamic of internal security dilemma was prevailing among governmental forces and southern troops. The decision of northern leaders to send military reinforcements in the South contributed to various military unrest in the region. Previously, the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement had allowed the reintegration of southern insurgents, the Anya Nya rebels, in the national army. At some point, they constituted a potential threat to northern regime's survival. In order to alleviate an eventual resurgence of insurgency, Northern leaders decided to deploy southern regiments to the North in 1983. Upon this Northern strategy of counter-insurgency, number of southern military units rejected the deployment decision and joined the rank of the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) under the leadership of John Garand de Mabior, triggering in the same date the outbreak of the Second Civil War.[234]

Whether or not the outbreak of conflict was unavoidable, Northern leaders' decision to abrogate the autonomous status of the South and to impose a unitary vision of governance greatly contributed to violence revival. The demise of the 1972 Agreement motivated Southern garrisons to riot against Northern authorities.[235] The administrative redrawing of southern map also appeared as a reason for Southerners to choose military actions as last resort for the resolution of their issue.[236] The Addis Ababa Agreement did contribute to relative stability for a decade, allowing for the South's autonomy and an end to its insurgency. The demise of the agreement therefore made a southern armed struggle unavoidable.[237]

[234] Kebbede, Sudan: The north-south conflict in historical perspective, p24.
[235] Collins, Slavery in the Sudan in History, p85.
[236] Chevrillon-Guibert, Sud-Soudan: les acteurs de la construction, p57.
[237] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p154.

The discovery of oil also gave a new dynamic to the southern problem. Northern elites were decided to have ownership of oil resources although the latter was falling under southern jurisdiction. As an autonomous region, in the context of 1972 Agreement, the South had the legal right to oil control. The Sudanese government attempted to take away southern ownership of oil through use of legal means. It introduced unsuccessfully a measure that would redraw southern borders.[238] From this perspective, the discovery of oil added a new element to the Sudanese conflict. Armed struggle was no longer confined in the pursuit of identity and political ideals. It became also a fight for wealth and economic power.[239] The Southern struggle against Northern rule started way before the discovery of oil. The dire underdevelopment Southerners were facing was at the center of their insurgency. The opportunity of wealth through exploitation of oil gave them more reasons to intensify their struggle.[240]

2.3. Negotiation: From Right to Self-Determination to Independence

Decades of armed struggle left the country profoundly wounded. The South was determined to bring about sociopolitical and economic change since it became aware of its distinct identity and structural marginalization. Southern political conscience throughout most of the second half of the 20th century favored military response as means of transformative change. Southern identity came to be formed around political ideology that either focused on fair national inclusion or, when there was no other choice left, on total separation from Northern rule. This situation constituted, so far, the mindset of Southern political leadership: transformational change had to happen, or partition would be the only alternative left. Northerners were decided to keep the status quo which, in many respects, benefited them. Southern distinct identity was perceived as an obstacle to national unity and needed to be molded along with Northern cultural and religious patterns. Forced assimilation was, from Northern leaders' perspective, the most effective means to bring an end to Southern insurgency. But towards the last decade of the 20th century, for several reasons, peaceful negotiations started being perceived among warring

[238] Pedersen, Ascha, and Morgan Bazilian, '' Considering the impact of oil politics on nation building in the Republic of South Sudan,'' The Extractive Industries and Society 1, no. 2 (2014): 164.
[239] Sefa-Nyarko, Civil War in South Sudan, p199.
[240] Ibid, 200.

parties as the most convenient alternative. This section of our work focuses on ''diplomatic'' and consultative dimensions that shaped (South) Sudanese statehood dynamics from the late 20th century onwards.

2.3.1. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)

Southern armed struggle started having an effect on the Sudanese political landscape. The necessity of a durable resolution of the Southern problem and right to self-determination was becoming a national unanimity. Northern opposition groups in particular were more favorable to the idea of the South's entitlement to a favorable political outcome. The 1995 Asmara Declaration or Declaration of Principles, which united Northern and Southern opposition groups, was one of the most significant indications of a growing desire of a political settlement of the Southern problem.[241] The signature of the Asmara Declaration was perceived as a symbolic move of Northern opposition forces regarding the South. Some of Northern opposition groups came for the first to southern Sudan to affirm their political backing of Southern right to self-determination.[242]

It was in great part through the endeavors of the National Democratic Alliances (NDA), which was a political coalition of Northern and Southern opposition movements, that progressively a nationwide recognition of Southern right to self-determination became possible later. In the late 1990s, Southern entitlement to self-determination turned into a topic of political consensus, as even the most radical Northern elites started showing a favorable approach to the matter. In this respect, the 1995 Asmara Declaration represented a milestone in the political history of post-colonial Sudan. Not only it was the obvious sign that the old exclusive Sudan was coming to an end, but also it constituted a turning point in Southern state-making process.[243]

While the commitment of Northern leaders to a peaceful resolution of the Southern problem was becoming evident, the South had to find a political compromise with itself.

[241] Ibrahim Elnur, Contested Sudan: the Political Economy of War and Reconstruction (Routledge, 2009), p.116.
[242]Collins, Africans, Arabs, and Islamists, p117-118.
[243] Elnur, Contested Sudan, p117.

So far, Southern leadership advocated for a radical and transformative but within the framework of a united Sudan. Its immediate challenge was to be able to find a balance between its preference of unity and Southern separatism supporters. This situation constituted a political dilemma that southern leaders faced, as they were aware of the necessity of political alliances with other Northern opposition parties for a structural transformation of the country. But they were also conscious of the fact that Southerners as a whole must be given the right to decide whether or not unity is necessary for them.[244]

Ultimately, peace negotiations started between Northern and Southern political leaders in order to decide the political future of their country. The process that ultimately led to the signature of the CPA in 2005 was complex and extended over a long period of consultations. The warring parties' decision to opt for a peaceful resolution of the conflict after decades of bloodshed was influenced by a number of factors. First, new economic dynamics made it necessary for the country to prioritize peace. With the discovery oil, it became evident that stable sociopolitical conditions were necessary for realizing economic profit. This was particularly true with the beginning of oil exportation in 1999. Second, the profound antagonism that was prevailing between Northerners and Southerners probably contributed to the necessity of peaceful negotiations.[245] The growing national unanimity on a peaceful resolution and Southern right to self-determination also shaped the peace consultations. Besides, the armed conflict's consequence was profoundly devastating, as the country fall into a severe humanitarian crisis. It became therefore crucial to find an effective political solution to avoid a worsening of the humanitarian disaster.[246] Conflict-fatigue and external pressures figure as well among factors that influenced the Sudanese peace talk process. The protraction of violent hostilities reached a point where the warring parties' military resources were depleting. The decrease of material assistance by external actors made it obvious that the armed struggle was reaching an end-point.[247] The intervention of the international

[244]Collins, Africans, Arabs, and Islamists, p119.
[245] Elnur, Contested Sudan, p112.
[246] Ibid, p113.
[247] Ibid.

community also played a role in the peace process. External pressures particularly increased because of calamitous humanitarian outcome the conflict led to.[248]

Political consultations between contending parties led, in 2002, to the signature of the Mackakos Protocol under the mediation of the Intern-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). It was an important step in the peace process, because it constituted the formal recognition of Southern right to self-determination. It also allowed the continuation in the North of religious institutions.[249] The Mackados Protocol would serve as the backbone of future consultations. It was a partial victory for Southerners, as their struggle for a reformed national integration or political autonomy not only gained a legal basis, but also was about to end with a desired outcome. The series of meeting and negotiations finally led to the last stage of the peace process with the signature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 2005.[250]

The peace agreement was signed between the Northern ruling party, the National Congress Party (NCP), and the Southern insurgent movement, the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). In its final form, the CPA didn't entail total independence to the South. Instead, it was built around a confederal political system. The South was mentioned as ''Southern Sudan'' instead of ''South Sudan'', as an indication of its regional autonomous. In other terms, instead of a direct partition, the CPA conferred to Southerners a regional independence that allowed an independent organization of their internal affairs. Within a united Sudan, Southern Sudan would be entitled a separate regional executive body and regional armed force. In the confederation context, the CPA envisioned a constitutional reform for the whole country. A temporary national constitution would be built on egalitarian and democratic principles, whereas, a religious institutional order would be maintained only for the North.[251]

As a result of the signature of the CPA, the SPLA/M leader John Garang was nominated as vice president of Sudan and the first regional president of Southern Sudan. Although

[248] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p168.
[249] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p90.
[250] Elnur, Contested Sudan, p119.
[251] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p17.

an autonomous status was given to the South, the CPA provided Southerners an opportunity to ultimately determine their region's political fate. It was decided that during a six years interim period, from 2005 to 2011, Southern Sudan would function as an independent region. At the end of the Interim Period, through the organization of a referendum, Southerners would decide whether to stay in a united Sudan or choose a total Southern independence.[252]

The Southern problem has been a constant dynamic throughout the post-colonial era of Sudan. What the CPA managed to create is to bring about a peaceful resolution by focusing on three main structural dimensions that have been, since the beginning, at the center of the Southern problem: political authority, economic management and military organization. First of all, the political arrangements of the CPA or ''Power Sharing Agreement'', as already mentioned, entitles to the South an autonomous status at a regional level and political representation at a national level. The Interim Period (2005-2011) gave an opportunity to Northerners and Southerners to work towards an ''attractive unity''. The failure of political coexistence would allow the South, after the end of the Interim Period, to decide a partition or the continuation of unity. Democratic reforms would also be undertaken to ensure inclusion in governmental positions, to achieve stable national institutions, rule of law and egalitarian system.[253]

The economic dimensions of the CPA or ''Wealth Sharing Agreement'' focused on the provision of conditions that would facilitate allocation of resources and long-lasting decentralized mechanisms in locations that are particularly in need of public funding. The agreement bestows on the South a financial framework that would not only allow it to benefit from a portion of profit made from oil and non-oil sectors, but also create a basic Southern independent economic system. Southerners would be entitled to collection of local income taxes and foreign aid and the creation of bank system.[254] The question of oil resources management constituted a crucial aspect of the resolution of the southern problem, as it had a double effect on the peace process. It created among the parties

[252] Malwal, Sudan and South Sudan, p162-163.
[253] Elnur, Contested Sudan, p119.
[254] Ibid.

enough economic incentives to make negotiations easier. However, it also caused the neglect of other crucial aspects of the economic dimension of the peace deal.[255]

The military aspect or the ‘’Security Protocol’’ of the CPA allowed for a reform of the country’s military sector with an emphasis on parties’ collaboration. The reform of the security sector would be built around three main articulations. First, a separate Southern and Northern national army and a combined military unit would be created, serving as a basis of an eventual Sudanese national armed force. Second, once the combined military unity created, each party would progressively reduce its military capacities. And finally, the South also would be given the right to gather material assistance for its own military forces.[256] However, the creation of combined military unit for both North and South hinged on the political outcome that would predominate after the end of the interim period of six years. In other words, a joint military force would be created on the condition that the South’s referendum on its political future would result in unity.[257]

Despite the opportunity of achieving multiple southern political goals and the cessation of decades of bloodshed that it offered, the CPA has been subject to criticisms. Its detractors point out to at least three fundamental limits of the peace agreement: its exclusive nature, its reproduction of colonial discourse and its failure to resolve other important issues. First of all, the CPA is perceived by some to be a non-inclusive peace deal. It focused solely on the political interests of the ruling party, the National Congress Party (NCP), and the SPLA/M, the Southern opposition movement. It contributed to consolidate the political power of these two parties that were, in reality, lacking legitimacy from a perspective of democratic principles.[258] One of the factors that pushed the NCP to favor a peace settlement wasn’t necessarily its desire of democratic and secular rule. Rather, it was the opportunity of power stabilization offered by peace negotiations that influenced its motivation for an agreement.[259] The agreement also constituted for the Northern regime a political strategy that would help create an

[255]Ibid, p120.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid, p127.
[258] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p18.
[259] Ibid, p19.

optimistic perception of its rule in the international community or, at least, hinder external pressure and interference on its internal affairs. This situation contributed to what some would considered as the peace deal biggest drawback, the absence of an international supervision that would focus on the agreement's implementation.[260] By using an exclusive approach that limited political participation between two actors, the CPA neglected to take account of the southern region' internal dissension that was gradually exacerbated by the disruptive impact of the conflict on southern communal life.[261]

Secondly, the CPA recreated social patterns that dominated discourses of Sudanese society during British colonialism. The agreement can be considered as a ''return'' to the colonial construction that divided Sudanese society into two distinct identities.[262] The British colonial paradigm of governance created a racialized Northern Sudan and an ethnicized Southern Sudan. Yet, during the peace negotiations, the parties failed to address the Sudanese society's racialization and ethnicization which were at the core of the country's political crisis, maintaining the colonial structure of their society. As a consequence, the North is to be based on a religious institutional order which, in turn, could violate the civil and human rights of those perceived as nonconformists. Besides, while the agreement creates conditions for the South's political emancipation, the decision of establishing Southern customary laws as basis of constitutional order is problematic. It could lead to a pronounced identity politics and constitute a source of ethnic divisions, allowing hence for internal conflicts in the South. From this perspective, the CPA missed the opportunity for a profound institutional transformation of the Sudanese state, opening the door to an authoritarian Northern rule and undemocratic Southern political system.[263]

