Voices of a Nation in a Contested Social Space: Radio and Conflict Transformation in Sudan

A dissertation presented to

the faculty of

the Scripps College of Communication of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Hala A. Guta

March 2011

© 2011 Hala A. Guta. All Rights Reserved.
This dissertation titled
Voices of the Nation in a Contested Social Space: Radio and Conflict Transformation in Sudan

by
HALA A. GUTA

has been approved for
the School of Media Arts and Studies
and the Scripps College of Communication by

________________________
Drew O. McDaniel
Professor of Media Arts and Studies

________________________
Gregory J. Shepherd
Dean, Scripps College of Communication
ABSTRACT

GUTA, HALA A., Ph.D., March 2011, Mass Communication

Voices of the Nation in a Contested Social Space: Radio and Conflict Transformation in Sudan (468 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Drew O. McDaniel

Sudan has been embroiled in civil war for fifty years. The peace agreement of 2005 finally brought this war to an end. This research explores how radio has informed audience perceptions and interpretations on issues of peace and conflict. This research draws on peace and conflict studies and media effects research with a special emphasis on the concept of cultural violence (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990). Two media organizations—Sudan National Radio (SNR) based in Sudan and Sudan Radio Service (SRS) based in Kenya—serve as the case studies for this research. Using media ethnography and framing analysis, the research employed a comparative framing analysis of media frames and audience frames of peace and conflict issues.

Framing analysis revealed that SNR and SRS adopted different frames for issues pertaining to peace and conflict. SNR’s major frames were: development projects as a peace dividend, internal unity and solidarity, and external conflict and conspiracy frames. As a state-owned radio, SNR functioned as a mouth-piece for the National Congress Party-dominated government and adopted the frames that were sponsored by the government. On the other hand, SRS, though issues of peace and conflict were prevalent in its reporting, adopted conflict and blame as major frames. Three factors emerged as major contributors to frame building in the two radio stations: organizational culture,
frames sponsorship, and the web of subsidies available to each station. This study established that audience members synthesized the media frames and tapped into their personal experiences to interpret the media frames and through this eventually developed their own frames. The audience frames were sometimes aligned with the media frames while on other occasions they were negotiated and even oppositional to media frames. Audience members relied on media frames only on issues that were outside the sphere of their direct experience. The research concluded that the role of media in conflict transformation should be understood in the context of a wider societal effort for peacebuilding. The dissertation offers a set of recommendations that includes a reform of media, capacity building and professional development, and adoption of conflict-sensitive approach in reporting.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Drew O. McDaniel
Professor of Media Arts and Studies
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people and organizations have, individually, jointly, and on several occasions contributed in immense ways to this dissertation. It remains my singular honor to thank them all for their support while acknowledging that any faults and or shortcomings in this dissertation can only be mine.

I am forever grateful to my advisor Dr. Drew McDaniel. Without his valuable knowledge, patience, and guidance, this dissertation would not have been finished. My gratitude also goes to my dissertation committee members: Dr. David Mould, Dr. Claudia Hale and Dr. Jaylynne Hutchison, for their unwavering support.

My advisor and committee members not only helped me go through the dissertation journey, but also in different ways have nurtured me as a scholar and shaped my intellectual identity. Dr. McDaniel introduced me to the mass media research methods and through his classes I came to know about framing analysis, which I subsequently applied in this research. I believe that I am a better researcher because of Dr. McDaniel’s rigorous instruction. His close guidance during field research and through the writing of this dissertation has afforded me the privilege of remaining focused without digression. Dr. Mould helped set my intellectual foundations in graduate school since I first met him in 2004. During the writing of this dissertation, I always had Dr. Mould’s attention, despite his busy schedule and many responsibilities. Dr. Mould remains the one mentor that has immensely contributed to my scholarly career. Dr. Hutchinson introduced me to the field of cultural studies, especially British cultural studies and issues of representation and voice. Dr. Hutchison’s classes and the intellectually stimulating discussions during
these classes, enabled me to understand issues of injustice and equality in a new light, and inspired my appreciation of the role of culture in society. Moreover, this dissertation would not have been complete without the writings of Johan Galtung. It was Dr. Hale who introduced me to Galtung and his writings on violence, a set of principles that later informed the theoretical grounding of this research.

I would like to thank Dr. Steve Howard for serving in my program of study committee and guiding me during the proposal development and through the development of a grant proposal, which made possible my field research for a year in Kenya and Sudan. I am also thankful for the support of African Studies Program at Ohio University for awarding me the Foreign Languages Area Studies (FLAS) scholarship for two successive years during my doctoral program. The scholarship was instrumental in my learning of Swahili, a critical skill during my field research in Kenya. I am appreciative to Dr. Peter Githinji, Dr. Peter Otiato, and Dr. Ann Biesteker for teaching me Swahili.

This research would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad. Through the scholarship, I secured the resources I needed to spend a year living in Sudan and Kenya conducting field research. Thank you Audra Rose and the office of research and sponsored programs at Ohio University, and Paula Carpenter, administrative assistant of the school of Media Arts and Studies, for your support with the grant proposal development and grant management during my field research.
The insights and the stories of the research participants no doubt made this dissertation possible. I am indebted to all my many participants in Sudan (Khartoum, Blue Nile State and Nuba Mountains, South Kordofan State) and Kenya (Nairobi and Kakuma), who gave me their time, opened their homes and hearts to me during interviews. These participants weathered my endless questions on issues that might be painful and brought to them memories they tried to forget. Nevertheless, all of them patiently answered my questions, shared their stories, emotions and dreams for a better future to our country, Sudan.

During my field research, many people and organizations assisted me in different ways: The Ministry of Rural Development in South Kordofan State, Sudan for hosting me in Kadugli; the Community Development Fund (CDF) in Blue Nile for facilitating my access to communities; SNR officials who gave me their time and assisted me in many ways, I cannot name them for confidentiality issues; all SRS staff for their help, support and for giving me an office, allowing me access to their archives, agreeing to interviews with me and for friendship and intellectually stimulating conversations during my five months at their facilities; UNHCR office in Nairobi and Sub-office in Kakuma: Caroline Oplie, David Odindo and Hassan Dabar; my field assistants in Kakuma, Akej, Amatu, Gama, Santino, AkoI, and Isitu for braving the unforgiving heat of Kakuma to take me around in the camp. Their exuberance and optimism in life made me strong during one of the most emotionally challenging legs of my field research.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, and my friends in Athens who have made Athens a second home for me.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Abstract | iii |
| Acknowledgments | v |
| List of Tables | xiii |
| List of Figures | xiv |
| List of Acronyms | xvi |
| Chapter 1: Introduction | 2 |
| Problem Statement and Research Questions | 3 |
| Significance of the Study | 5 |
| Sudanese Media Landscape | 7 |
| Print Media | 7 |
| Radio | 12 |
| Regional Radio in South Sudan | 17 |
| Radio Stations Based outside Sudan | 18 |
| Television | 20 |
| Delimitations | 21 |
| Definition of Terms | 22 |
| Organization of the Study | 23 |
| Chapter 2: History of a Polarized Society | 25 |
| Introduction | 25 |
| Ancient Sudan | 27 |
| Turko-Egyptian Sudan (1821-1885) | 33 |
The Mahadist State (Mahadiya) (1881-1898) ............................................................... 38
The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1899-1956) ........................................................ 40
Early Resistance and Pacification (1899-1924) ........................................................ 43
The Southern Policy .............................................................................................. 46
Early Sudanese Nationalism Movement (1924-1938) .............................................. 48
Revived Nationalism and Independence Negotiations (1938-1956) ........................ 54
Torit and Yambio Clashes 1955 ........................................................................... 60
Post-Independence Sudan: Independent Country, Divided Society ..................... 61
The First Civil War (1955-1972) .............................................................................. 62
First Parliamentary Government (1956-1958).......................................................... 62
First Military Government: Abboud Regime (1958-1964)...................................... 66
Addis Ababa Agreement and Beyond 1972-1983. ............................................... 71
The Second Civil War (1983-2005) .......................................................................... 74
The Birth of Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/ Army ....................................... 74
SPLM/A and the New Sudan Conception/Vision (Al-Sudan Al-Jadeed) .......... 75
The Rise of the Islamists’ Movement and Political Islam ....................................... 78
Third Parliamentary Government (1985-1989)...................................................... 80
The National Salvation Revolution (Al-Ingaz Al-Watani) (1989- present) ............ 84
Peace Talks and the Road to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) .......... 89
The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ......................................................... 93
Development Disparities ......................................................................................... 97
Violent Clashes in South Sudan: Ethnic Clashes or an NCP Conspiracy? ............... 321
The 2011 Referendum and Sudan Thereafter ............................................................. 333
Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 351
Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion ............................................................................ 354
Media Frames ............................................................................................................. 355
Sudan National Radio Frames ................................................................................ 355
Sudan Radio Service Frames ................................................................................ 362
Media Frames Building .............................................................................................. 369
Audience Frames ........................................................................................................ 373
Sudan National Radio Audience Members ............................................................. 373
Sudan Radio Service Audience Members .................................................................. 377
Practical Implications for the Peace Process .............................................................. 384
Conclusion and Recommendations ............................................................................. 392
Limitations of the Research and Suggestions for Future Research ......................... 400
Personal Reflections ................................................................................................... 401
References .................................................................................................................. 410
Appendix A: IRB Approval ............................................................................................. 442
Appendix B: Research Permit in Kenya ........................................................................ 443
Appendix C: Consent Form ............................................................................................ 444
Appendix D: Interview Guide ....................................................................................... 446
Appendix E: The Comprehensive Peace Agreement ....................................................... 449
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>List of Radio Stations in Sudan as of 2009</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>List of Regional Radio Stations in South Sudan as of 2009</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>SRS Stories Breakdown by Month</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>SRS Stories Breakdown by Month</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Sudan Map. ........................................................................................................... 1
Figure 2. Administrative Map of Sudan. .................................................................................. 28
Figure 3. Map of Ancient Sudan Kingdoms: Nobatia, Makuria, and Alodia. ....................... 29
Figure 4. Map of Funj and Fur kingdoms. ........................................................................... 31
Figure 5. Historical Map of Turko-Egyptian Sudan. ........................................................ 37
Figure 6. Map of Sudan that shows the Mahadist State boundaries and Fashoda, the
location of the English-French standoff in 1898. .............................................................. 42
Figure 7. Access to Education 1960. ................................................................................. 101
Figure 8. Time Frame of Research Activities in Sudan. ....................................................... 166
Figure 9. Time Frame of Research Activities in Kenya. ...................................................... 166
Figure 10. Sudan Radio and Television Corporation Main Entrance Guard Gate. ....... 169
Figure 11. South Kordofan Ministry of Rural Development, During a Coffee Break with
Workshop Facilitators and Participants. .............................................................................. 181
Figure 12. Coffee place-Demazin Bus Station. .................................................................. 184
Figure 13. Morning Tea in Blue Nile State. ..................................................................... 184
Figure 14. Meeting with Mapans. ........................................................................................ 188
Figure 15. Mapan Women Enjoying Coffee ........................................................................ 188
Figure 16. Visiting the Fruit Farms in Al-Disa. ................................................................... 190
Figure 17. During an Interview in Al-Disa. ....................................................................... 191
Figure 18. SRS Staff Working on the Newscast of the Day. ......................................... 195