Finally, the CPA failed to resolve important issues that could be source of an eventual Northern-Southern tension. The agreement didn't find a resolution to territorial issues, especially in areas strategically important because of energy resources they contain,

[260] Kalpakian, Jack Vahram, "Peace agreements in a near-permanent civil war: Learning from Sudan and South Sudan," South African Journal of International Affairs 24, no. 1 (2017): 4.
[261] Chevrillon-Guibert, Sud-Soudan : les acteurs de la construction, p53-54.
[262] Idris, Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan, p90.
[263] Ibid, p91.

especially the Abeiy region.[264] According to some, the peace deal is non-conclusive because of the unsettlement of crucial issues such as borders dispute, control of oil resources, unsolved citizenship problem.[265]

2.3.2. The Outcome

Towards the end of the six years interim period (2005-2011), the Sudanese political situation became marked by Southerners' growing preference for a total independence. The organization of elections in 2010 in the whole country was perceived as an opportunity to enhance democratic values in the country.[266] There were fears that organizing elections in a state profoundly marked by internal divisions and political mistrust could lead to further instability. But it became clear that for Southerners, the peace deal wasn't to serve as a means to bring about a democratic order in the country. Instead, Southern leaders' main concern was the realization of a political partition.[267] The elections finally took place in April 2010 and resulted in the continuity of the NCP political rule in the North and the maintenance of the SPLM dominance in the South.[268] The Interim period ultimately failed to create a promising national unity for Northerners and Southerners. As a result, in the referendum of January 2011, nearly the entire South opted for a total independence for itself.[269] South Sudan became officially an independent country on 9 July 2011.[270]

[264] Pedersen, Ascha, and Morgan Bazilian, '' Considering the impact of oil politics on nation building in the Republic of South Sudan,'' The Extractive Industries and Society 1, no. 2 (2014): 165.
[265] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p20.
[266] Brosché, Johan, and Kristine Höglund, "Crisis of governance in South Sudan: electoral politics and violence in the world's newest nation," The Journal of Modern African Studies 54, no. 1 (2016): 9.
[267] Brosché, and Höglund, Crisis of governance in South Sudan, p10.
[268] LeRiche and Arnold, South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence, p130-131.
[269] Ibid, p18.
[270] Ibid, p1.

CHAPTER 3: UNDERLYING FACTORS OF FRAGILITY IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE SOUTH SUDANESE STATE

3.1. A Quasi-State: Fragile Internal Sovereignty

3.1.1. Contested Territory: Undefined and Unstable Internal and External Borders

From the outset of its independence in 2011, South Sudan was characterized by its political authorities' inability to exert or maintain its territorial integrity. As part of one essential dimension of statehood, the physical base of a state or its territory is critical in assessing a state's capacity to preserve its material existence and population. This ability to protect, internally or externally, the integrity of borders has so far appeared as an important aspect of the South Sudanese state weakness. While the country's benefited from an international and judicial recognition of its political existence in the international system, its process of building itself or, at least, of detaining a crucial aspect of material statehood and internal sovereignty was far from being achieved.[271]

The inability of the state to exert a territorial presence in all its regions became more obvious with its strong presence in the capital, Juba, on the one hand, and its physical withdrawal from rural areas on the other hand. Governmental officials have managed to effectively project their power only in the capital. The immediate implication of this territorial incapacity was the exacerbation of uncontrolled areas. Because of governmental absence and authority void, these spaces became dominated by non-state armed groups that caused nothing short of anarchic and destructive behaviors.[272] The evidence of territorial weakness demonstrated a profound internal weakness, as the South Sudanese state showed an incapacity to project its power beyond its capital city or regional capitals.[273]

[271] Giraudeau, Géraldine, "La naissance du Soudan du Sud: la paix impossible?," Annuaire Français de Droit International 58, no. 1 (2012): 79.
[272] Kuol, Luka, "Three trajectories facing South Sudan," Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. (2018), p4.
[273] Lacher, W, "South Sudan: International State-Building and its Limits. SWP Research Paper 2012/RP 04. Berlin: Germany Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik," German Institute for International and Security Affairs, (2012), p7.

The external dimension of the issue of territorial integrity of South Sudan is related to its unresolved border issue with its Sudanese neighbor. South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan, but the tensions between the two countries didn't fade away as they continued to undermine each other on the question of contested borders. South Sudan shared in its northern part at least 20 km of borders with Sudan and faced territorial disputes with its neighbor on the question of the ownership of the regions of Abyei, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. The South Sudanese state engaged itself in an open competition with its Sudanese counterpart over the control of these areas. These aforementioned three regions appeared strategically important because of the presence of natural resources but also constituted for the young nation a source of territorial instability.[274]

As South Sudan was approaching independence in 2011, through its transitional constitutional arrangements, it claimed legal ownership of the Abyei region.[275] But a legal claim all alone was insufficient in the ownership of a contested area. The declaration of legal ownership ought to be followed by an ability to exert a physical control of the claimed territory. The reaction of the Sudanese state against South Sudan claim was the immediate invasion and occupation of the Abyei region. Whether or not the legal claim of the South Sudanese state was in accordance of international law, local inhabitants and South Sudanese military presence were driven out from the region as a result of the Sudanese invasion.[276] This violent development of territorial disputes between the two countries contributed to cause further instability in the region. The Sudanese army subsequently invaded in 2012 another disputed territory, the Heglig town of Southern Kordofan region. While South Sudan acceded to independence, it was clear that it was struggling to control its territory and claimed borders in an efficient way. Territorial disputes with its Sudanese neighbor brought South Sudan on the verge of war, as military confrontation for the conquest of borders continued between the two states. This situation exacerbated the South Sudanese state's inability to protect its borders, especially

[274] Mwangi S Kimenyi, "Future Engagement between South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan," in One Year After South Sudan's Independence: Opportunities and Obstacles for Africa's Newest Country (Brookings Africa Growth Initiative, 2012), p7.
[275] Matthew Arnold and Matthew LeRiche, South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence (Oxford University Press, 2013), p151.
[276] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p152.

following Sudan's alleged use of informal armed groups in order to undermine its rival's stability.[277]

Sudan's military actions were preceded by non-violent yet drastic measures against South Sudan, such as the closure of trade borders. The use of this economic leverage suggested the intent of the Sudanese state to weaken the new-born state which had naturally a nascent economy.[278] Because of territorial disputes, just within one year starting from its independence (2011-2012), South Sudan was confronted by a destabilizing relationship with its Sudanese neighbor over contested borders. The shutdown, at that time, of trade roads and military hostilities undermined the embryonic South Sudanese state's stability.

From the perspective of its internal borders, the South Sudanese state was also confronted to severe limitations in its capacity to impose a territorial order. The question of territorial delimitation particularly fueled tensions and hostilities between local communities. At the beginning of its independence, based on its temporary constitutional arrangements, South Sudan's administrative and territorial structure was established through the recognition of ten regional states. Territorial subdivisions within these regions allowed local lands' repartition into counties which, in turn, were made up *payams* and *bomas*[279], both representing the smallest South Sudanese administrative areas. As the importance of local land ownership started growing, the country became vulnerable to hostilities between local inhabitants.[280]

Relatively to lands' dispute between communities, three possible factors contributed to the internal territorial weakness of South Sudan. First of all, communal frictions between South Sudanese citizens on the question of land ownership has a historical root. During the British rule, colonial rulers engaged in an arbitrary territorial organization, they tended

[277] Schomerus, Mareike, Lotje de Vries, and Christopher Vaughan, "Introduction: Negotiating Borders, Defining South Sudan," in The Borderlands of South Sudan: Authority and Identity in Contemporary and Historical Perspectives (Plagrave Macmillan, 2013), p7.
[278] Rolandsen, Øystein H, "Too Much Water under the Bridge: Internationalization of the Sudan–South Sudan Border and Local Demands for Its Regulation," in The Borderlands of South Sudan: Authority and Identity in Contemporary and Historical Perspectives (Plagrave Macmillan, 2013), p34.
[279] Theoretically, South Sudan's decentralization system is organized as followed: 1. Central government, 2. Regional states, 3. Counties, 4. Payams, and 5. Bomas.
[280] Justin, Peter Hakim, and Lotje De Vries, "Governing unclear lines: local boundaries as a (re) source of conflict in South Sudan," Journal of Borderlands Studies 34, no. 1 (2019): p35.

to relocate local communities from a space to another, regardless local dynamics and traditions.[281] This ultimately contributed to the contemporary landownership competition between local residents. Secondly, the conflation of traditional and formal political structures in local administrations contributed to the emergence of local disputes on rightful landownership.[282] Simultaneous involvement of traditional and governmental authorities in the resolution of lands disputes may have led to conflicting decisions, causing more instability instead of de-escalating the situation. Finally, the lack of clear institutional order on the question of land management also led to contradictory perspectives among citizens. While some favored the establishment of local borders along with ethnic lines and indigeneity as condition of landownership, there were voices that argued that territorial delimitation should be approached on the basis of the majority group. The state's incapacity to solve these contradictions suggested not only its lack of territorial monopoly but also of clear lack of institutional lines upon which absorb internal territorial issues. The result of this inability was the increase of local conflicts, further aggravated by ethnic motivations.[283]

The country became highly unstable as local disputes over territorial ownership waxed. For reasons such as cattle-herding or farming, local communities tended to engage in physical confrontations over control of lands.[284] State policies on the matter also contributed to the exacerbation of this internal territorial instability. Whether South Sudanese ruling elites were unwilling or unable to impose order, their decision in 2015 to increase the number of local administrative areas has been interpreted as a way of favoring their own communities in the question of internal borders.[285] Even though reversed in 2020[286], this decision contributed, at that time, to the increase of local violence between communities over territorial disputes.[287] Overall, this situation demonstrates a

[281] Ibid.
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Johnson, Hilde F, South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to Civil War (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), p291.
[285] International Crisis Group, ''Salvaging South Sudan's Fragile Peace Deal,'' (Africa Report N°270, March 2019), p4.
[286] Garang A. Malak, "South Sudan Ministers Endorse Return to 10 States," The East African (The East African, February 20, 2020), https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/South-Sudan-ministers-endorse-return-to-10-states/4552908-5462044-147984w/index.html).
[287] Leonardi, Cherry, and Martina Santschi, Dividing Communities in South Sudan and Northern Uganda: boundary disputes and land governance (Rift Valley Institute, 2016), p12.

fragile and volatile territorial order that displayed the South Sudanese state's incapacity to properly control its lands.

3.1.2. Heave Reliance on External Intervention for Basic Services

The heavy reliance of South Sudanese authorities on external aid for the provision of basic services also portrayed a limited statehood capacity. South Sudan showed an incapacity to be efficiently functioning without aid from international actors. From a historical standpoint, the current South Sudanese ruling structure, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), relied on external aid for its functioning since its inception. Over a long time, it showed an incapacity to provide services to local communities without external intervention. Ultimately, this situation rose the question of South Sudanese elites' capacity to independently rule the then soon-to-be-independent state.[288]

The high presence of external actors' assistance in the delivery of basic services in South Sudan exposed greatly the limited capacity of South Sudanese authorities. Hence, as the country was approaching its independence, it became very pertinent to cast doubt on the capacity of national elites in meeting the population's needs without the intervention of international organizations.[289] Unfortunately, just in a year after independence, the internal conditions of the country deteriorated, crucial sectors such as education and health were failing to meet the citizens' needs. As a result, the provision of important part of basic services was undertaken through external intervention.[290] In that sense, the country's struggle was profound, it was lacking a capacity to properly function. What appeared to have prevented a complete downfall of the country was the continual material intervention of international organizations. Through donors' funds, the United Nations dedicated a yearly budget of one billion dollar to its humanitarian operations in the country.[291]

[288] Washburne, Sarah Lykes, ''Post-war governance and the impact of international aid in South Sudan,'' in Forging Two Nations Insights on Sudan and South Sudan (Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern & Southern Africa, 2013), p193.
[289] Washburne, Post-war governance, p194.
[290] Martell, Peter, First Raise a Flag: How South Sudan Won the Longest War But Lost the Peace (Oxford University Press, USA, 2019), p215.
[291] Martell, First raise a flag, p259.

In terms of services provision, the prevailing challenges were overwhelming for the new state's capacity. The population was in a critical situation, its huge majority needed immediate humanitarian assistance.[292] The enormity of the humanitarian situation was such that, economically, the cost of humanitarian assistance appeared, for a time, to be most costly in the world. In big metropolises such as New York City, affording ingredients for cooking a meal of rice and beans would cost around 1 percent of a regular daily earnings. Whereas, for accomplishing the same thing in South Sudan, one would need about 155 percent of a daily income. This situation made the economic cost of provision of basic needs such as food in South Sudan one of the highest in the world.[293]

The South Sudanese state's capacity appeared insignificant in the continuous delivery of basic services, as a result, the international community continued to operate in the country mostly through humanitarian intervention. An enormous share of this external humanitarian assistance was dedicated to the provision of the populations' immediate needs.[294] The country became largely dependent on food assistance, as an important number of citizens was facing food insecurity.[295] The severe incapacity of the state to provide services made the international organizations involvement critical for survival. In that sense, from the perspective of services delivering, it became clear that the South Sudanese government predominantly depended on the presence of international aid.[296]

While South Sudan's official authorities were being exhorted to assume more social duties as a proper governing body, critical sectors such as healthcare were continuously, for the most part, maintained by international organizations. In that sense, the state's responsibility of meeting citizens' needs through basic services delivery became somehow handed over to external actors. As a result of the state's incapacity and the continuous external intervention, the population, at a certain point, diverted their

[292] Ibid, p272.
[293] Ibid, p244.
[294] Johnson, The Untold Story, p28-29.
[295]Pape, Utz, "South Sudan: Impact of a Continued Internal Conflict on Food Security and Poverty," World Bank Group, (2014):4.
[296] Reeve, Richard, "Peace and Conflict Assessment of South Sudan," International Alert (2012):50.

expectations of services delivery towards international organizations rather than their own leaders.[297]

3.1.3. Undefined and Unstable Political System

South Sudan faced an unsettled situation regarding its nature of governance. While an effective statehood supposes the establishment of a clear form of government that administrates the state, South Sudan has so far been confronted to the question of the proper political system upon which it should rest its governance. The transitional constitutional arrangements that preceded its formal independence constituted an occasion during which the country discussed the future of its mode of governance. That is to say, debates were made on the question of whether an independent South Sudan state ought to be based on a federal/decentralized system or on an unitarist mode of administration.[298] In practice, the mode of government in South Sudan was a centralized system but had so far showed its limits, especially because of the central government neglect of some of its core responsibilities at the lower levels of political representations. However, the adoption of a federal structure also contained serious risks for the country. Devolution of political power at lower levels within a system that was already failing might have not be sufficient to overcome the existing challenges. Rather, it could only proliferate forms of violence and political instability at these lower levels of the administration.[299]

The inability of elites in reaching a clear and definitive consensus regarding the choice of a core system of governance demonstrated the fact that the state had yet to find its political identity. This lack of consensus contributed to the fragilization of state harmony. While in theory, South Sudan was based on a decentralized system, the reality on the ground indicated otherwise, as power was greatly concentrated on the central government. This institutional and structural disarray contributed to a weakened statehood and favored the

[297] Reeve, peace and conflict, p51.
[298] Kimenyi, Mwangi S, ‘’Making federalism work in South Sudan,’’ in One Year After South Sudan's Independence: Opportunities and Obstacles for Africa's Newest Country (Brookings Africa Growth Initiative, 2012), p16.
[299] De Vries, Lotje, Peter Hakim Justin, and Camille Niaufre, "Un mode de gouvernement mis en échec: dynamiques de conflit au Soudan du Sud, au-delà de la crise politique et humanitaire," Politique africaine 3 (2014): 173.

competition of non-state actors against formal structures in the South Sudanese political landscape.[300] Besides, the absence of political consultations in a representative and inclusive way aggravated the structural conundrum the country was facing on the question of the form of government to adopt. Because of the absence of consensus-based political order, actors with diverse agendas tended to operate independently from the state's institutional monopoly.[301]

Debate around the form of government to adopt became, particularly during the 2015 peace talks, extremely factionalized. As the country felt into a civil conflict in 2013, political contention between South Sudanese elites on the question of governance mode turned out to be manifestly divisive, the government of South Sudan (GoSS) supporting an unitarian order on one hand, and the opposition group's preferring federalism on the other hand.[302] The ruling power's refusal of free debates on the matter was accompanied by authoritarian measures, such as censorship and violent opposition against voices favoring federal views. This situation not only displayed a profound lack of national consensus on the nature of the form of government, but also exposed the country to more instable situations. Could history repeat itself over the question of federalism in the form of internal political conflict, as it occurred in the post-colonial Sudan when Southern Sudanese took arms against the political status quo in the Sudanese state?[303] Following the outbreak of civil conflict in 2013, the disruptive impact of political disagreement over the governance system to adopt became more obvious once the opposition party designated ''federalism'' as its political mantra, whereas the GoSS perceived such a stance as national betrayal.[304]

Frictions on the question of the form of government hadn't solely occurred among South Sudanese elites but were also reflected among local communities. Communal involvement has worsened the situation about the country's political future, because

[300] Chevrillon-Guibert, Raphaëlle, "Sud-Soudan: les acteurs de la construction et de la formation de l'État," Afrique contemporaine 2 (2013): 76.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Kuol, Luka Biong D, "South Sudan: The Elusive Quest for a Resilient Social Contract?," Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding (2019): 8.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Johnson, Douglas Hamilton, "Federalism in the history of South Sudanese political thought," Rift Valley Institute Research Paper 1 (2014): 26.

debates on the matter were being developed along with ethnic lines and started taking a regionalist rather than a federalist form.[305] Communities from the southern part of South Sudan, the Equatorians, were particularly more involved in the call for federal political order. Their stance was perceived to be source of disruption as, according to some voices in the public opinion, their regionalist advocacy would only contribute to the weakening of internal harmony and open the door to more local instabilities.[306]

The Equatorians tend to perceive themselves socially and culturally different from other regional groups in South Sudan. This perception contributed to their preference for federalism, a political system that would supposedly allow them to independently manage their regional affairs. But their political approach contained political risks because it constituted a challenge to the constitutional consensus needed by the state to move forward.[307] The Equatorians were mostly motivated by their fear of being under the political domination of the Dinkas, the majority South Sudanese ethnic group. Their desire lied in the fact that, within a united Sudan, a political structure that allows for self-rule in local affairs ought to be implemented.[308] Hence, the GoSS' opposition to an effective decentralized system of governance created frustration among communities. The South Sudanese rulers' approach, especially during the 2011 Transitional Constitution-making process, was perceived to be marginalizing. From that perspective, whether in the form of regionalism, federalism or decentralization, the political disagreement on the nature of the form of government to adopt contributed to a situation of fragility for the South Sudanese state.[309]

3.2. Security Dimension of Fragility

3.2.1. The South Sudanese State's Absence of Violence Monopoly

[305] Frahm, Ole, "Defining the nation: National identity in South Sudanese media discourse," Africa Spectrum 47, no. 1 (2012): 30.
[306] Frahm, Defining the nation, p31.
[307] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p156.
[308] Ibid, p232.
[309]Radon, Jenik, and Sarah Logan, "South Sudan: governance arrangements, war, and peace," Journal of International Affairs (2014): 155.

Modern statehood is fundamentally associated to the principle that asserts that violence must be under the monopoly of state control. An incapacity to detain a total control of military means in a society is therefore perceived as a mark of an internal weakness of the state. South Sudan was particularly challenged by various local dynamics that have transformed it into a highly militarized society in which resources of violence became accessible to the majority of the population. Despite its access to independence, South Sudan became challenged from outset by the predominance of a military class. The departure of Northern Sudanese rule opened the door to a South Sudanese social class defined by ethnic and military dynamics.[310] South Sudan's political landscape was dominated by political actors that mostly relied on military networks or, in some cases, possessed their own military force. As a consequence, South Sudan became a highly militarized society.[311]

The proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) contributed greatly to the militarization of South Sudanese society. The widespread circulation of SALW, historically speaking, was favored by decades of war waged in the region. It is one of the long-lasting impacts of the armed struggle that occurred during the South Sudanese wars of liberation.[312] Few years prior to the South Sudanese independence, SALW were enormously widespread, as only at the hands of civilians around 720, 000 were circulating. This high circulation of weapons among the population contributed to a profound militarization of social life.[313]

The advent of independence didn't contribute to a decrease of civilian arms possession rate. On the contrary, the militarization of the society exacerbated as, while more than 3 million SALW were available, two-thirds of the South Sudanese population were

[310] D'Agoôt, Majak, '' Taming the dominant gun class in South Sudan,'' (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. 2018), p12.
[311] Kuol, Kuol Deim, ''Confronting the challenges of South Sudan's security sector: a practitioner's perspective,'' (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. 2018), p40.
[312]Kahl, Marius, '' The challenge of increasing the security of the people in South Sudan,'' in Forging Two Nations Insights on Sudan and South Sudan (Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern & Southern Africa, 2013), p206.
[313] Zambakari, Christopher, '' Post-referendum South Sudan: Political drivers of violence and the challenge of democratic nation-building.'' in Forging Two Nations Insights on Sudan and South Sudan (Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern & Southern Africa, 2013), p103.

estimated to be in possession of these weapons in 2011.[314] The prevalent presence of SALW made, in fact, illegal ownership of guns much easier among civilians, especially the youth. The militarization of social life allowed for civilians' use of violence to achieve their personal crusade of justice in cases of perceived wrongdoings from other groups or individuals.[315]

The widespread circulation of SALW led to an internal disruption and an increase of violence in South Sudan. Weapons became easily accessible, violence outside the sphere of state in consequence proliferated. The formation of ethnic groups of self-defense and intercommunal hostilities aggravated with the multiplication of uncontrolled weapons possession.[316] Despite its access to independence, South Sudan became confronted, mainly because of its high militarization, to an insecurity problem. Urban zones have started facing a growing crime rate, violence against civilians became common across regions and even confrontations between local communities took a more disastrous turn.[317]

The proliferation of weapons and the militarized nature of the society have made acts of violence more calamitous. The use of violence resources became one of the most affordable commodities and was easily materialized outside the sphere of the state. The impact of widespread circulation of SALW contributed to the transformation of social relations. Instead of the use of peaceful ways to deal with social tensions, people tended to rely on military means to resolve disputes. The resolution of local matters became militarized with deadly results in local communities. In that sense, the widespread proliferation of weapons pervaded social harmony in South Sudan, as just in a month after independence in 2011, communal confrontation led to the death of hundreds of civilians

[314] Charlton Doki and Adam Mohamed Ahmad, "'Africa's Arms Dump': Following the Trail of Bullets in the Sudans," The Guardian (Guardian News and Media, October 2, 2014), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/02/-sp-africa-arms-dump-south-sudan.
[315] Jok, Jok Madut, "Mapping the sources of conflict and insecurity in South Sudan: living in fear under a newly-won freedom," (The Sudd Institute, Special Report 1 2013), p17.
[316] Lacher, W, "South Sudan: International State-Building and its Limits. SWP Research Paper 2012/RP 04. Berlin: Germany StiftungWissenschaft und Politik," (German Institute for International and Security Affairs, 2012), p10.
[317] Jok, Mapping the sources of conflict, p16.

and the destruction of local economic resources.[318] The capacity to rely freely on the use of SALW encouraged the emergence of groups that engaged in acts of violence independently from local leadership structure. The disruption of local leadership of structure caused an uncontrolled use of violence resources and had the potential to ultimately lead to a more profound anarchic situation.[319]

The South Sudanese state's incapacity to maintain violence under its control encouraged the proliferation of informal armed actors. These actors engaged themselves in filling up the security void created by state security weakness. The extreme circulation of SALW undermined greatly the GoSS security capacity. Existing formal security structures appeared unable to absorb challenges related to uncontrolled violence, especially when it came to the assurance of civilians' safety. As a result, non-state South Sudanese armed groups expanded their influence throughout various areas where they operated as security providers to their own communities. These groups also engaged themselves in criminal activities such as unlawful tax recovery and use of violence against people outside their communities.[320]

At the advent of independence, ironically, while the SPLM detained a predominance over political life, it remained uncapable of assuring a monopoly over recourse to military resources in the country. In consequence, since the beginning of independence, it faced, in the security sector, competition from informal armed groups which, in turn, continuously relied on violence as a means to achieve their various ambitions.[321] With the increasing weakness of the GoSS' legitimacy, non-state armed groups continued their proliferation in the South Sudanese security sector, reaching at a certain point over 40 distinct factions.[322]

[318] Agbor, Julius and Olumide Taiwo, '' Managing ethnic diversity,'' in One Year After South Sudan's Independence: Opportunities and Obstacles for Africa's Newest Country, (Brookings Africa Growth Initiative, 2012), p14.
[319] Hutton, Lauren, South Sudan: From fragility at independence to a crisis of sovereignty (Conflict Research Unit, The Clingendael Institute, 2014), p21.
[320] Lacher, South Sudan, p24-25.
[321] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p159.
[322] Kuol, Three trajectories facing South Sudan, p3.