Figure 19. UNHCR flight at Wilson Airport, Nairobi.................................................. 200

Figure 20. Map of Kenya Showing Location of Kakuma and Lokichoggio. ............... 201

Figure 21. UNHCR Compound, Kakuma. .................................................................. 203

Figure 22. Dryness in UNHCR Compound, Photo Taken from My Room. ............... 203

Figure 23. Meeting With Community Mobilizers during Lunch Time in Kakuma ...... 210

Figure 24. Conducting Interviews in Kakuma Refugee Camp................................. 210

Figure 25. Budabuda (Bicycle) Public Transportation in the Camp......................... 211

Figure 26. A Street in Kakuma Refugee Camp............................................................. 211

Figure 27. Abyei Area Map......................................................................................... 299
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Abyei Boarders Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Associated Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU PSC</td>
<td>African Union Peace and Security Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPA</td>
<td>Darfur Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUP</td>
<td>Democratic Unionist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>Graduate Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GONU</td>
<td>Government of National Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOS</td>
<td>Government of Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOSS</td>
<td>Government of South Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICA</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>Joint Integrated Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICF</td>
<td>Islamic Charter Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGAD</td>
<td>International Court of Arbitration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICA</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCP</td>
<td>National Congress Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NF</td>
<td>National Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIF</td>
<td>National Islamic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPG</td>
<td>Nile Provincial Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA</td>
<td>Permanent Court of Arbitration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>Popular Congress Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDF</td>
<td>Popular Defense Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Command Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACDNU</td>
<td>Sudan African Closed Districts National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAF</td>
<td>Sudan Army Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANU</td>
<td>Sudan African National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Sudan Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan Liberation Movement/ Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNR</td>
<td>Sudan National Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLAM/A</td>
<td>Sudan People Liberation Movement/ Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Sudan Radio Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRTC</td>
<td>Sudan Radio and Television Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSLA</td>
<td>South Sudan Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSLM</td>
<td>Southern Sudan Liberation Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSPG</td>
<td>Southern Sudan Provincial Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNA</td>
<td>Sudan News Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUS</td>
<td>Sudanese Union Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMID</td>
<td>United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIS</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFL</td>
<td>While Flag league</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Sudan Map.

Source: http://www.machara.org
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The signing of the comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) between the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the government of Sudan (GOS) on January 9, 2005 marked a moment of historic importance for a country that has been at war for half a century. Although another conflict continued in Darfur, in the western part of the country, the signing of the CPA filled people with hope that the agreement would end suffering in a country that had been embroiled in a civil war. This hope, however, did not last long because violence broke out again in July 2005 after the death of then vice president, founder and chief of SPLM/A, John Garang under suspicious circumstances. These violent outbreaks, which were mainly between Southerners and Northerners, left 45 dead and more than 360 injured, according to media reports. Since that day, commonly known as “black Monday,” hopes for lasting peace and ethnic solidarity have slumped and skepticism regarding the hitherto fragile peace process has grown. Half a century of civil war has left Sudanese society with deep ethnic divisions. For sustainable peace in Sudan to be a reality, the cultural factors that underlie conflict need to be analyzed and addressed. This dissertation pursues this objective.

Drawing on media effects research and Johan Galtung’s concept of cultural violence (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990), this dissertation aims to understand the role mass media play in audiences’ perceptions about conflict, social cohesion and peace in Sudan. Two media organizations—Sudan National Radio (SNR) based in Sudan and Sudan Radio Service (SRS) based in Kenya—serve as the case studies for this research.
Galtung (1969, 1990) made clear distinctions between three dimensions of violence: direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Direct violence can be thought of as the physical act of violence, while structural violence is the type of violence that results from social injustices and inequalities. Cultural violence can be attributed to “those aspects of culture . . . that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (Galtung, 1990, p. 1). Although direct violence can be stopped by a peace agreement or a cease-fire, cultural violence can survive long after an effective cease-fire (Bratic, 2005; Galtung, 1990). Since cultural norms are usually embedded in social institutions, it is essential that post-conflict social institutions be critically examined. Any aspects of culture that legitimize violence should be identified to prevent recurrences of direct violence¹. While political negotiation deals with direct violence and policies deal with structural injustices, addressing “cultural violence requires attitude change” (Bratic, 2005, p. 68). In conflict situations, media institutions can be manipulated to perpetuate cultural violence; on the other hand, they can also be used to promote cultural peace.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

As noted, on January 9, 2005, the government of Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) signed a peace agreement that ended one of history’s longest civil wars. The war had left two million people dead and more than four million displaced (Jok, 2001). A new interim constitution approved by the

¹ Bigombe, Collier, & Sambanis (2000) report that 31% of the civil wars in the world resume within the first ten years of the end of the conflict (p. 323).
national assembly in July 2005 heralded a new era of peace. This interim constitution states that:

The republic of the Sudan is a sovereign, democratic, decentralized, multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-lingual state; committed to the respect and promotion of human dignity and founded on justice, equality, and the advancement of human rights and freedoms. It is an all-embracing homeland wherein races and cultures coalesce and religions co-exist in harmony. (Sudan constitution, 2005)

These constitutional stipulations were ideals; but for these ideals to be realized, all Sudanese people and authorities must be committed to the promotion of social cohesion and deepening trust and accord among different groups. For Sudan to achieve a sustainable peace, it is essential that structural imbalances, socio-economic disparities, and cultural aspects that legitimize and violence which have been inherited in societal institutions be identified and openly and effectively addressed.