The extreme militarization of the South Sudanese society immensely complicated the GoSS' management of the security sector. The incapacity of the state to fulfill its security service or to implement policy that would help tackle the existing military challenges pushed local communities to count on themselves in the maintenance of local security.[323] Overall, the security structure of the South Sudanese state became highly insufficient in the delivery of security services. The structural weakness of state security meant that civilians and informal armed groups were armed enough to bypass state intervention to ensure communal security.[324]

3.2.2. Weak Security Structures

The security dimension of fragility in South Sudan was characterized by an acute failure of security reform, a situation that contributed to the weakness of the existing South Sudanese security structure. The security sector appeared in South Sudan, first of all, in the form of a great economic burden that absorbed enormously state's financial resources. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), as South Sudan's national army, encompassed all alone more than half of state's employees. Around 60 percent of governmental salary expenditure was dedicated to the security sector. The economic burden of the security sector was further exacerbated by an extreme multiplication of armed factions, resulting in the neglect of other important sectors. However, the enormous financial dedication to the security sector didn't bring about any real reform, rather, it contributed to the solidification of the South Sudanese military class.[325]

The state's lack of monopoly contributed to the expansion of military leaders' use of violence as a means of seeking power and influence.[326] The strategy of political bargaining through means of violence by military elites and non-state armed factions made the state vulnerable to military uprisings and threats. As the GoSS continued to rely on the use of cooptation as a way of absorbing these threats, its economic capacity became overwhelmed by the continual integration of militias within the national army. In other

[323] Hutton, South Sudan, p20.
[324] Reeve, peace and conflict, p41.
[325] Kuol, South Sudan: The Elusive Quest, p10.
[326] Brosché, Johan, and Kristine Höglund, "Crisis of governance in South Sudan: electoral politics and violence in the world's newest nation," The Journal of Modern African Studies 54, no. 1 (2016): 18.

words, the South Sudanese state had used military integration and resources distribution as a strategy of containing troublemakers, but, by continuously doing so, it reached a point where the security sector all alone became an enormous financial liability for the country's national budget.[327] In that sense, South Sudan's security sector appeared as a ''social welfare system'' that absorbed numerous armed factions and created nothing but a false sense military order.[328]

South Sudan's national army appeared to be highly ethnicized and personalized, relationships within it were based on a patronized order, preventing the achievement of a real security sector reform. The roots of disorganized military integration within the national army go back to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement which officially recognized South Sudan's right to self-determination. The South Sudanese elites, at that time, in order to create a united military front among Southern armed factions, adopted the Big Tent philosophy. Applied in 2006, the Big Tent approach advocated the formal integration of various Southern militias within the SPLA. While this policy contributed to a relative peace within Southern Sudan up to the independence, it sacrificed long-term and organized military integration over short-term stability. As a result, after the independence, South Sudan's national army appeared as a conflation of various armed forces divided by internal frictions.[329] The army turned out to be extremely factionalized, soldiers' allegiance was diverted more towards their factions' leaders rather than the military central command.[330]

The South Sudanese military structure became a national force only in appearance. The SPLA was in reality dominated by disparate armed factions whose loyalty was exclusively offered to their militia chiefs. It was a heterogenous military body that mostly focused on military elites and ethnic groups' gains and interests.[331] The profound factionalization of the South Sudanese army compromised the hierarchical order of the

[327] Brosché, and Kristine, Crisis of governance, p19.
[328] Johnson, The Untold Story, p227.
[329] Breitung, Claudia, Wolf-Christian Paes, and Luuk van de Vondervoort, "In need of a critical re-think: Security sector reform in South Sudan," (2016):5.
[330] Breitung, Paes, and van de Vondervoort, In need of a critical re-think, p14.
[331] Miamingi, Remember, ''Security sector stabilization: a prerequisite for political stability in South Sudan,'' (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. 2018), p19.

military structure such that, at the lower stratum, military detachments were organized along with local dynamics and not with a national strategy. Units showed a tendency to move to locations close to their own communities where they operated under the control of local armed leaders. In that regard, the principal features of South Sudanese armed factions became an absence of military disciple and an obedience to patrimonial ties rather than a loyalty to the central command of the national army.[332] One of the prime examples of the patronization of South Sudan's military structure could be observed through the decision of the South Sudanese president Salva Kiir to create his ''personal army''. Composed of the presidential guard and a militia group, his private army had been allocated a budget outside the national defense budget. The principle of recruitment rested on the selection of loyal elements from his own region.[333]

What could have helped the country overcome its structural military fragility was the implementation of a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program in an efficient way. Right from its independence, the South Sudanese state attempted the application of a DDR strategy that would tackle its security issues. However, the first attempts didn't bring about the desired goal. Only a few thousands of soldiers at that time had been demobilized and reintegrated, but these efforts failed to reduce the economic burden that the security sector constituted for the country. Within the DDR program, the process of selection of candidates itself contained flaws. It had been managed in an ineffective and biased way as those in charge tended to run it through patrimonial ties.[334] South Sudanese military elites' own perception of the DDR program wasn't focused on decreasing the army's size. On the contrary, they conceived it as a means to strengthen their military capacity by getting rid of old and uncapable elements and bringing in new and younger recruits.[335]

Just in 2013, the number of soldiers under the SPLA's payroll was estimated to be around 230,000. But, the result of an expert-conducted investigation demonstrated the inaccuracy

[332] Rolandsen, Øystein H., and Nicki Kindersley, "South Sudan: A political economy analysis," Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo (2017): 11.
[333] De Waal, Alex, "When kleptocracy becomes insolvent: Brute causes of the civil war in South Sudan," African Affairs 113, no. 452 (2014): 357.
[334] Lacher, South Sudan, p23.
[335] Ibid, p24.

of this number which, in reality, was much below the true account. The DDR program pursued by the GoSS appeared to have exaggerated the evaluation of soldiers' number. Not only the South Sudanese national army had not been able to carry out an exact account of its military troops, but also investigations revealed that the armed forces contained thousands of ''ghost soldiers'' that were under the payroll of the state. While the existence of ghost soldiers was financially beneficial to military leaders, it perpetuated the dynamic of the security sector as an economic burden.[336]

At least, three structural factors have contributed to make the implementation of a security sector reform more difficult to achieve. First of all, South Sudanese security structure's lack of efficiency and legitimacy pushed non-state armed actors not to trust disarmament policies. The militarized nature of the society further encouraged South Sudanese to rely on self-defense for the preservation of their own safety and interests.[337] Besides, one of the most important conditions of a successful security reform being the scrutiny of military institutions by civilians, it was nearly impossible to meet such as a condition in South Sudan. The extreme militarization of public and political life in South Sudan made the distinction between civilian and military jurisdictions unfeasible.[338] Finally, there was a political unwillingness that hindered the proper participation of civil society organizations. In that sense, the security sector reform process from the outset was subjected to an undemocratic approach that undermined proper oversight of the security sector management by civil groups.[339]

3.2.3. A Violence-Prone Society

State-building and state formation during the Interim Period (2005-2011) didn't address the deep-rooted injuries that occurred among South Sudanese elites and between local communities. Several intercommunal hostilities continued to take place because of the complete absence of proper mechanisms of national reconciliation. As a result, atrocities

[336] Johnson, The Untold Story, p227.
[337] Apuuli, Phillip Kasaija, ''Durable stability in South Sudan: what are the prerequisites?,'' (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. 2018), p35.
[338] Apuuli, Durable stability in South Sudan, p36.
[339] Ibid, p37.

of the past continued to be relevant in the South Sudanese society, appearing as a ticking bomb that could trigger further internal instability if not dissolved properly.[340]

Besides the unresolved past grievances, the likelihood of violence further deepened with the outbreak of civil conflict in 2013. This situation exacerbated the vulnerability of the South Sudanese society, as local violence between communities continued to be an issue. In that sense, the country became prone to dynamics of repeated intercommunal frictions which, in some cases, occurred in the form of acts of vindictiveness through deadly means.[341]

The prevalence of widespread acts of violence constituted one of the biggest challenges to the survival of South Sudan as a state. The country became trapped within a vicious circle of instability due to a pervading violence, aggravating the poor economic and social conditions of inhabitants. In result, resource-oriented ethnic rivalries intensified and perpetuated through use of violence, creating a vicious circle within which poverty, rivalry and violence intertwined.[342]

The South Sudanese state' vulnerability towards internal instability became more obvious at the advent of independence with the surge of local violence between ethnic groups. The accession to independence didn't constitute the beginning of a chapter of intercommunal peace. On the contrary, it represented the continuity of local violence between rival communities.[343] The perception of acts of injustice in South Sudan was no longer defined along with opposition to Sudan. The country emerged as an independent state after its secession from Sudan, yet it continued to be prone to disruptive internal dynamics. Just in a few weeks after its independence in 2011, it faced numerous violent confrontations between communities. As a result of one of these intercommunal hostilities, hundreds had been killed and wounded, whereas, thousands of households and livestock were respectively destroyed and plundered. Despite the localized nature of these

[340] Johnson, The Untold Story, p283.
[341] Ibid, p284.
[342] Jok, Jok Madut, "Insecurity and ethnic violence in South Sudan: Existential threats to the State," The Sudd Institute (2012): 4.
[343] Jok, Mapping the sources of conflict, p6.

confrontations, they emerged as evidence of South Sudan's continuous vulnerability to internal instability.[344]

The outbreak of 2013 civil war constituted the outcome of the internal vulnerability the country was suffering from since its independence. South Sudanese elites' approaches in solving issues and competing over power were not alien to the prevailing vulnerability of the society. The high militarization of South Sudan meant that recourse to military means to achieve certain goals became unavoidable. South Sudanese leaders tended to undertake their political agendas throughout military actions, as if there was a consensus that violence was the most reliable and effective tool to achieve their agendas. As a caution against opposition groups, the ruling regime had a propensity to join military means to political rivalry. Prior to the 2013 civil conflict, an internal security dilemma became prevalent among South Sudanese political competitors, especially after the GoSS started being convinced of the opposition's likelihood of relying on violence to achieve its political goals. This caused each side to perceive one another as source of military threat.[345] The increase of mutual suspicions and mistrust was followed by accusation of coup plotting against opposition groups, leading to the adoption of measures of further militarization by the ruling power.[346] The inexistence of institutional structures that addressed political rivalry meant that reliance to violence was inescapable between the competing South Sudanese elites. The internal security dilemma between South Sudanese ruling power and opposition elites hence turned into a military cataclysm.[347] What started as a political rivalry within the state apparatus ended up in armed conflict, perpetuating the dynamic of the high vulnerability of South Sudan to instability and violence.[348]

3.3. Institutional and Political Dimension of Fragility

[344] Bereketeab, Redie, "Les défis de la construction de l'État au Sud-Soudan," Afrique contemporaine 2 (2013): 45-46.
[345] Johnson, The Untold Story, p283.
[346] Rolandsen, Øystein H, "Another civil war in South Sudan: The failure of guerrilla government?," Journal of Eastern African Studies 9, no. 1 (2015): 163.
[347] Johnson, The Untold Story, p254.
[348]Badiey, Naseem, and Christian Doll, "Planning amidst precarity: utopian imaginings in South Sudan," Journal of Eastern African Studies 12, no. 2 (2018): p368.

3.3.1. Weak Institutionalized Structures

While the accession to independence granted South Sudan its political freedom *de jure*, the country profoundly lacked an institutional legacy upon which establish political rule. The advent of political sovereignty wasn't accompanied by stable institutions emanating from the period it was part of Sudan. Instead, the country faced enormous challenges in building a proper institutional basis, especially in the management of its internal affairs and economic resources.[349] The elites' decision to embark on ethnic-oriented rule further undermined the already fragile institutions of the country. They didn't engage themselves in a mode of governance that would favor the development of a stable institutional basis, rather, their political vision did nothing but perpetuate the dynamic of institutional void.[350]

The absence of stable institutional basis exacerbated social breakdown once the country fell into an armed conflict. The advantage of institutional strength is that it allows states, in times of crises, to rely on non-violent means of resolving issues and avoid a social breakdown. In the situation of South Sudan, the various national institutions were marked by a profound inefficiency. Hence, when civil war started in 2013, it immediately became uncontainable and took the form of total breakdown, because South Sudanese institutions were either absent or extremely weak.[351] While the fragility of South Sudan's institutional order appeared evident, the ruling power so far showed an incapacity in bringing about policies that would favor an institutional transformation. Rather, it engaged itself in a governance that perpetuated the state's institutional weakness. The administration of institutions was conducted in an exclusionary way and was under the control of a military structure. The military monopoly of existing state structures hindered the political participation of other actors.[352]

[349]Pedersen, Ascha, and Morgan Bazilian, '' Considering the impact of oil politics on nation building in the Republic of South Sudan,'' The Extractive Industries and Society 1, no. 2 (2014): 173.
[350]Kon, Madut, "Institutional development, governance, and ethnic politics in South Sudan," Journal of Global Economics (2015):1.
[351] Martell, First raise a flag, p233.
[352] Brosché, and Kristine, Crisis of governance, p19.

The South Sudanese state was also confronted to a weak legal system and an absence of rule of law. The existing legal system is made up of two distinct judicial bodies, formal and customary structures of justice. Despite the official recognition of these two separate mechanisms of justice, there were practical problems that customary justice seemed to engender. Traditional justice was structured along with ethnic lines and norms, causing the existence of multiple forms of judicial mechanisms. Adding to that, the coexistence of two distinct forms of judicial bodies suffered from a proper internal organization, as it became difficult to make a distinction between the customary and statuary spheres. The lack of coordination between the two judicial universes created an institutional confusion and gave way to a rather inconsistent and hybrid legal system.[353] This lack of coordination of traditional and formal bodies contributed to the creation of an inefficient and malfunctioning justice sector in South Sudan.

The country also failed to implement a proper criminal jurisdiction. Besides that, it suffered from the absence of properly trained workers in the legal profession. This lack of convenient human resources exacerbated the inefficiency of South Sudan's justice sector. Even in some occasions when the legal system appeared operational, it tended to appear biased as it conducted its affairs under the influence and control of the ruling power. As a result, judicial sentences were prone to favor some groups at the expense of others. This weakness of the justice system made the implementation of rule of law nearly impossible, aggravating conditions of state fragility in South Sudan.[354]

Apart from its structural weakness, the justice sector in South Sudan was physically in a perilous condition. Whether from the perspective of formal or traditional mechanisms of justice, the legal system as a whole faced security threats from influential military and political elites focused on their personal interests. The proper functioning of the justice sector was therefore undermined in part by physical threats against legal practitioners. In response to financial or personal insecurity within their profession, legal sector workers tended to resign, hoping to escape manipulations or false accusations from third parties.[355]

[353] Hutton, South Sudan, p27.
[354] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p23.
[355] Laku, Sr Justin, "South Sudan Governance: A Call for Federalism to Address Marginalization and Prevent Armed Conflict Recurrence," (IFF Working Paper Online No 21, Fribourg, 2017), p21.

Furthermore, the mode of governance of the GoSS was highly pervaded by neopatrimonial practices. The prevalence of patronage system represented one of the most important aspects of institutional weakness in South Sudan. It took the form of monopoly of one party over the country's political landscape. The ruling political party, the SPLM, became indistinguishable from the state itself. It totally predominated existing public structures in a way that made the separation between party and state nearly impossible. As a result of this institution conflation or (con)fusion, both military and political institutions were administrated under the single leadership of the South Sudanese president, Salva Kiir. In the South Sudanese patronage system, the presidency, the ruling party, and the national army were all connected and governed as an integrate single structure. In that sense, the ruling regime had a complete control of the state's political and financial resources and used them to consolidate its power. Within this patrimonial system, the ruling South Sudanese regime remained without serious political competition able to threaten its reign through democratic means. Because, available state resources could easily be used by the ruling regime to either buy off loyalists during elections or undermine opposition groups.[356]

Patronage dynamics transformed the South Sudanese political landscape into a one-party-like system in which competition for power only occurred intra-party. The only way for political actors to take control of the state apparatus was to seize the SPLM leadership. Outside the internal structure of the ruling party, political rule had so far remained impossible to achieve. It was within the structure of neopatrimonial system that South Sudanese political actors had to engage in internal rivalry to materialize their political goals.[357]

In the post-independence period, the monopoly of political power by the SPLM was evident from the beginning, especially during the formation of the first government in 2011. Nearly the total ministerial responsibilities of that government fell to the SPLM and, in the same time, the majority of the parliamentary system and regional administrative bodies were given to its members. For some, the South Sudanese ruling

[356] Rolandsen, Another civil war in South Sudan, p169.
[357] Warner, Lesley, "The Disintegration of the Military Integration Process in South Sudan (2006–2013)," Stability: International Journal of Security and Development 5, no. 1 (2016):3.

regime was not in the traditional sense a one-party system that solely needed to be reformed to give way to political competition. It could rather be considered as a congregation of various actors, fighting within the same political space over the control of state resources and preserving through patronage networks their interests.[358]

The neopatrimonial system extremely took roots in the South Sudanese public life. The safest way for citizens to ensure a governmental job was to rely on patronage ties. In this regard, access to state resources wasn't opened to the population in an inclusive way. From a civilian perspective, benefiting from privileges was inseparable from one of the core principles of the system, the dependence on a patrimonial network. Access to state resources became even more complicated by the predominance that the SPLM exerted on political life. Dynamics of patrimonial networks in South Sudan continued to remain complex because of two important factors. On the one hand, those benefiting from state resources faced criticisms for their misappropriation of state wealth and pursuit of power. But on the other hand, they were expected to assist their communities materially.[359] The coexistence of these two factors, without doubt, perpetuated the survival of clientelist practices. The system was maintained as long as patrons pursued their personal interests while continuing to buy off clients through material support.

The patronage system was under the dominance of military elites that diverted most of their actions to the assurance of their personal gains. It was through distribution of state resources that these elites created grassroots that remained loyal to them. In other terms, within the South Sudanese neopatrimonial system, elites-grassroots link operated in a reciprocal way: elites had to guaranty individuals or communities' access to state resources and, in result, the latter dedicated its allegiance to the former.[360] But because of the material nature of their relations, elites and grassroots in South Sudan were submitted to an unstable and changing patrimonial ties. Hence, dynamics of patronage networks tended to be characterized by actors' recourse to bargain.[361]

[358] Lacher, South Sudan, p17.
[359] Chevrillon-Guibert, Raphaëlle, "Sud-Soudan: les acteurs de la construction et de la formation de l'État," Afrique contemporaine 2 (2013): 64.
[360] D'Agoôt, Majak, '' Taming the dominant gun class in South Sudan,'' (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Special Report No. 4: Envisioning a Stable South Sudan, Washington D.C. 2018), p12.
[361] De Waal, When kleptocracy becomes insolvent, p348-349.

3.3.2. Power Struggle

Political and institutional fragility in South Sudan took also the form of turbulent power struggle dynamics between elites. One of the main features of this political competition was its development along with ethnic lines. The country's leaders showed a tendency to ethnicize political discourse in the pursuit of their personal agendas. Throughout the use of ethnic sensibilities, they conducted divisive strategies that profited their political goals. In result, they further deepened the institutional fragility of the state by creating more internal frictions.[362]

Within the dynamic of power struggle, it became very difficult to determine the nature of the relationship between competing South Sudanese political actors, as their ties and allegiances were subject to constant change. The ability of regional armed actors to cause instability had occasionally pushed the GoSS to indulge to a certain extent their military presence in order to avoid violent uprisings.[363] The political competition between these opposition groups and the GoSS was mostly fueled by ethnic discourses. The tribalization of power struggle showed that elites were less concern with the implementation of particular political projects than a factionalized political competition.[364] With the state's weakness in its institutional and political structures, the leaders perceived reliance on ethnic card as a crucial means to access power.[365]

South Sudanese elites struggle over power wasn't motivated in great part by conflicting ideology or political program. Their internal frictions and pursuit of power were rather dictated by their personal agendas and interests. It therefore became common to observe, within the country's power structure, competing actors determined to change the status quo in their favor or to fight in order to gain more access to state resources. Internal divisions constituted one of the SPLM's greatest drawbacks. While achievement of independence was becoming very close – probably because of largest political and financial opportunities that were to come – intra-party competition aggravated. Growing

[362] Johnson, The Untold Story, p280.
[363] Lacher, South Sudan, p18.
[364] Ibid, p19.
[365] D'Agoôt, Majak, "Assessing the utility of risk management theory in the governance of new states: lessons from South Sudan," Journal of Risk Research 23, no. 2 (2020):2.

factionalized behaviors pushed actors towards grassroots politics through which they attempted to gain loyalists supporting their cause. The intensification of competition contributed to a further widening of mistrust between South Sudanese leaders. Allegations of opposition groups attempting to seize power pushed the GoSS, at that time, to adopt an exclusionary approach to prevent opponents from participating to the constitutional arrangements that preceded the independence proclamation in 2011.[366]

Political schemes continued to dominate relationships between South Sudanese elites after access to independence. As a newly independent country, South Sudan was supposed to organize its first national democratic elections within four years, counting from the independence date. Opponent groups were determined to use this opportunity to challenge the leadership, as they were all eager to become head of the new state. The possibility of democratic change through elections appeared as a crucial opportunity for opponents to seize power without recourse to violent means. By expressing their political agendas, South Sudanese competing actors created more mistrust within the SPLM. It became clear for the president Salva Kiir that his rivals were determined, at least through political means, to achieve a change in the leadership structure of the party.[367]

By 2013, just in two years after independence, dynamics of power struggle had completely taken a critical turn, as each actor had to play his political cards with caution and efficiency. Because of the one-party nature of South Sudanese politics, all the political maneuvers occurred intra-party, the intertwinement of state structures meaning that key to political authority resided within the party's leadership. In order to get rid of his rivals, South Sudan's president used its wide presidential powers to disintegrate nearly the entirety of key structures of the party. Reliance on such drastic measures pushed his critics to denounce his leadership as authoritarian.[368]

It was the culmination of turbulent power struggle within the leadership structure of the SPLM that ultimately contributed to the outbreak of civil war in 2013. Competing actors have showed strong resolution in achieving their political agenda, that is to say, to detain

[366] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p152.
[367] D'Agoôt, Assessing the utility of risk management theory, p9.
[368] Ibid, p10.

a major political influence within the apparatus of the new state. The escalation of internal frictions and political antagonisms reached a point of no-return, as rivals started relying on more extreme means in accordance their agendas. The South Sudanese President Salva Kiir continuously showed its determination to maintain the political status quo against the leader of opposition groups, the then-Vice-president Riek Machar. Amidst growing tensions, the GoSS used allegations of coup plotting in order to legitimize its radical approaches against opposition groups. Political competition remained so far non-violent, but as internal frictions deepened, it took a brutal turn.[369]

However, dynamics of power struggle were not limited within the leadership structure of the SPLM. One the contrary, South Sudanese political rivals largely relied on schismatic strategies that would further their cause among the population. Through divisive approaches and by playing ethnic cards, they attempted to undermine rivals' political influence. As their ultimate goal was to detain political power, South Sudanese elites amply made use of discourses that favored their cause, but which had, in the end, contributed to state fragility and social breakdown.[370]

The culmination of these disruptive strategies of political competition ultimately resulted into an armed conflict in 2013. The different layers of the neopatrimonial system, that is to say, the government, the party leadership and the national army, all together became affected, causing the disintegration of the state.[371] The political animosities that started in the capital, Juba, transformed into a military confrontation between rivals and finally turned into a general armed conflict. Both elites and local communities became entangled within civil war and, with the disastrous effect of widespread violence, the newly-born country came to be completely torn.[372]

3.3.3. Liberation Curse

[369] Vertin, Zach, "A Poisoned Well: Lessons in Mediation from South Sudan's Troubled Peace Process," (International Peace Institute, April 2018), p2.
[370] Thiong, Daniel Akech, ''How the politics of fear generated chaos in South Sudan,'' African Affairs 117, no. 469 (2018): 634-635.
[371] De Waal, When kleptocracy becomes insolvent, p366.
[372] Johnson, The Untold Story, p255.