When a peace agreement is signed, the disputants declare the end of direct violent exchanges. However conflicts, even after resolution through political peace agreements, leave societies suffering from distrust, trauma, and grievances that last long and can be transmitted through generations and thus become a real obstacle to sustainable peace (Baric, 2005; Broom & Hatay, 2006). Reversing these adverse consequences needs more than political agreements. Social change and interaction is required. Mass media have long been used to bring about desirable changes in communities. Ideally, mass media can play an essential role in facilitating dialogue which leads to understanding, peace, and
cohesion. Yet media can be a double edged sword. Media are equally effectively manipulated by the elites in power to augment their standing and continued control of the message to dominate the political scene. The importance of mass media derived from the assumption that they “are responsible for providing the images, representations, and ideas around which the social totality, composed of all these separate fragmented pieces, can be coherently grasped as a ‘whole’” (Hochheimer, 2004, p. 8). Bratic (2005), in his research about 40 peace media projects around the world, concluded that integration of media within peace-building projects can have a significant impact in creating peaceful societies. However, despite the role modernized Sudanese mass media institutions can play, as Awad (2004) noted, little research has been done on the influence of the Sudanese mass media and their contribution to the consolidation of the fragile peace.

Using framing analysis and media ethnography, this research aimed to understand how radio in Sudan informs audiences’ perceptions about peace and social cohesion. This research specifically addresses the following questions:

RQ1. How does Sudan National Radio (SNR) frame issues of peace and conflict?
RQ2. How do SNR’s messages inform audiences’ perceptions about peace and conflict?
RQ3. How does Sudan Radio Service (SRS) frame issues of peace and conflict?
RQ4. How do SRS’s messages inform audiences’ perceptions about peace and conflict?

Significance of the Study

This research contributes to the literature on mass communications, communication for social change and peace and conflict studies. Although the way communication influences social change is a growing field of research, MacBride (2004)
contended that communication research has been undertaken mainly in industrialized countries. As such, “developing countries have, therefore, been dependent on a small number of sources and restricted research approaches for findings which might or might not be applicable to [developing countries]” (p. 224). Onadipe and Lord (1999) further argued that there is a lack of thorough and systematic research on the role of media in Africa. Thus, this study adds to the literature on mass communication in a non-Western context. In Sudan, little research has been done on the influence of Sudanese mass media and on media contributions to the consolidation of the fragile peace (Awad, 2004). Again, this research contributes to the literature on media, conflict, and peace-building in Africa, in general, and Sudan, in particular.

Media as one of the social institutions that facilitate interaction can play an important role in achieving “positive peace.” Galtung (1964) compared this concept to what he described as “negative peace,” defined as simple absence of violence. While negative peace deals only with the manifestation of the conflict and aims to control violence, positive peace seeks to achieve the ideal of general and complete peace conditions by addressing the causes of violence. Positive peace, thus, aims to achieve social justice (Bratic, 2005; Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990). Positive peace involves active interaction, while negative peace does not need interaction as long as there is no violent conflict. To attain positive peace, individuals need to first move from a state of violence to a state of negative peace and then forward toward more interaction and integration to achieve a state of positive peace. In this process, mass media can play an essential role in facilitating a dialogue that leads to understanding, peace, and cohesion.
Media’s role in inciting and escalating violence has been the subject of numerous studies in the field of mass communications (Allan & Seaton, 1999). The case of the hate radio station Radio-Television Libre de Mille Collines that fuelled the 1994 Rwanda genocide and the role of media in Kenya’s post-elections violence in 2008 are both illustrations of the role of media as provocateur in conflict (Fackler, Obonyo, Terpstra, & Okaale, 2009; Kellow & Steeves, 1998). Since many scholars have concluded that media can incite conflict, it is then reasonable to assume that media can influence peace-building as well (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). However, as Wolfsfeld (2004) noted, there is a paucity of research on mass media during peace processes. Another contribution of this study was to research media in the peace process.

Sudanese Media Landscape

To fully capture the role radio plays in Sudanese society, it is important to understand the Sudanese media landscape in terms of its historical development. The following section provides an overview of print and electronic media in Sudan.

Print Media

Print media was the first form of Sudanese mass media. Sudan’s first contact with the press was during the Turko-Egyptian occupation (1821-1885). Although the exact date was not clear, historians concluded that the Turko-Egyptian regime “brought a small lithographic press to Khartoum to print ledgers and other government documents” (Sharkey, 1999, p. 531-2). When the Mahadist state (1881-1898) overthrew the Turko-Egyptian regime, they used the press to print the ratib (prayer book). When the British colonized Sudan, they began publishing the Sudan Gazette in 1899, an official periodical
in English that was dedicated to publishing government laws, orders, and notices. The Sudan Gazette was aimed at circulating news to British officials in Sudan (Salih, 1971; Sharkey, 1999). The first commercial newspaper in Sudan, Garidat al-Sudan (Sudan’s Newspaper), was established in 1903 by three Lebanese businessmen. Sudan’s newspaper continued in circulation until 1941. Like the Sudan Gazette, Garidat al-Sudan did not target Sudanese natives. The target readership Gardiadt al-Sudan was non-English speaking officials, mainly Egyptians, Syrians, and Lebanese. Sudan’s second commercial newspaper was the bi-weekly the Sudan Herald, which was established on 1911 by two Greek entrepreneurs. As the number of literate Sudanese increased, the owners of Sudan Herald, in cooperation with some Egyptians, Lebanese, and Northern Sudanese started an Arabic weekly publication: Ra’id al-Sudan (Sudan pioneer) in 1913 (Hussein, 1985; Salih, 1971; Sharkey, 1999). However because all of the above mentioned newspapers and journals were owned by foreigners and were not targeting a mass Sudanese audience, many scholars did not consider them part of Sudanese print media (Hussein, 1985). Yet they played an important role in the development of Sudanese print media and its role in Sudanese society. Because of its role in Sudan’s early nationalism movement, and specifically an article published in 1918 about a famine in Sudan and the inadequate British response, the British authorities closed down Ra’id al-Sudan and its Lebanese editor was arrested and deported to Egypt (Sharkey, 1999).

Shortly after the closure of Ra’id al-Sudan, Hussein Sharif, a Gordon College graduate who worked in Ra’id al-Sudan, started Hadarat al-Sudan (Sudan Civilization/Culture). Hadarat al-Sudan, which started publication in 1919, was owned by a
consortium of Sudanese elites led by Sayyid Abdel al-Rahman al-Mahdi, leader of the Ansar sect (Mahadi followers). The newspaper, the publication of which many consider the beginning of Sudanese print media, was the first wholly Sudanese-owned and edited newspaper. Hussain Sharif, the editor in chief, intended *Hadarat al-Sudan* to be a forum for Sudanese to express their views and address social issues pertaining to Northern Sudanese society. In spite of its relatively high circulation (1700 copies per day), *Hadarat al-Sudan* encountered financial problems that threatened its continuation (Hussein, 1985; Salih, 1971; Sharkey 1999). However, in 1924 the Sudanese political spectrum witnessed a major tumult when the first nationalist resistance revolt against British colonization erupted. The owners of *Hadarat al-Sudan* sided with the British authorities against the leaders of the 1924 revolt (more details follow in Chapter Two). As a result, and in reward for their loyalty in supporting colonial authorities, the British administration “paid the paper's outstanding loan debts, bought its press, guaranteed an annual subsidy, and promised to cover losses” (Sharkey, 1999, p. 535). *Hadarat al-Sudan* survived the financial storm. However, interestingly, two major political leaders, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, leader of the Sufi Khatmiyya group, and Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi, joined the ownership of the newspaper (Salih, 1971).

As the political environment in Sudan developed and the Sudanese nationalism movement remerged after the 1924 revolt, a clear line started to be drawn between two political groups in Northern Sudan: those who called for unity with Egypt (who later formed as the Democratic Unionist party) and those who called for an independent Sudan (later to become members of the Umma party). To take advantage of the increasing
numbers in the Sudanese educated class and the power of mass media in reaching Sudanese masses, Abdel al-Rahman al-Mahadi (leader of Ansar and Umma party) started \textit{al-Nil} (the Nile) newspaper in 1935. \textit{Al-Nil} was the first daily newspaper with a clear political stance. The signing of the Anglo- Egyptian treaty in 1936 and the creation of the Graduates General Congress in 1938 sharpened the divide between the Unionists and the Sudan for Sudanese camp. In a response to \textit{al-Nil}, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, leader of Khatmiya sect and the Unionsit camp, founded \textit{Sawt al-Sudan} newspaper (Sudan Voice) in 1940 (Sharkey, 1999). The years leading to independence witnessed a rapid growth of print media in Sudan. Hussein (1985) contended that, between 1950 and 1954, there were more than 30 newspapers and magazines in Arabic and English in circulation in Sudan.

Sudan gained its independence in 1956, and the pre-independence newspapers and magazines continued under the first Sudanese government. However, this did not last long before a military coup overthrew the elected government in 1958. In a trend that would continue in Sudanese politics, the military government imposed harsh restrictions and censorship on all forms of mass media. As a result, the number of newspapers diminished to 17. As Hussein (1985) argued, “the suspension of newspapers was a common phenomenon when a newspaper opposed the policy line of the government” (p. 28-29). This statement is usually true under dictatorships. Consequently, Sudanese print media went through waves of growth whenever there was democracy and decline during military governments (that is 1958-1964, 1969-1985, 1989-present).

During the short democratic period of 1985-1989, print press flourished as a result of the vibrant political environment after 16 years of military rule (1969-1985). When the
Islamists movement ascended to power in 1989, sources estimated that Sudan had around 55 publications in Arabic and English, including daily newspapers and periodical magazines (IMS, 2007; Metz, 1991). However, immediately after taking control, the coup leader, Al-Bashir, announced the suspension of the 1985 Constitution; the dissolution all political parties, trade unions, and non-religious societies; as well as the suspension of all newspapers (Kaballo, 1989). The Sudanese armed forces newspaper was the only exception, although it continued in circulation for only a brief period. Not long after, the regime allowed a few non-political newspapers (mainly those dealing with cultural issues and sports) and launched two pro-government political newspapers: *al-Ingaz al-Watani* (National Salvation) and *al-Sudan al-Hadeeth* (New/Modern Sudan) (Galander & Starosta, 1997).

After the signing of the CPA in 2005, Sudanese print media began to enjoy relatively fewer restrictions. However, these freedoms were marginal as the National Press Council—the regulatory body of the press—had the power to license, monitor, and discipline the print media. News and articles were subject to monitoring and censorship before publication by the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS). Security officers frequently prohibited publication of articles, especially those dealing with what were considered contentious issues such as the Darfur conflict or criticism of either the government or the National Congress Party. Newspapers can be suspended for a day or two, and editors and journalists are often subjected to questioning by security officers and harassment. For instance, in July 2010, the National Intelligence and Security Services shut down two newspapers and three journalists were arrested, tried, and sentenced to jail
(Sudan Tribune, 2010). In spite of the limited margin of freedom that was allowed after the CPA signing, according to the IMS (2007) report, conditions are regressing rapidly towards the conditions in force before the signing of the peace agreement. Censorship has again been enforced, banning coverage on critical issues such as . . . the Darfur crisis, and demonstrations against the government and rebel movements. The fear of suspension or confiscation has further led to widespread self-censorship among media practitioners. (p. 31)

Radio

While print media found its way to Sudan as early as 1903, Sudan’s experience with radio did not start until the 20th century was well underway. As in most African countries, radio in Sudan was established during colonial rule (Ziegler & Asante, 1992). The first radio station in Sudan was Sudan National Radio (SNR), which is known to the public as Radio Omdurman. SNR started its first broadcast in 1940 to broadcast Allies’ news from the battlefield during World War II. In the beginning, the radio station did not have a building and it broadcast 30-minute newscasts from a small room in the post office headquarters in Omdurman. British authorities distributed loud speakers in the main post office public square in Omdurman; the public gathered there at the time of the broadcast to follow the news. In 1942, the British authorities decided to increase the broadcasting time to one hour daily and included programs about the Sudan Defense Force, which was fighting with Allied forces in North Africa. The new programs also included an English program that targeted Sudanese intellectuals and foreigners. In 1943, the radio station moved to a bigger building and new transmitters were added. After
moving, SNR started broadcasting on Medium Wave 524m and Shortwave 31m. However, the turning point came when Sudan achieved independence, and the radio became fully nationalized. Consequently, SNR moved to its current building in 1957, one year after independence in 1956. However, as Mytton (1983) noted, African leaders continued the pattern of hostility to private electronic media that was carried on by the colonial rulers despite their independence struggle rhetoric of commitment to freedom of expression and information. Electronic media’s potential for reaching a wider audience than print media made it a useful, but at the same time dangerous, enterprise that needed to be controlled, directly or indirectly (Mytton, 1983; Nassanga, 2009; Zeleza, 2009). Sudan was no exception in this matter; as of 2010, radio and television remained a state monopoly.

After independence, the broadcast time increased to ten hours and fifteen minutes. The trend of increasing broadcast hours continues, and as of 2010, the SNR broadcasts 24/7. Programming started with newscasts, and then songs, interviews, and religious programs were added. Nevertheless, all programming was done from the studios; and this trend continued until 1951, when the first out-of-studio programming started by broadcasting football games from Omdurman stadium. The first out-of-country broadcast was in November 1956 when the radio started broadcasting the UN meeting during which Sudan joined the international body as an independent state.

Programming on SNR started with the national program, which targeted the whole country and broadcast its news in Arabic with a limited allocation for programs in English. As the radio station developed, special services (oriented stations) were added.
These services changed over time as needed. Some of these services, for example, included the South Corner, which evolved into the Sudanese Nation Voice.

In 1980, Sudan adopted a decentralization policy. The country was divided into five regions, each region with its own government and local ministers. The introduction of a decentralized government system gave the different regions the right to have their own communication systems. Consequently, each region started its own radio station. The justification behind this step was that centralized broadcasting from Omdurman could not cover such a huge country as Sudan. However, as IMS (2007) noted, most of the regional stations are “financially fragile and a number of the radio stations are unable to remain on the air for more than five to seven hours a day, with less than half of that time being devoted to locally-produced programming” (p. 24). Regional stations started in 1987, and as 2008, 19 out of the 26 states in Sudan have their own regional radio stations (SNR, 2008).

SNR and the National TV were officially integrated in 1991 under what was then known as National Radio and Television Corporation (NRTC), which became the Sudanese Radio and Television Corporation (SRTC) in 2001. SRTC as of 2009 is the only broadcaster with transmission facilities inside Sudan, although private broadcasting can use it after obtaining a license. SRTC broadcasts throughout Sudan, including the south, through four repeater transmitters and regional stations. SNR broadcast 24 hours a day via medium-wave (MW, AM), shortwave (SW), and FM transmission. SNR can be received throughout almost all of Sudan although there are some areas where reception is poor (SRTC, 2007).
Until recently, SNR and its regional stations were the only radio stations in the country. However, in recent years SRTC began issuing licenses to private FM stations. In exchange for license fees and facilities, SRTC owns 15% of all FM private radio (IMS, 2007). As of 2008, there were 11 FM radio stations in Khartoum; five government-owned, in addition to SNR, and six are private stations (see Table 1).

As in many other African countries, radio is by far the most accessible medium in most of Sudan. An assessment conducted by Sudan Radio Service (SRS) of radio listening habits in South Sudan concluded that almost 81% of households in South Sudan have access to radio (SRS, 2005). Other research carried out in other regions, such as West Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, and some other areas of the Upper Nile, confirmed that there are radios in most villages (IMS, 2003). Although there was much doubt about the credibility of “state-owned” radio and TV, SNR remains the most listened to radio station in the country (UNICEF, 2009).

---

2 Access is widely defined as access to listening rather than ownership
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Programming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Omdurman (SNR)</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>General programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Qur’an station</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>Religious (Islamic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace radio</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>Entertainment and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM 100</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>Entertainment and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadi al-Neel (Nile valley)</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>General programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-umma (The Nation)</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>General programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Kawther</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Religious (Islamic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio al-Rabi’aa (radio 4)</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alriyadiya (sport)</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiba</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Religious (Islamic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Radio in South Sudan

As mentioned earlier, radio targeting South Sudan started with a special program on SNR called the South Corner. This program started in 1955 after the beginning of Sudan’s first civil war (1955-1972). The South Corner broadcast its programs from the main station for 40 minutes and used Southern local languages and dialects. Meanwhile, the station in the southern city of Juba was launched in 1962 to broadcast on short wave for three hours daily. The station was halted in 1965 when the government decided that the radio should broadcast only from Omdurman. In July 1969, the South Corner was launched as a separate station that broadcast its programs for three hours daily. It aired in English, Arabic and local languages. When the South Corner was transformed into a separate station, SNR ceased broadcasting in English and all English programming was integrated into the Southern Sudan programming. After the Addis Ababa peace agreement of 1972, the National Unity station, which started broadcasting on October 1976, replaced the South Sudan program. However, the name of the station was soon to be changed to Sudanese Nation Voice in 1977 to reflect the new policy of the station of serving both the North and the South (SNR, 2008).