South Sudan, as already mentioned in several occasions, gained its independence as a result of a liberation war waged against Sudan for decades. With the advent of independence, the ones who fought and liberated the country were positioned as legitimate rulers of the new state. As much as liberation resulted in political freedom for South Sudan, it became a burden after independence. The political and institutional structures of the country have been caught up by what can be qualify as liberation curse, that is to say, discourses and policies relative to liberation in independent South Sudan progressively took the form of disruptive dynamics that undermined institutional order in the country. One of the aspects of the ordeal of liberation in South Sudan was that it gave a certain political entitlement to the ‘’liberators’’ over state resources management and distribution. The SPLM, as the party that liberated the country and ruling it, failed to pursuit a political reform that could have helped it transcend the legacy of past wars and embody a legitimate political structure. Instead, the image of the state became intertwined with the party's legitimacy, such that, hostility toward the latter was perceived by elites as antagonism towards the former. Liberation discourses were used by South Sudanese leaders as a means of legitimizing their political power and nationalist visions.[373]

The SPLA fought as armed rebellion against Sudanese regimes, yet it continued to maintain its image of armed liberation movement after the independence.[374] One the one hand, the liberation label entitled the control of state resources to those who were considered as liberators, one the other hand, those who didn't not fit into this labelling became marginalized.[375] This proves that competition over state resources in South Sudan didn't occur straightforwardly between members of the society. Rather, claims to state resources happened primordially between ‘’liberators’’. The criteria of merit were measured through efforts showed during the war of liberation.[376] In that regard, reliance on discourses of liberation constituted the most effective means of political legitimatization of the ruling power. From this perspective, South Sudan military elites

[373] Hutton, South Sudan, p11.
[374] Johnson, The Untold Story, p255.
[375]Ylönen, Aleksi, "Reflections on Peacebuilding Interventionism: State-and Nationbuilding dilemmas in Southern Sudan (2005 to the present)," Global Change, Peace & Security 28, no. 2 (2016): 220.
[376] Reeve, peace and conflict, p29.

perceived themselves as the most deserving individuals in controlling political power and state financial resources.[377]

The argument of liberation didn't only give the SPLM access to the control of state resources and institutions, but also it caused the ruling party to act without proper accountability. Actions and policies conducted by elites did not fall, in general, under the scrutiny of established laws. With its title of liberator, the ruling party represented the core element of existing structures in the country and had the ability to rule without restrictions.[378] The perception that they were more deserving in the conduct of political affairs caused South Sudanese liberators to govern in ways that fragilized the state. While individuals who were considered to not be part of the liberation movement were marginalized, those labelled as liberators pursued actions that undermined the country's stability. In consequence of the pervasive entitlement associated with liberation arguments, governmental sectors became vulnerable to patronage practices, ineffectiveness and widespread fraudulent activities. The weakening of crucial state sectors and inefficiency of policies in the domains of development and service provision all together put the country in worsened conditions of fragility.[379]

South Sudanese military elites' propensity to rely on liberation arguments for political legitimacy and entitlement to power served as excuse against their mismanagement and inefficiency. While resorting to the legacy of liberation, they tended to call on citizens' patience when accused of being unable to provide to the population needs. From the civilians' perspective, liberation legacy started being irrelevant due to the growing insecurity, disastrous socioeconomic conditions of the country. The country started reaching a point where arguments of liberation all alone were no longer perceived as source of state legitimacy.[380]

[377] Ibid, p30.
[378] Hutton, South Sudan, p21.
[379]Kon, Institutional development, p4.
[380]Moro, Leben Nelson, Rachel Gordon, Philip Thiong Dau, Daniel Maxwell, and Martina Santschi, "Statebuilding and legitimacy: experiences of South Sudan," Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, Report 15 (2017): 23.

Liberation discourses also served as a way of delegitimizing alternative voices in the country. This philosophy of political entitlement born out of the legacy of liberation hindered chances of political participation and created a political landscape devoid of civilian involvement. The liberation argument in South Sudan led to discriminatory and exclusionary policies, making it difficult to materialize a stable institutional order.[381] It even influenced social relationships between citizens after independence. South Sudanese who lived abroad and started returning to their ancestral lands were also affected by the weight of the liberation legacy. There was a tendency to perceive them as low-class citizens because of their non-participation to the liberation struggle.[382]

The impact of the liberation legacy was noticeable within the country's security sector. Security forces, in some occasions, used acts of violence against citizens and relied on their contribution to the liberation struggle as a way of demonstrating the social privilege they deserved. Within the army itself, soldiers who integrated the national army through other armed groups were perceived differently and could be subject to discriminatory behaviors from their peers from ''SPLA-proper'', the official South Sudanese rebellion movement during the civil wars against Sudan.[383]

3.4. Economic and Developmental Dimension of Fragility

3.4.1. Resource Curse

South Sudan's economy is extremely dependent on oil resources. While the large majority of the population rely on subsistence economy, oil represents the most important economic asset for the country. As a resource-rich country, the South Sudanese state based its entire economic productivity on oil exploitation and production. It extracted the majority of its economic profit through that natural resource. 98 percent of exported products and 80 percent of gross national income of the country originated from oil production. In time of relative peace, especially before the outbreak of civil conflict, oil generated up to 1.3 billion dollars in the space of five months of 2013. In other terms, not

[381] Hutton, South Sudan, p36.
[382] Frahm, Ole, "Making borders and identities in South Sudan," Journal of Contemporary African Studies 33, no. 2 (2015): 254.
[383] Jok, Mapping the sources of conflict, p13-14.

only the country showed a high reliance of its oil resource, but also the revenues generated from it were consequential for the economy.[384]

The dependence on oil made South Sudan's economy extremely vulnerable to sudden shocks. Generated high revenues from oil helped the country minimize its dependence on external aid but didn't not prevent the economy from being highly volatile. Another aspect of the vulnerability of South Sudanese economy resides in the fact that the management of oil production is tied to Sudan's infrastructures. While South Sudan possesses enormous amount of oil and produces it, it lacks export infrastructures through which to sell its energy to external markets. Relying entirely on Sudan's infrastructural capacity to achieve oil export means that South Sudan's economy is significantly exposed to an external vulnerability that can show itself at any moment. As much as both countries economic fate appeared inseparable from oil production, South Sudan remained as the most dependent on oil-generated profits.[385]

One particular event that occurred in 2012, a year after independence, demonstrated the South Sudanese state's high dependence on oil revenues. Following disagreements with Sudan over fees related to oil transit, the country shut down its entire oil production, as an economic means of pressure against its neighbor. But, afterwards, it had to adopt measures of austerity in order to absorb an eventual negative impact of its decision.[386] This situation exposed two facts that show the fragility of South Sudan's economy: first, the country economic policies and strategies were entirely tied to its oil sector such that, cases of sudden shock or disruption would immediately fragilize the economy; secondly, oil governance had to rely on the Sudanese factor in the sense that, without coordination and agreement between the two partners, the management of the entire sector could be greatly compromised.

Furthermore, right from the beginning of its independence, South Sudan was exposed to a disadvantage that had a potential to disrupt in the near future its oil economy. The oil

[384] Medani, Khalid Mustafa, "" Open for Business": The Political Economy of Inter-Communal Conflict in South Sudan," Middle East Report 269 (2013): 28.
[385] Lacher, South Sudan, p11.
[386] Reeve, peace and conflict, p17.

industry was exploited by Sudan for years, and by the time South Sudan gained its independence, the sector had started to enter in a phase of decline. The years of past production affected the oil industry and, unless reports on the matter turn out be incorrect, within few years the available oil resources could start decreasing considerably. This situation demonstrates the profound volatility of South Sudan's economy which could in a near future face a brutal downfall. In this regard, the country may have only few years to transform its national economy into an economic system that relies on nonoil sectors.[387]

To survive, the South Sudanese economy had to constantly hinge on constant flow of oil revenues. However, both oil production and profits were knowing a decrease, leading to more constraints on an economy already fragilized by the sudden outbreak of conflict in 2013.[388] Besides, with its oil-based economy, South Sudan was exposed to another external factor that further deepened its volatile economic condition, the fact that oil prices were set according to global markets. It was a situation that made the country's economy more vulnerable, because not only there was no nonoil sectors able to generate consequential revenues, but also the unpredictability of global markets could at any time lead to a decline of oil prices. And even when the country would manage to generate profits from its oil sector, the huge majority of its earnings would tend to be diverted toward the maintenance of its administration, neglecting social sectors such as education and health.[389]

The presence of oil resources constituted for South Sudan a source of disruption and even contributed to a regional instability between the country and its Sudanese neighbor. The existence of oil fields in contested borders created hostilities between the two countries. Their tensions, at first, appeared as based solely on territorial claims, but the fact that the disputed areas contained important resources such as oil suggested that these tensions were motivated in part by oil presence.[390]

[387] Shankleman, Jill. "Oil and state building in South Sudan." (United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 282 2011), p11.
[388] World Bank, ''South Sudan Economic Update, July 2018,'' Economic Updates and Modeling, (2018):2.
[389] Shankleman, oil and state building, p13.
[390] Kimenyi, Future Engagement, p7.

It was not surprising that when tensions escalated into military confrontations between the two neighbors, it mostly occurred in oil-rich locations such as Abyei and Heglig. As disputes intensified over control of lands and oil resources, South Sudan and Sudan became more determined to pursuit military actions against each other. By 2012, military confrontations between the two rivals exacerbated, especially after the discovery of the building of a Sudanese pipeline in oilfields of a disputed area.[391] The disputed town of Heglig, in particular, became a scene of armed fighting between the South Sudanese and Sudanese armies. While the advent of independence was supposed to bring about a peaceful coexistence, intense desire of ownership over oil resources still caused the two neighbors to engage in a destabilizing confrontation.[392] Besides, the interdependence of the two countries in the management of their respective oil sectors led to further instability. Disputes over fees of oil exports through Sudan's pipelines pushed South Sudan's authorities to halt oil production as a means of coercion against the rival state. The intensification of their disputes pushed them to opt for military actions and border closure.[393]

The presence of oil not only contributed to regional instability, but it also led to internal disruption in South Sudan. Oil resources turned out to be a source of destabilization for the new state. South Sudan national oil company, the Nile Petroleum Corporation, was built as a commercial enterprise. However, when the civil conflict started in 2013, it was turned into a source of military funding. The internal management of the company being under the monopoly of South Sudanese ruling military elites, it had been organized in a way that favored illegal conduct of financial activities without possibility of scrutiny. Therefore, once the war broke out, the company's revenues were handed over to the regime's military structures which, in turn, could at any moment use these funds to pursue their war goals.[394]

[391] Pedersen, and Bazilian, Considering the impact of oil politics, p171.
[392] Martell, First raise a flag, p214.
[393] Pape, Utz, "South Sudan: Impact of a Continued Internal Conflict on Food Security and Poverty," World Bank Group, (2014): 8.
[394] World Bank, South Sudan Economic Update, p7.

The capture of oilfields also constituted a source of motivations of warring factions once the civil war started. Military factions were determined to seize oilfields because of their enormous strategic and economic values in the country. The rebellion groups, in particular, in their war-making strategy gave a special interest in targeting oil-rich locations.[395] In this regard, right from the beginning of the conflict, the armed opposition immediately targeted and invaded regions strategically important for the GoSS. One of the territories that the opposition attempted to conquer was the Upper Nile State where resided the high majority of the country's oilfields.[396] The goal of the armed opposition groups, first, was to seize strategic oilfields, and, then, to use them as a means of pressure against the ruling regime in the eventuality of peace talk.[397]

3.4.2. Rentierism and Neopatrimonialism

Neopatrimonialism and extreme dependence on oil revenues represented two important yet interrelated features of governance in South Sudan. Because of the patrimonial nature of its political system, the South Sudanese state had to rely on stable economic foundations to sustain itself. But it was the presence of oil money that favored the creation and strengthening of the patrimonial system in the first place. With the advent of independence, South Sudan' military elites emerged quickly as dominant class and became able to exert a firmer grip on political power due to the abundance of oil wealth. Profits made from oil served to build an elite military class that had at its disposal socioeconomic advantages that distinguished it from the rest of the population.[398]

Military elites proceeded to build an economy that was entirely based on patronage system. Since the state was lacking an institutional strength, South Sudanese citizens had to rely on their patrimonial ties to benefit from state resources. The economic relations between state and population was tied to the internal mechanisms of the neopatrimonial system. Access to social privileges and distribution of resources became dependent on

[395]Gebremichael, Mesfin, Alagaw Ababu Kifle, and Alem Kidane, "South Sudan Conflict Insight," Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University, Conflict Analysis & Insights, Vol. 2, (2018): 3.
[396] Johnson, The Untold Story, p204.
[397]Blanchard, Lauren Ploch, The Crisis in South Sudan, (Congressional Research Service, 2014), p4.
[398] Pinaud, Clemence, "South Sudan: Civil war, predation and the making of a military aristocracy," African Affairs 113, no. 451 (2014): 209-210.

civilians' relationships to influential individuals within system. The nature of neopatrimonial ties in South Sudan was developed around kinship which, in turn, took the form of ethnicity. In other terms, unless one belonged to a specific ethnic that had an influence within the system, it was very difficult to benefit from public economic opportunities.[399]

The entire survival of the neopatrimonial system in South Sudan hinged on rentierism, that is to say, as long as South Sudanese elites continued to benefit from oil money, they would be able to maintain the continuance of the existing system. But because of the volatility of the economy which depended entirely on the constant flow of oil revenues, the maintenance of such a system showed itself to be very demanding and unreliable for power consolidation. The 2012 oil production shutdown proved that to be true, as, once the GoSS halted the activities of oil sector, it remained almost completely without revenues.[400] In this regard, the entire South Sudanese political system, from the central government to local administrative areas, depended on oil revenues for their functioning. That is why, when South Sudanese authorities took the decision to halt oil production, they undermined the whole political structure upon which was based their governance.[401]

Furthermore, state stability in South Sudan was greatly undermined by an intense competition over resource distribution and access to wealth. The economic fragility of the country can be explained through this dynamic of resources' competition both at elites and citizens' levels. One of the underlying causes of violent instability in the country was related to competing actors' determination to acquire wealth. Internal frictions between South Sudanese leaders became fueled by pursuit of interests and appropriation of wealth. Local communities were also involved in divisive actions, as they often engaged in activities that brought them material satisfaction but, in the process, endangered their rivals.[402]

[399] Johnson, The Untold Story, p93-94.
[400] Radon, Jenik, and Sarah Logan, "South Sudan: governance arrangements, war, and peace," Journal of International Affairs (2014): 161.
[401] Reeve, peace and conflict, p29.
[402] Hutton, South Sudan, p32.