After the signing of the CPA in 2005, and as part of the peace-building process, a Joint Media Committee was established in April 2005. As part of the CPA arrangements, the committee, which has representatives from the SPLM/A and NCP, was mandated to supply FM radio transmitters to the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) and the ten Southern States by the National Ministry of Information and Communication. This step
aimed at building the capacity of the media sector in South Sudan in order to facilitate peace-building and post-conflict transformation in the region. Because of these developments, the Juba radio and TV station, which was originally part of the SRTC, became the independent radio station Southern Sudan Radio & TV in 2006. The station broadcasts in three languages: English, classic Arabic, and simple Arabic. As of 2008, South Sudan had eight private FM stations in addition to a number of community radios that were established by Internews Network (IMS, 2007) (see Table 2)

*Radio Stations Based outside Sudan.*

There are two radio stations, as of 2009, were based outside of Sudan but target a Sudanese audience: Sudan Radio Service (SRS) which is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and Radio Dabanga, based in the Netherlands. Radio Dabanga began broadcasting in December 2008 using shortwave transmitters of Radio Netherlands Worldwide. Radio Dabanga targets Darfur Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and broadcasts news about Darfur that is normally not allowed on SNR.

SRS is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded project of the Education Development Center (EDC), currently based in Nairobi, Kenya with two bureaus in Juba and Khartoum. SRS also has a network of correspondents across Sudan. SRS broadcasts its programs in English, Arabic, simple (Juba) Arabic, Dinka, Zande, Moru, Nuer, Bari, Shilluk, and Toposa. SRS launched its broadcasts on 30 July, 2003. Initial broadcasts were an hour long, gradually increasing to six hours per day as of 2009. SRS programs include news, civic education, health, agriculture and animal husbandry, and business and economic issues (SRS, 2010).
### Table 2

*List of Regional Radio Stations in South Sudan as of 2009*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Programming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakhita FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Religious (Catholic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Religious (Catholic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miraya FM(UN Radio)</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumbek FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrap FM</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juba radio</td>
<td>State-owned</td>
<td>General and entertainment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Television

Television began in Sudan in 1962 through assistance from the West German government. The early beginnings featured entertainment programs from Egypt, Western Europe, and the United States (Hussein, 1985). When TV broadcasting started in Sudan, airtime was limited to a few hours per day and did not cover more than Khartoum, the capital. However, opening a microwave station enabled the TV broadcast to stretch its coverage a little further than Khartoum. In 1972, another station was opened in Medani, central Sudan, followed by a third station in Atbara, northern Sudan. These stations were linked to Omdurman TV by a microwave system (Hussein, 1985).

Similar to radio, the government-owned Sudan Radio and Television Corporation (SRTC) controls TV in Sudan. While the private sector has penetrated radio, television has remained the territory for the government. No private TV station has been licensed or permitted to broadcast in Sudan, although Sudanese private TV stations based outside Sudan utilize satellite to transmit inside Sudan. The only allowed TV channels inside the country are the two government channels: the National Channel (Sudan TV), which broadcast over the air, and the Blue Nile Channel, which can only be received by satellite (IMS, 2007). However the penetration of satellite television gave Sudanese viewers access to a wide range of foreign television channels, especially from the Middle East. Sudan State TV is received in all larger urban areas. In some smaller communities, some arrangements are made for satellite receivers, TVs and generators or other power systems to enable a community to meet in a common place at certain times to watch various programs. In the Nuba Mountains, these are called “peace clubs” (IMS, 2003, p. 27).
As explained earlier, Juba TV was transformed to Southern Sudan TV after the CPA in 2005. As of 2009, Southern Sudan TV broadcast nine hours a day, providing locally produced programs as well as national news from SRTC and international programs. Southern Sudan TV broadcasts in English, classical Arabic and colloquial Arabic (IMS, 2007).

Delimitations

For the purposes of this research, two media organizations—Sudan National Radio (SNR) based in Sudan and Sudan Radio Service (SRS) based in Kenya—were selected. The radio medium was selected because of its relative accessibility in a country with low literacy rates and high poverty rates. An audience survey that was conducted in 2009 in Northern Sudanese states showed that radio was still the most popular media in Northern Sudan with listenership of 75.3%, and SNR was the most listened to radio station with a percentage of 57.7% (UNICEF, 2009). The two radio stations (SNR and SRS) were selected for comparative analysis. According to an SRS survey of listening habits in Southern Sudan and among Sudanese refugees in Kenya, SNR and SRS are the most listened to radio stations (SRS, 2005) in the region.

Although there is currently another conflict going on in Darfur in Western Sudan, this research is limited to issues of conflict between the North and the South, which

---

3 According to Human Development Report 2006 literacy rate in Sudan is 60%. However, these statistics are taken mainly from the North. Estimates are two much lower in the South. Note also the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) definition of literacy—the ability to read and write a simple sentence about yourself. Basic literacy is not functional literacy—what a person needs to hold a job or complete a health history questionnaire at a clinic.

4 BBC, Radio Omdurman, and SRS are the most listened to radio stations in this order
ended with the signing of CPA in 2005. Thus, post-conflict in this research designates the period from January 9, 2005 to present.

Definition of Terms

Arab Muslims and Africans: these terms are highly contested in Sudanese public discourse. However, for the purpose of this research, the definition of Arab and African is not based in ethnicity but, rather, in the way the Sudanese, in their public discourse, define themselves. Most Northerners define themselves as Arabs, based on cultural identity that considers Islam and Arabic language as cultural determinants of being an Arab. Other groups define themselves as Africans in contrast with the Arabized Northerners.

North Sudan, Northerners: for the purpose of this research the term Northern Sudan is defined according to Mukhtar (2006) who positions the North not as a geographical region, but, rather, an ideological and political North, with geographical confinements limited to the Muslim, Arabic speaking, central riverain Northern Sudanese.

Conflict: the term conflict in this research refers to statewide or regional conflict. As such, conflict at organizational, family, and interpersonal levels is excluded from consideration.

Topics and frames: a topic is a description of the particular subject covered, while frame refers to the interpretive and organizing elements employed in order to generate meaning. For example, while violent clashes in South Sudan might be a topic, the
interpretive organizing element is ethnicity. Thus, the topic is violent clashes, but the frame is ethnic violent clashes.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter provided background information to the problem under-study, articulated the research questions and provided an argument concerning the significance of the study. This chapter also provided an overview of the Sudanese media landscape.

I believe that Sudan’s present cannot be understood without understanding the complexity of its past; the factors underpinning the country’s polarization into Arabized North/Center and non-Arabized margins. Thus, Chapter Two provides a historical synthesis of the events that contributed to Sudan’s conflict and the shaping of Sudan’s polarized society. Since marginalization and injustices have been at the core of Sudan’s conflict, the chapter concludes with a section on development disparities and examination of the marginalization claims.

Chapter Three is a review of the literature. This research draws on two major bodies of literature: peace and conflict studies, and media effects research, namely media framing. As such, the chapter is divided into two major sections. The first section is a review of the literature on peace and conflict studies, the differences between conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. The first section also provides an argument for the suitability of the concept of conflict transformation for the issues in this research. The second section is a review of the literature on media effects
research and framing research. The chapter concludes with a review of the literature on
the role of media in the context of conflict.

Chapter Four is the methodology chapter. The chapter starts by providing an
overview of the different schools of audience research by way of situating this research
within audience research scholarship. The chapter then delves into a detailed description
of the field research in Sudan and Kenya. The chapter also discusses the data analysis
procedure. Qualitative research is, by nature, a reflective process. As many scholars have
asserted, reflexivity is an inherited part of qualitative research; the meaning construction
in qualitative research can be understood by looking not only through the social context
of the research but also through the individual context of the researcher. Therefore, I
conclude this chapter by situating myself in relation to the research by providing a
reflexive account about my positionality in an attempt to reveal to the reader the lenses
that shaped my interpretation in the rest of the document.

Chapters Five and Six present the findings from the field research in Sudan and
Kenya respectively. Each chapter provides a narrative of the major media frames and the
way with which research participants interacted with the media frames to construct their
own.

Chapter Seven synthesizes the findings from the two case studies to advance
theoretical and practical implications of this work. The chapter concludes with a personal
reflection section that describes the challenges I faced, and the lessons I learned through
this research journey.
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF A POLARIZED SOCIETY

Introduction

Through an analysis of historical events, this chapter provides an overview of how Sudan became embroiled into the longest civil war in the 20th century. The chapter provides a synthesis of the historical factors that contributed to the conflict and the shaping of Sudan’s polarized society. This chapter is divided into five major historical periods: Ancient Sudan, the Turko-Egyptian period (1821-1885), the Mahadiya (1885-1898), the Anglo-Egyptian condominium period (1889-1956), and post-independence Sudan (1956-2005). While other scholars and Sudan’s historians might have a different approach to chronological divisions, I chose these specific periods because each represents a turning point in the history of Sudan, especially the polarizing of Sudan into Islamic-Arabic North and African South. The coming of Islam to ancient Sudan can be recognized as the starting point of dividing the country into the Arabized North and African South. The Turko-Egyptian conquest institutionalized the slave trade and reinforced the North Islamic orientation. The Mahadiya was considered by many historians as the first national movement in modern Sudan; however, the Mahadiya did not bring national unity to a country polarized by the slave trade. The Anglo-Egyptian condominium period reinforced the division between the North and South through the Southern Policy and the Closed Districts order, which established separate administrations for the North and the South under a British governor general. Many

5 Joint rule by two or more nations
Sudanese consider the current civil war in Sudan a direct outcome of the country’s colonial legacy. This chapter concludes with a section on development disparities in Sudan, a trend that predates the country’s independence. Sudan’s conflict(s), although complex and multidimensional, share a major theme: marginalization. The country suffers widespread development and socio-economic disparities between its center and peripheries. Almost all armed groups and armed conflicts were expressions of protest against such patterns of neglect and marginalization. Therefore, isolating the development patterns in Sudan for closer investigation helps contextualize the conflict, moving it from a simple Arabs against Africans explanation to an in-depth interrogation of issues of economic interests, equity, and maneuvers (both overt and covert) aimed at self perpetuation in power, via amassing of resources, by central groups and their national leaders.

Sudan is located in northeast Africa and borders nine countries (see Figure 2). According to the fifth census of 2008, Sudan’s population was estimated to be 39,154,490, although this census was highly disputed by many political entities in Sudan as it was perceived as perpetuating Northern Sudanese hegemony based on claims of being the majority (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Some historians divide Sudan’s population into Northern Arabized Muslims and Southern African non-Muslims (e.g., Holt & Daly, 1988). However, this categorization is not as clear cut as it appears. The largest ethnic category, Arabized Sudanese, constitutes nearly 40% of the total population and is comprised of mostly Muslims. Major Muslim (but non-Arabized) groups are: the Nubians in the far north, the nomadic Beja in the northeast, and the Fur of the west.
Southern non-Muslim groups include Dinka (more than 10% of the total population and 40% in the South), Nuer, and numerous smaller Nilotic and other ethnic groups. Although census planners omitted the ethnicity and religion categories from the 2008 questionnaire, other sources estimated that 70% of the country’s population is Sunni Muslim, living mostly in the North. The remaining population is divided between those 25% who hold indigenous folk beliefs and Christians who account for 5% of the population and are mostly in the South and Khartoum. Arabic is the official national language, widely spoken in the North. English is the official second language. Other local languages such as Nubian, Ta Bedawie, and diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages are also spoken (Metz, 1991).

Ancient Sudan

What is known as modern Sudan today is comprised of three major regions: the Northern part of post-colonial Sudan, which was known by the medieval Muslim geographers as Bilad al-Sudan (Land of the Black in Arabic), the Darfur region in the Western part and the Southern part (Holt & Daly, 1988). Sudan with its present borders came into existence after British colonization.

Sudan’s past is closely bound up with its present challenges. The historical process of dividing the country into the Arabized North and what might loosely be called African South dates back to the 7th century. At the time there were three territories in the Nile area South of Egypt: Nobatia or Nubian, Makuria (al-Muqqarah) and Alodia (Alawa) (see Figure 3). The three kingdoms were converted to Christianity and granted
recognition to the spiritual authority of Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria in Egypt (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

Figure 2. Administrative Map of Sudan.

Source: http://www.sudan.net/governmet/admnmap.html
Figure 3. Map of Ancient Sudan Kingdoms: Nobatia, Makuria, and Alodia.

The invasion of Egypt by the Islamic Ummayad empire military between 639 and 641 marked the beginning of the contact between ancient Sudan and Islam. In 651-2, the Arab-Muslim army, under the leadership of Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarh, invaded Sudan. Although the Arabs besieged Dongola, the capital of al-Muqqarah, strong Nubian resistance prevented the city from falling into the hands of the Arabs. The conquest resulted in a peace accord with the Nubian people known as al-baqt (Pact). One of the provisions of this treaty was that the Nubian kingdom should send a given number of slaves annually to Egypt. The treaty also “established remote Arab control over the country and opened communication channels with the Arab world, guaranteed the freedom of movement for the Arabs” (Deng, 1995, p. 10).

The economically privileged Arab traders were attractive suitors for intermarriage among the local people of Sudan. As a result, Northern Sudan underwent Arab-Muslim assimilation through conquest, intermarriage, trade, and settlement; and “Christian Nubia succumbed to gradual erosion and infiltration rather than to organized military invasion” (Holt & Daly, 1988, p. 15). In other words, Islamicization and the Arabization of Northern Sudan was a result of demographic movements and trade relations rather than a military conquest. This gradual erosion paved the way for the rise of two Islamic kingdoms in the area between the 16th and 18th centuries. These were the Funj sultanate which dominated the Nile Valley area and the Fur sultanate which dominated present day Darfur (see Figure 4).
Figure 4. Map of Funj and Fur kingdoms.

Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) made an important distinction between the two kingdoms in terms of the spread of Islam. The Funj Sultanate, which extended from the third cataract of the Nile to Fazughli in the upper Nile, underwent Islamicization by virtue of commercial and political contact with Arab and Muslim scholars from Egypt and Arabia. On the other hand, the Fur Kingdom “was rather isolated from the mainstream influence emerging from Arabia and Egypt . . . [and] was more exposed to influences from the Nile Valley itself and the Islamized Sudanic kingdoms of west Africa” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 7). This difference in the sphere of influence might explain how the process of Islamicization in Northern and Central Sudan, unlike Islamicization in Darfur, was accompanied by assimilation into Arabic culture as well. The present day Darfurians, although Muslims by religion, do not claim Arabic ancestry.

The Southern part of present day Sudan was inhabited by four major tribes: Nuer, Shilluk, the Dinka, and the Azande. Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) believed that the Northern and Southern parts of Sudan had some occasional interactions as well as “economic and commercial activities across the frontier” (p. 8). However, the Southern part remained isolated from the influence of Islam and Arabic culture because Arab migration and settlement southward was hindered by the difficult terrain and harsh tropical climate (Akol, 2007; Deng, 1995). The relationship between the Arabs and Southerners was limited to a few slave traders. Their interests were mainly economic; and thus, they had no interest in Arabizing or Islamizing the South (Deng, 1995; Khalid, 2003). The South was dominated by the Chollo and Dinka. The Chollo established their reign over the White Nile region and maintained the region’s cultural identity in the face
of Arabization and Islamization (Akol, 2007). By the 19th century, the dichotomized cultural identity of Sudan was more or less solidified. Northern and central Sudan had undergone Arabic and Islamic assimilation, while the Southern part maintained its strong indigenous African cultural orientation. Darfur, Nuba Mountains, and Beja land in the east “retained a strong regional identity” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 8).

**Turko-Egyptian Sudan (1821-1885)**

Unlike many other African countries, the wave of 19th century colonization was not Sudan’s first colonization experience. Sudan was first colonized in the period of joint Turko-Egyptian rule (1821-1885). Egypt had always been the gateway to the conquest of Sudan. In the 19th century, when Egypt was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, Muhammad Ali Basha ascended to power. Motivated by his ambition to build and expand the Ottoman Empire, Muhammad Ali Basha sent a joint Turkish-Egyptian army to invade the Northern regions of Sudan in 1820. Muhammad Ali Basha’s expansionist policy was motivated by promises of gold “and the idea of a slave-army, [of] docile [soldiers], trained in the European manner and personally loyal to him” (Holt & Daly, 1988, p. 48). After invading the north and central Sudan, the Turkish-Egyptian army moved west and took over Kordofan. However, Darfur remained resistant to Mohammad Ali Basha’s rule (see Figure 5).