Historically speaking, ethnic or elites' competition over resources appropriation was not a new phenomenon that the South Sudanese society faced. It simply took a more intense and dramatic turn after the country's access to independence. When capture of state resources occurred, it affected in the same time social relations between citizens. Those who didn't manage to access economic opportunities tended to perceive themselves as marginalized. The growing sentiment of marginalization exacerbated economic competition between elites in urban spaces and among local inhabitants in rural zones.[403] However, within the neopatrimonial economic system of South Sudan, elites were the most advantaged, as their sociopolitical position granted them an easy access to state resources. They managed to benefit from oil revenues to increase their personal wealth and political influence. They also used informal mechanisms, through kinship ties, to ensure that their economic assets stay safe from external threats. Their social and economic status helped them to maintain, at local level, patron-client networks that served to preserve their existing economic resources.[404]

As already mentioned, the South Sudanese neopatrimonial system relied entirely on state resources capture, on the constant flow of economic profits generated from oil production. This means that loss of oil revenues could disrupt the functioning of the entire system. An eventual cessation of flow of oil money not only had the potential to make the existing neopatrimonial system dysfunctional, it also could lead a brutal and violent outcome in the political space. An unfair distribution of existing wealth or, worse, the halt of resources distribution could easily trigger widespread discontents which, once intensified, could result in armed conflict. This scenario proved to be observable in the afterwards of the 2012 oil production shutdown. The GoSS' decision to cease its oil production immediately stripped the regime and its patronage system of its most valuable asset, oil money. Revenues generated from oil production constituted the ruling power's source of strength, they helped kept different disruptive individuals or groups in line, allowing the system to be relatively stable.[405] Therefore, when the regime lost its economic asset, the

[403] Jok, Mapping the sources of conflict, p7.
[404] Pendle, Naomi,"'They are now community police": Negotiating the boundaries and nature of the Government in South Sudan through the identity of militarised cattle-keepers," international journal on minority and group rights 22, no. 3 (2015): p424.
[405] Rolandsen, and Kindersley, South Sudan: A political economy analysis, p16.

patronage system became more vulnerable. The GoSS had to adopt restrictive economic measures to absorb the impact of cessation oil revenues. By doing so, it undermined (important) groups or individuals' economic situation that so far was completely dependent on state resources and, in result, it opened the door to acrimonious sentiments.[406] The impact of the economic demise of the patronage reached its peak with the outbreak of civil conflict in December 2013. While this disastrous outcome represented the combination of a number of factors that have been displayed throughout our work, it is more probable that the loss of the economic asset of the system precipitated the implosion of the state.

3.4.3. Underdevelopment

Infrastructurally, South Sudan is one of the least advanced countries in the world. Its economic infrastructures, especially its road network, was extremely limited. Around the year of its independence, for the entire country there were only sixty kilometers of paved roads that were mostly located in the capital city, Juba.[407]

From a historical standpoint, this situation doesn't entirely come as a surprise, because of the country's long history of waged conflicts. One of the legacies of decades of liberation war was the existence of very limited economic infrastructures in the country. Due to the impact of past wars and the fact that, geographically, it is landlocked, South Sudan possesses transport costs that are among the highest in the world.[408] There was also limited degree of urbanization, a large portion of South Sudanese citizens were still living in rural areas. Because of the limited roads networks, linking rural areas and remote zones to cities constituted an enormous challenge to overcome.[409]

The extreme limitation or even non-existence of proper roads impeded the GoSS to consolidate the state authority in many areas of the country. It affected the state's capacity to fulfill some of its core functions properly. The implementation of an effective taxation

[406] Twijnstra, Rens, "'Recycling oil money': procurement politics and (un) productive entrepreneurship in South Sudan," Journal of Eastern African Studies 9, no. 4 (2015): 694-695.
[407] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p165.
[408] Ibid, p170.
[409] Lacher, ''South Sudan,'' p7.

system and the delivery of services, for example, were hindered by the lack of roads.[410] As a result of limited or non-existent infrastructural basis, state power projection became extremely deficient. The absence of state authority in the country's peripheries demonstrates that power was concentrated only in the center. Therefore, resources allocation and decision-making process happened to be limited within the sphere of the central government in the capital-city, Juba.[411]

South Sudan's economy was confronted to a skyrocketing inflation and a depletion of its national currency value, the South Sudanese Pound (SSP). A severe inflation extremely fragilized the country's economic basis. The SSP went through series of decline that made it lost almost its entire monetary value. The devaluation of the SSP and other economic disruptions, such as trade roads insecurity and markets closure, all together caused the inflation of commodity prices. State policies adopted afterward failed to better the country's economic condition, causing a further deterioration of the inflation situation. Within the span of two years (December 2015-2017), the average price of goods and services showed an increase of 1100 percent![412] This economic situation impacted negatively an important share of the population, it exposed a lot of South Sudanese households to food insecurity.[413] As the SSP kept losing its value, it became more and more difficult for the population to afford basic food for survival.[414] The economic crisis also impacted the conduct of state affairs overseas, the payment of embassy rents and the salary of accredited diplomats started becoming unaffordable for the government. Internally, the economic condition of the state undermined the regime ability to sustain the survival of its patronage system.[415]

An important aspect of underdevelopment in South Sudan is relative to the extreme condition of poverty citizens faced. At the beginning of its independence, the degree of

[410] Ibid, p8.
[411] Johnson, The Untold Story, p31.
[412] Pape, Utz, and Arden Finn, "How Conflict and Economic Crises Exacerbate Poverty in South Sudan," How conflict and economic crises exacerbate poverty in South Sudan. World Bank Blogs, April 23, 2019, https://blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/how-conflict-and-economic-crises-exacerbate-poverty-in-south-sudan.
[413] World Bank, South Sudan Economic Update, p1.
[414] Ibid, p9.
[415] Mutasa, Charles, and Kudrat Virk, "Building Peace in South Sudan: Progress, Problems and Prospects," (Centre for Conflict Resolution, 2017), p15.

poverty and destitution was extremely severe, it was far below international development indicators standards. Living conditions of mothers and children were dire, as their mortality rate were extreme. Access to basic services for social survival was overall tremendously low.[416]

At the independence period, precisely in 2011, roughly half of the population was considered to be in poverty. Following the deterioration of the country's internal stability, especially with the outbreak of conflict, decline of oil income and other economic disruptions, the economic conditions of South Sudanese worsened dramatically. By 2016, the poverty rate reached 81 percent, in other terms, most of the population was living below the global poverty index which was set at 1.90 dollar per day. The poverty scale drastically worsened in particular between 2015 and 2016 because of the effect of civil war and high rate of inflation.[417]

Conditions of poverty in South Sudan, in general, were more marked in rural zones. Rural inhabitants suffered from lack of basic services and economic opportunities. What made the situation worse was that the huge majority of the population – around 85 percent South Sudanese – resided in the rural areas where opportunities of improving living conditions were extremely limited or inexistent.[418] In this regard, South Sudan was considered to be one of the countries touched the most by extreme poverty conditions in the world. From the global poverty index' perspective, for every 5 South Sudanese, 4 were affected by poverty.[419]

Against the backdrop of poor living conditions of citizens, the South Sudanese state financial resources were being depleted by its elites. The weak economic structure of the country facilitated the spread of prebendalist practices and embezzlement. South Sudanese leaders became extremely invested in the illegal depletion of state's financial assets. Just within a year after the independence, precisely in 2012, an important number of elites were accused of misappropriation of over 4 billion dollars mainly from oil

[416] Arnold and LeRiche, from Revolution to independence, p169.
[417] Pape, and Finn, ''How Conflict and Economic Crises Exacerbate Poverty.''
[418] Ibid.
[419] World Bank, South Sudan Economic Update, p8.

revenues.[420] The patrimonial nature of the political system in South Sudan allowed the illegal capture of state resources. Within the system, it became easy for individuals to misappropriate state funds. The internal structure of the state itself favored the proliferation of elites' acts of resources embezzlement. That is why, it didn't come as a surprise that around 75 government officials were involved in a corruption scandal in 2012.[421]

Operations of financial frauds and resources misappropriation were conducted through networks of patronage. Corruption came to embody the system itself.[422] The ruling regime managed to build a mode of governance that fed on the preservation of elites' economic interests and operated exclusively according to patron-clients ties. In this regard, it became impossible to conceive the survival of the patronage system without the illegal appropriation of state funds.[423]

3.5. Social Dimension of Fragility between Verticality and Horizontality

3.5.1. Identity Crisis (a Horizontal Perspective): Weak Social Harmony and National Integration

South Sudan faced, since the beginning of its independence, a huge social challenge consisting of absorbing, in a harmonized way, its diverse ethnic groups. The country seceded from Sudan and gained its political freedom and juridical sovereignty over the conduct of its internal affairs. While the gaining of independence, in theory, meant for the country political freedom from external pressure, building a national identity from its multiple ethnicities was as a crucial condition for its internal stability.

South Sudan's demography displays a diversified ethnic composition among citizens. With a population estimated to be around 11 million at independence, the country showed a marked heterogeneity in its social fabric. The Dinka figure as the biggest ethnic group,

[420] Cust, James, and Torfinn Harding, "Oil in South Sudan: Implications from international experience," International Growth Centre (IGC), Working Paper, London: London School of Economic and Political Science 47 (2013): 16.
[421] De Waal, ''When kleptocracy becomes insolvent'', p358.
[422] Ibid, p361.
[423] D'Agoôt, ''Assessing the utility of risk management theory'', p6.

followed by the Nuer and then other more smaller communities. Historically, during the liberation struggle against Sudan, these groups mostly set aside their disagreements and focused on achieving their political goal. However, with the advent of independence, the question of their social coexistence and unity came to the spotlight.[424]

Social harmony between citizens is central in building a stable state and nation. Looking at the situation of South Sudan, this crucial dimension of nationhood was direly lacking. While the country is made up of over sixty different ethnic groups, it appeared far from assuring an integrated social order between them. These groups tended to be separate from each other as they leaved in geographically distinct and communitarian spaces. The fragile social order in South Sudan was greatly undermined by a number of dynamics, such as power struggle or rivalry over state resources capture.[425]

The lack of social harmony is evidenced by the fact that political competition was mainly driven by ethnic-oriented interests. The domination of the Dinka over the other ethnic groups in the conduct of national affairs appeared at the center of political struggle in the country, some groups seemed to be engaged to fight against the status quo that favored one community at the expense of the other. In that sense, the achievement of independence in South Sudan could be perceived as a ‘’partial liberation, because the country failed to build political and institutional structures that went beyond identity differences.[426] Ethnic belonging represented in South Sudan a strong weapon in the pursuit of political power. In consequence, violence and instability were greatly influenced by ethnic sentiments. There seemed to be a complete elites’ unwillingness to consecrate efforts into building a social and national cohesion.[427]

At a local level, communities tended to be regrouped and organized administratively along with their ethnic lines. The institutionalization of ethnic-based administration

[424] Sefa-Nyarko, Clement, "Civil War in South Sudan: Is It a Reflection of Historical Secessionist and Natural Resource Wars in “Greater Sudan”?," African security 9, no. 3 (2016): 199.
[425] Gray, Stephen, and Josefine Roos, "Pride, conflict and complexity: Applying dynamical systems theory to understand local conflict in South Sudan," African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, no. 2 (2012): 2.
[426] Mutasa, Charles, and Kudrat Virk, "Building Peace in South Sudan: Progress, Problems and Prospects," (Centre for Conflict Resolution, 2017), p11.
[427]Moro, et al., Statebuilding and legitimacy, p20.

contributed to the social disharmony South Sudan was facing. In other terms, while the country was divided into a number of regional states, the internal administrative divisions of these regions were greatly determined according to the ethnicity of local communities. This mode of decentralization, although initiated during the British era, survived up until this contemporary period. As a result of the delimitation of internal borders along ethnicity, each South Sudanese ethnic and tribal group perceived itself through the lens of a distinct and exclusive identity. Such perception created difficulties in building a nation bound through common goals and social harmony.[428]

Besides, the legalization of ethnic identity within tribal lands created a distinction between the indigenous and the nonindigenous, causing a social discrimination between them, as the former becoming more entitled to economic and political privileges than the latter.[429] The ethnicization of internal borders' delimitation, despite originating from the British colonial practices, was carried on by the South Sudanese authorities. It resulted in the exacerbation of the social fragility and undermined integration between distinct local communities.[430]

At the beginning of independence, a national identity binding all South Sudanese was either extremely weak or non-existent. The country contains a diversity of ethnic groups separated by distinctive linguistic and cultural traits, but these multiple identities coexisted within the same geographical space without being able to develop a strong sense of nationally belonging together. Citizens in South Sudan tended to express their allegiances more to their ethnic groups than to the nation. The idea of a citizenship transcending regional and local differences so far failed to materialize itself.[431]