In accordance with the motivation to search for human and economic resources, Mohammed Ali Basha and his successors started moving southward looking for men and ivory, among other local commodities, and began expanding the new regime’s territory. Nile navigation tours were started. These expeditions, known as *Salim* voyages, were led
by Salim Qapudan in 1839, 1840 and 1842 (Holt & Daly, 1988). The opening of the White Nile route expanded the slave trade. Slave traders used the North as a base for their operations, carrying out incursions into the Southern regions (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Groups of foreigners and indigenous Northern traders penetrated the South looking for ivory and other commodities and hunting for slaves. Although the slave trade turned out to be a major activity, it began as a result of the ivory trade. As explained by Holt and Daly (1988):

> Slaves were needed to supply the domestic needs of the trading communities, as concubines and porters, and were also used by traders as form of recompense to their retainers, thereby reducing overheads. Thus, under the auspices of the ivory traders, a secondary slave-trade developed, which helped to supply the markets in the north. (p. 70)

Slave-traders started setting up fenced stations, known as zaribas, to hold captured slaves (Holt & Daly, 1988; Lesch, 1998). Zariba is an Arabic word for cattle ranch. The use of this term speaks volumes to the inhumane conditions under which slaves were held. From the Southerners’ point of view, there was no difference between foreigners and indigenous Northerners; they were all slave traders (Deng, 1995). The memories of brutal slave hunters, both Northerners and foreigners, remained alive in Southerners’ collective memory and the whole slave trade activity shaped the social and cultural relationship between the two parts of the country. One of the major figures in the slave trade industry was al-Zubair Rahma Basha, whose zaribas developed into a town known as Daim Zubair (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Al-Zubair Rahma remains a
controversial figure in Sudanese history. In Northern Sudanese collective history, he was considered a hero and an Islamic missionary, to the extent that a street in downtown Khartoum was named after him. For Southerners, al-Zubair Rahma’s name brings back the brutal memories of slave raids and the conditions under which Southern slaves were held in zaribas.

The Turko-Egyptian regime established an administration based in Khartoum, while an army headquarters was built at Medani along the Blue Nile to host the garrison troops (Holt & Daly, 1988). Many historians attribute the formation of the defined state of contemporary Sudan to the Turko-Egyptian administration. During this era, local Sudanese were allowed to take part in the administrative, judiciary, and educational systems (Elnur, 2009; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). These historical developments significantly influenced the way present day Sudan’s educational and cultural system was regionally divided. When the British came to Sudan, they simply allowed Northern Sudan to continue with the established social institutions (including the Islamic legal and educational system). On the other hand, South Sudan was opened to missionaries’ influence and, thus, developed on a different trajectory.

Slaves from what is now known as South Sudan were sent to Egypt to serve as soldiers in Mohamed Ali Basha’s dream army. However, the Sudanese soldiers could not stand the Egyptian weather and hundreds of them died, resulting in a total failure of the model army dream. Nevertheless, these soldiers, known as Jihaddiya, were still used as garrison troops in Sudan, helping to build the newly colonized region. These slave soldiers continued to be used in agricultural labor. As the slave trade intensified, many
slaves were forced to work in the domestic sector as well, as strenuous laborers in Central and North Sudan, a trend that has had a tremendous impact on the social fabric of the Sudanese society. The country had been divided into slaves and free, and as Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) noted, “Islam seemed to have provided the dividing frontier between the sector of population who could not be enslaved by Egyptian government, and the non-Muslims who became the object of slave plunder” (p. 13). This dichotomy, to some extent, has characterized Sudanese society since then. Sudanese society in the Northern public memory is being divided into Muslim Arab (sic) free men and women and non-Muslim black slaves. As articulated by Akol (2007), “the word abid (Arabic for ‘slave’) became synonymous with Southern Sudanese” (p. 4). Being a slave in today’s Sudan is an ethnic characterization more than a legal one.

By the mid 1850s, with the accession of the Western-educated Muhammad Said Basha, public opinion in the ruling circles in Egypt began to shift toward banning the slave trade. As a result, in 1862, the slave trade was officially banned, although ivory trading was allowed to continue (Holt & Daly, 1988). However, the slave trade ban was never successful, and these regulations were never carried out. For the Turko-Egyptian administration, the “whole economic being of the Sudan rested on slave trade” (Wright, 1972, p. 31), making the ban a near impossible mission. Moreover, slave traders, by that time, had political-economic power beyond administrative orders. Accordingly, as Holt and Daly (1988) articulated, “slave-trade proceeded as vigorously as ever” (p. 75). Southern Sudanese resistance and revolt grew stronger and thus paved the way for the Mahdi revolution to gain support within South Sudan (Akol, 2007).
Figure 5. Historical Map of Turko-Egyptian Sudan.

Source: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/africa_1885.jpg
The Mahadist State (Mahadiya) (1881-1898)

Resistance to the Turks and Egyptians came from both the North and South, resulting in a successful revolution led by Mohamed Ahmed al-Mahdi in 1881. Although the resentment of Sudanese and the resistance to the oppression and high taxation from the Turko-Egyptian rulers were the major forces behind the Mahadiya, other external factors contributed to its success (Deng, 1995; Holt & Daly, 1988; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Outside of Sudan, Egypt was suffering internal conflicts and the authority of the Ottoman Empire was challenged resulting in the fall of the Khedive Ismail⁶ and opening the doors for British control in Egypt, and later Sudan. In the years prior to the collapse, the Turko-Egyptian regime witnessed economic hardships, and as a consequence, the regime’s control over Sudan weakened. These conditions in Egypt, combined with the resentment from the slave traders who were protesting the new slave trade regulations, as well as the burden of taxation on many Sudanese, contributed to the success of the new revolution (Holt & Daly, 1988; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

Al-Mahdi began the movement with an Islamic appeal. The word Mahdi means the divinely guided. Al-Mahdi (whose original name was Mohamed Ahmed, and al-Mahdi was an added qualifying adjective) declared that he was the awaited Islamic Messiah (Al Mahdi Al Muntathar). The idea that a divinely guided one (Mahdi) would appear when the end time approaches to revive the true Islam is held by many Muslims. Mohamed Ahmed adopted the name of al-Mahdi in June 1881 when he revealed himself

---

6 Khedive is a hereditary title that is equivalent to “prince” used in the Ottoman Empire
and began sending letters to tribal and religious leaders asking them to join him in his
divinely ordained mission (Dekmejian & Wyszomirski, 1972). The Islamic face of the
Mahdiya was important in the context of this research because it gave a religious
justification and connection to the actions of al-Mahdi later, especially the
recommencement of the slave trade.

Al-Mahdi and his army fought several battles with the Turko-Egyptian troops, but
the decisive and last battle was in Khartoum. The Khartoum battle ended on January 26,
1885 when al-Mahdi’s troops captured the city, declaring the end of Turko-Egyptian rule
and establishing a new era in Sudanese history (see Figure 6 for the Mahadist State
boundries). Al-Mahdi did not enjoy his new regime; he died six months after the capture
of Khartoum, leaving the newly established government to his successor, Khalifa
Abdullahi. The victory of al-Mahdi was due to the support of many segments and groups
in Sudanese society. However, these groups offered their support for different, and
sometimes contradictory, reasons. For instance, the South, in spite of the Islamic nature
of the Mahdist revolution, “though it did not convert, saw the religion of the Mahdist as
a tool for liberation” (Deng, 1995, p. 11). For the Southerners, al-Mahdi was a freedom
fighter whose mission was to liberate the local people from the foreigner’s oppression
(Deng, 1995). The Dinka, one of the largest ethnic groups in South Sudan, “portrayed the
Mahdi as a manifestation of the spirit of Deng, their deity associated with rain and
lightning as manifestations of God’s might” (Deng, 1995, p. 72). On the other hand, the
slave traders saw a different kind of liberator. The Northern ethnic groups who were
engaged in slave raids, the Baggara of Kordofan, for example, supported the new
movement in order to rescue their trade which had been threatened by the Turko-
Egyptian antislavery campaign. The Mahadist regime, although it did not hold full
control of the South, chose to support the groups that were engaged in slave trade for
many reasons. One of the major reasons was the Islamic nature of the Mahadist
movement. Deng (1995) explained how this Islamic nature influenced the way the
Mahadis dealt with the South; he stated that “fanatically motivated and sure of their
divine mission to rid the world of infidels, the [Mahadis] carried a holy war into the
South and, with it, full scale slavery returned” (p. 72). The Mahadist revolution greatly
disappointed its supporters from the South by continuing, like their ancestors, the slave
raids and “Islam was turned against the South, thus becoming a divisive element [once
again]” (Deng, 1995, p.11). For the Southerners, as noted by Suleiman (2005),

The memory of the brutal slave trade conducted mainly by mercenaries of the
Northern Jellaba\(^7\) has lived on in the culture of the South. The experience of such
aggression by Arab Muslims against Black Africans gave rise to Southern
resistance to Islam and the embrace of Christianity, which Southerners perceived
as being on their side against oppression.