Up until the access to independence, what constituted the substance of social harmony was the expression of a collective political opposition of Southerners against the Sudanese rule. In this regard, the cohesion of South Sudanese communities developed on basis of

[428] Zambakari, Christopher, ''South Sudan and the Nation-Building Project: Lessons and Challenges,'' in National democratic reforms in Africa, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p102.
[429] Ibid.
[430] Justin, Peter Hakim, and Lotje De Vries, "Governing unclear lines: local boundaries as a (re) source of conflict in South Sudan," Journal of Borderlands Studies 34, no. 1 (2019): 40.
[431] Jok, "Insecurity and ethnic violence in South Sudan'', p2.

a ‘’negative unity’’, a unity that was fueled by a common struggle against North Sudan. Therefore, once the war ended and the country gained afterward its political freedom, possibilities of internal frictions along ethnic lines became extremely probable.[432]

Social disharmony after the independence became more evident, even the idea of choosing a proper governance system was strongly associated to ethnic identity. Communities’ call for a federal or effective decentralized system had less to do with a concern for a fair resources distribution between regions than a lack of social cohesion. This absence of social harmony and citizens’ prioritization of their ethnic identity over their nation made it difficult to achieve a project of national unity.[433]

3.5.2. State-Society Relations (a Vertical Perspective): Failed Social Contract

South Sudan’s political liberation from Sudan is associated to the idea that South Sudanese elites perceived injustice and discrimination their communities were suffering from and became determined to change the status quo. Within the united Sudan, social dynamics were considered to be at the disadvantage of Southerners, as they were excluded from state resources distribution. It led to the idea that within the social contract binding ruled and ruler, Southern interests were disregarded. Hence, the existence of South Sudan as an independent and free state presupposed the will to rectify the social unfairness South Sudanese faced in the past. From this perspective, social expectations were extremely high as the country was starting a new political chapter after its wounded past. The South Sudanese independence was a crucial occasion for the new leaders to (re)affirm their willingness and resoluteness to a social justice and contract that would profit to the ruled. South Sudanese citizens were expecting a transformation that would serve their interests. They were hoping for a proper governance that would ensure the fair distribution of state resources.[434]

However, soon after the independence, their desire of a well-governed society shattered as the elites started showing incapacity in the management of the country on many levels.

[432] Ibid, p10.
[433] Johnson, ‘’The Untold Story’’, p282.
[434] Reeve, ‘’peace and conflict’’, p32.

The provision of basic needs, the assurance of security, the implementation of democratic values and an efficient economic governance were considered to fall short.[435] Resentments relative to state incapacity were particularly marked among South Sudanese youth. Young people perceived elites to be unable or unwilling to satisfy their needs, they wanted more inclusive policies and actions oriented towards their expectations. In the face of leaders' inaction, youth dissatisfaction exacerbated, opening the door to further social disorder.[436]

The attitude of leaders constituted a major source of disappointment. There was a sentiment that the state failed to fulfill its part of social contract. Among their multiple expectations, South Sudanese citizens desired considerably the achievement of security within the country. However, they considered the leaders to have failed to materialize that desire of safety from threats.[437] Early reports on citizens view on governance after independence evidenced their dissatisfactions. Many of them were convinced that the elites were taking a wrong turn in their governance. The failure of attending to the basic demands of the population in crucial social sectors such as education and health was mentioned as an important factor of social discontents against the state.[438]

The GoSS in fact neglected to bring about social transformation, it invested inconsequential resources in social development. Initially, through the South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013, the leaders planned a strategy of improvement of basic services-oriented sectors, especially healthcare and education. Yet, they failed to act for the implementation of their strategy. They didn't go far as to create efficient financial structure that would serve to properly manage resources to be diverted towards crucial

[435] [435] Jok, "Insecurity and ethnic violence in South Sudan'', p1.
[436] Ensor, Marisa O, "Heirs of the world's newest nation: Contrasting rhetoric and realities of children as citizens and nation-builders in South Sudan," Global Studies of Childhood 5, no. 1 (2015): 54.
[437] Jok, Jok Madut, Diversity, unity, and nation building in South Sudan, (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 2011), p3.
[438] Cook, Tracy D, and Leben Nelson Moro, "Governing South Sudan—Opinions of South Sudanese on a Government that Can Meet Citizen Expectations," (Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute, 2012), p5.

sectors. Instead, they mostly focused on the security sector, investing insignificant financial resources towards the improvement of basic services delivery.[439]

The largest share of the public budget was dedicated to sectors crucial the regime' consolidation of power, such as the security and administration sectors. Meanwhile, sectors such as education and health continued to be extremely neglected and relied not on the GoSS but on external aid to operate in a basic way.[440] During the fiscal year of 2014-2015, the total national budget of the country was estimated to be around 3.97 billion SSP.[441] For that period of time, the state invested around 35 percent of the national budget exclusively on the maintenance of the security sector. Meanwhile, important sectors such as education, healthcare, and development of infrastructures received respectively 5.5, 4 and 3,5 percent of the planned public budget.[442]

By comparing resources allocated to these different sectors, it is evident that South Sudanese elites did not prioritize the development of social sectors that would benefit immediately to the population. Instead, much of their efforts were diverted towards the consolidation of their political rule. This situation demonstrates a failure in the tacit social contract between South Sudanese citizens and their leaders who have showed an incapacity or unwillingness to bring about a social transformation.

[439] Watkins, Kevin, ''Basic services in South Sudan: an uncertain future, '' in One Year After South Sudan's Independence: Opportunities and Obstacles for Africa's Newest Country, (Brookings Africa Growth Initiative, 2012), p3.
[440] World Bank, South Sudan Economic Update, p6.
[441] Attipoe, Olympio, Biplove Choudhary, and Nicholas Jonga, "An analysis of Government Budgets in South Sudan from a human development perspective." (South Sudan: UNDP 2014), p4.
[442] Ibid, p10.

CONCLUSION

State fragility has been over a long time associated to the political condition of African states. Since its emergence as a studied global phenomenon by policy-makers and academicians, numerous works have been carried out to measure its impact on states' social, economic and political situation. The African continent, because of its multiple internal disruptions, has been at the center of international concerns on the question of states' ability to efficiently rule, bring about basic services and ensure the well-being of their citizens. South Sudan had the potential to emerge as an exception to the widespread weak political rule in the continent. While independent political rule in most of African states started in the second-half of the 20th century, statehood or state-making in South Sudan followed a long and particular trajectory.

The colonial period constituted the first main dynamic of state-making in South Sudan during a period of isolation and subjugation. It shaped the image of an exploited Southern Sudan, a marginalized region and neglected communities with a distinct identity. The post-colonial era constituted a period of confrontation within which political visions of Southern and Northern Sudanese were at odd against each other. This contradiction culminated into decades of internal armed struggle. Finally, the achievement of a political project of an independent Southern state started taking shape with the cessation of violent confrontations and the beginning of political consultations. This period of negotiation constituted the occasion of deliberation of matters of great dissension, such as the question of a Southern self-determination or share of oil wealth. It was after this period of negotiation, within which a political roadmap that ensured the possibility of a Southern independence, that South Sudan finally achieved its independence.

Against this historical backdrop, our main inquiry, throughout this work, was to determine the possible reasons that could explain the emergence of a weak statehood in South Sudan after independence. South Sudan, in fact, emerged as an independent state, with a distinct political and cultural identity and showed, through a history marked by marginalization, violent confrontation and peaceful negotiation, the necessity of its political autonomy. While these historical dynamics have favored the achievement of

self-rule, the post-independence period became characterized by a profound fragility that materialized itself in several aspects.

In relation to the theoretical framework we built on the factors of fragility and in response to our research problem, the emergence of South Sudan as a weak or fragile state obeys to five essential dynamics or factors. Firstly, from the perspective of internal sovereignty, the country has showed an incapacity in maintaining an order in its physical base. Its internal territorial delimitation and its ownership of some parts of external borders became subject to violent contestation. External forces and internal disruptions undermined its capacity to exert a proper control of its borders. Its undefined political structure opened the door to internal dissensions between elites and communities, reinforcing the image of a quasi-state that has still to find its political identity and control its physical existence. The condition of quasi-statehood in South Sudan was compounded by the ruling power incapacity to deliver basic services to its population without a continuous recourse to international aid.

Secondly, the country faced a remarkable deficiency in its security sector. That deficiency was marked by a lack of state' monopoly of violence due to the high militarization of the society and the proliferation of violence entrepreneurship outside state control. The military sector of the country was further fragilized by state incapacity to implement a proper security reform. In result, as the state continued to show a weakened security structure, it tended to face internal disruptions that took the form of repeated acts of violence either from local communities or from military elites themselves.

Thirdly, from an institutional and political perspective, South Sudan became pervaded by weak state structures symbolized by a neopatrimonial system of governance. The neopatrimonial system allowed a total monopoly of state institutions by military elites which continuously engaged themselves in turbulent struggle for political power, a struggle that partially contributed to the 2013 civil conflict. Past liberation struggle that led the independence also emerged as severe inconvenient for political transformation. The legacy of liberation gave military elites a sense of entitlement in the ownership of state resources and provided them a source of excuse for their mismanagement.

Economically, the South Sudanese state suffered from resource curse, its high dependency on oil revenues made its national economy extremely vulnerable. Oil also showed itself to be source of instability between elites and even appeared as a driver of the 2013 civil conflict. Within the neopatrimonial system, the South Sudanese economy became profoundly undermined by rent-seeking practices and intense pursuit of personal wealth. The survival of the existing political system came to be entirely dependent on the constant flow of oil money. As a result of ruling elites neglect and disruptive neopatrimonial practices, the country suffered from a lack of economic infrastructures, impeding, in the process, opportunities to develop proper economic opportunities. The economic condition of the country became further marked by a huge depreciation of the South Sudanese Pound, resulting in a drastic increase of commodities price. And while the population was confronted to a high level of poverty, elites continued to undermine the economy by pursuing the misappropriation of public funds.

Finally, viewing from a social aspect, fragility became evident in South Sudan. The state was facing internally an identity crisis that favored an ethnic division between local communities, reducing greatly chances of building social norms based a common citizenship and nationhood. Ethnicization of social relations led to fragile social foundations within which citizens pursued their interests along with ethnic lines. While, vertically, citizen-citizen relations appeared to be undermined by ethnicization, horizontally, state-society relations became weakened by elites' incapacity to fulfill their part of the social contract.

These aforementioned different factors demonstrate the profound fragility of the South Sudanese state after the beginning of its independence. Each crucial aspect of statehood became affected by dynamics of instability, violence and disorder. From the perspective of fragility as a continuum, South Sudan emerged at outset as a weak state and, with the increase of its internal disruptions at several levels, its situation of fragility deepened to reach level of near failure or collapse. The outbreak of civil conflict brought about destruction both at elites and population levels, transforming a manageable weakness into a deep-seated demise. While its legacy of marginalized region, its enormous oil resources and the assistance of the international community all constituted incentives to create

strong state structures, South Sudanese elites' tendency to divert efforts and resources towards their personal interests and their eagerness to preserve the political status quo in their favor, created a vicious circle of fragility within which the country became trapped continuously.

Despite these findings on factors of fragility in South Sudan, this study is nevertheless confronted to an analytical limitation. We made a thorough analysis of the country from the perspective of modern statehood which, in reality, obeys exclusively to a western conception of state and, therefore, tends to neglect particular dynamics that could be found in the African context. While the South Sudanese state-making process followed globally accepted patterns, that is to say, recognition of self-determination right, peace talks and official agreement over a certain number of issues, the post-independent period showed not only a South Sudanese state with Western-like institutions but also the existence of influential informal orders that operated outside governmental control or in cooperation with formal structures. In this regard, the prevailing dynamics of fragility may have undermined the proper functioning of formal statehood in South Sudan, however, informal structures continued to operate, mostly on a small scale, within the society, providing the needs of citizens where the state institutions were absent. Our study, here, is limited to the analysis of dynamics of fragility related to formal state structures, leaving out informal and non-state orders because of their irrelevancy to our theoretical framework which is built according to the global conception of statehood. As much as formal state structures have showed themselves to be profoundly incapable of proper governance, fragility in South Sudan may not mean total collapse for the citizens, as they continue to rely on informal structures to attain to basic needs.

While our study demonstrates a profoundly fragile South Sudanese state, new researches can be dedicated to informal and non-state structures and their relationship to fragility in the country. It could also be important to approach statehood in that country from the perspective of resilience and recovery. How do states such as South Sudan overcome internal challenges and structural impediments that prevent them from achieving stability? While multiple studies have been dedicated to recovery and resilience in fragile states, in the context of South Sudan, new angles of research could be considered. The

implication, for example, of non-state and informal actors in the creation of mechanisms of resilience and recovery can be studied to see if, in fragile states such as South Sudan, the capacity-building of formal structures alone is sufficient for a state to recover from fragility.

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