The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1899-1956)

While Khalifa Abdullahi was trying to establish his control and expand the
Mahdiya state, neighboring African countries were falling into the hands of the Western
colonial powers. To the North, Egypt was under British control; France and Belgium

\(^7\) An Arabic word which means merchandisers that is used in South Sudan to describe Northerners
were in control of the Southern frontiers of Sudan. While Britain did not show interest in Sudan, French occupation of Fashoda in 1898 revived British worries about the destiny of Sudan as a Southern gateway to Egypt and, more importantly, to the sources of the Nile (Holt & Daly, 1988; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005; Wright, 1972) (see Figure 6). Britain reacted immediately by first warning France that “the presence of French force in Fashoda and in the valley of the Nile was regarded as a direct infringement of the rights of the Egyptian government and of Great Britain” (Holt & Daly, 1988, p. 117). That warning was followed by the marching of Anglo-Egyptian armies towards Sudan. The Mahdiya army faced the conquest with bravery but lost the Karari battle in Omdurman in 1898, marking the end of the Mahdiya regime. Because the Anglo-Egyptian conquest was done under the name of Egypt, British direct rule in Sudan was not feasible. However, Britain was not willing to lose control over Sudan. Consequently, a unique form of government that put Sudan under joint Anglo-Egyptian rule was established. The January 19, 1899 agreement, which was “without precedent in International law,” gave Britain trusteeship over Sudan (Bashir, 1974, p. 20). Britain was given military and civil authority through the British-nominated governor general, and Egypt was left “as little more than a rubber-stamp partner” (Deng, 1995, p. 77). In terms of power, Britain had the upper hand in Sudan, but nonetheless, Egypt was the one to bear the financial cost of the conquest (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Sudan entered a new era of history under a British-dominated Anglo-Egyptian condominium.
Figure 6. Map of Sudan that shows the Mahdist State boundaries and Fashoda, the location of the English-French standoff in 1898.

Source: http://unimaps.com/sudan1884-1900/index.html
As noted by Deng and Daly (1989), the relationship between the Anglo-Egyptian regime and the Sudanese people went through three phases: initial resistance to the foreign rule, cooperation, and rising nationalism after World War II. After the conquest, the newly established regime faced a huge task of pacification and stabilization. Resistance came from different groups with different motives and sprang up all over the country. In the North, the opposition was led by the Mahadists and their allies and led to the revolt of Wad Habouba in 1908 in central Sudan. In the South resistance was led by spiritual and tribal leaders and was manifested in the 1901 Dinka uprising and the 1912-1917 Shiluk and Neur revolt (Bashir, 1974; Deng, 1995; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). In the far West, Darfur, which was an autonomous state under the rule of Sultan Ali Dinar, continued to be a source of resistance until it was brought under control in 1916. By 1924, Sudan’s western borders were marked (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

To face the challenges of bringing such a vast territory under control, the British administration opted for indirect rule policy, where cooperation was solicited from local religious and community chiefs and leaders (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). This policy of indirect rule was characteristic of British colonial policy in Africa and Asia, where the native population were govern “through their own chiefs and political institutions under the control of European officials . . . The Whites, however, hold the real political, financial, and military powers in their hands, while the chiefs serve as their marionettes” (Padmore as cited in Davie, 2005, p. 16). This policy of cooperation with the local leaders took different directions in the North and South. In the North, the British
administration started developing ties first with those who opposed the Mahdiya, such as Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, leader of Khatmiyya tariqa (Sufi sect). After winning over the anti-Mahadists, the British moved to the more neutral and even pro-Mahadists leaders, offering incentives for tribal leaders to cooperate. The incentives took different forms, from recognition of spiritual and tribal leadership, to monetary incentives. For instance, a board of *ulama* (religious leaders) was created in 1901; funds were made available for constructing schools and facilitating pilgrimages to Mecca; Friday was considered a holiday instead of Sunday, and Sharia courts were allowed to rule in personal and family matters (Deng, 1995; Holt & Daly, 1988; Lesch, 1998). The British policy was to rule “through British officials in the central administration and provinces,” with indirect rule through tribal leaders in rural areas (Lech, 1998, p. 29). The British relied on the existing judicial and administrative systems established during the Turko-Egyptian regime. However the most important aspect of this policy was the prohibition of missionary activities in North Sudan (Deng, 1995).

Since the British were the administrative rulers and had a wide range of authority, another form of inducement for cooperation was to strengthen the religious and tribal leaders’ wealth and political power, as in the case of Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi. Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, grandson of al-Mahdi, and the leader of the Ansar (followers of the Mahdi) group was allowed to “collect Zakat (Islamic tithes) from the Ansar … and to develop lucrative pump irrigated cotton schemes on Aba Island in the Gezira district. Many Ansar labors were West Africans migrants who were paid in grain and clothing” (Lesch, 1998, p. 29). The British support for Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi enabled him not
only to accumulate wealth through free labor and taxation, but provided him with political power in addition to the spiritual power he had as al-Mahdi’s descendant. The British succeeded in pacifying and buying al-Mahdi’s grandson’s loyalty to the extent that not only did Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi forget that the British rule was established upon the ruins of his grandfather’s government, but even presented his father’s sword to the King George V in 1919 as a sign of loyalty (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). This story is often recited in Sudanese political circles as a sign of how Northern leaders sold out to the colonizers in exchange for economic and political power.

The British policies had significant implications for post-colonial Sudan’s political sphere. The two leaders, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani and Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, with the support of the British, were able to gain massive political and economic power. By 1921, Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi owned more than 13,000 acres of land, with a labor force of 45,000 people, and his annual income was estimated to be between 15,000 to 40,000 pounds (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani “became the first Sudanese to be decorated before the First World War when he was given the KCMG [Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of St. Michael & St. George] in 1900” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 19). The other major implication is that “the [British] administration tried to establish legitimacy by demonstrating sensitivity to the local religious values and institutions” (Deng, 1995, p. 54). Consequently, Arabism and Islam were encouraged in the North, and Northern Sudan’s identity was very much shaped in the trajectory of Arabic-Islamic orientation. On the other hand, South Sudan was driven into a different direction.
The Southern Policy

British policy towards Southern Sudan was totally different. As mentioned earlier, resistance to the new colonizers sprung up in both the North and the South. Tribal and religious leaders led the resistance across different ethnic groups of the South. As asserted by Lesch (1998), “the motivations for resistance remained similar to those of the nineteenth century, with the exception that slave raids had ended” (p. 31). Unlike Northern Sudan, where local Islamic and cultural values were respected and supported, the South was opened to missionary activities and Christianity was encouraged, local leaders and administrative structures were eroded, and British legal codes replaced indigenous judiciary systems (Lesch, 1998). Lesch argued that “the British shared the perceptions of previous conquerors that the people in the South were primitive and pagan” (p. 31). However, in addition to prejudices against Southern indigenous institutions, Northern Islamic social institutions were more established when the British came. From the Turko-Egyptian regime to the Mahdiya rule, the British found a system in place that they carried on.

When all forms of resistance were crushed, the British started formalizing and implementing what came to be known as the “Southern Policy.” The Southern Policy was formalized in 1930, but initial steps preceded its full implementation. Initially the Closed Districts Order was introduced in 1922, whereby the British closed the South to Northerners, including Northern government officials (Sarkesian, 1973). Only those holding special permits were allowed to pass. Closed Districts included Southern Sudan,
the Nuba Mountains of Southern Kordofan and the Funj areas of the Southern Blue Nile\textsuperscript{8}. Britain’s declared justification for the “Closed District” policy was to protect southerners from slave traders from the North. However, and according to the Permits to Trade Ordinance of 1952, Northern merchants “jallaba” were allowed to travel to the South (Lesch, 1998). As a result, the Northerner’s image in the South’s collective memory was that of either a slave trader or merchant. The term jallaba, Arabic for trader, became synonymous with Northerner or Arab. In Sudanese contemporary political discourse jallaba is synonymous with Northerner exploiters or oppressors.

In 1928, along with the Closed District Policy, the British formalized a "language policy” that allowed vernacular indigenous languages to be taught in primary schools in Southern Sudan where English was designated as the official language. Consequently, Arabic was not used in schools and government offices in Southern Sudan (Biong, 2003; Deng, 1998; Holt & Daly, 1988; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). As Holt and Daly (1988) noted, these steps were “the conscious beginnings of a ‘Southern Policy’ aiming at the political separation of the southern provinces from the Sudan” (p. 125). The Southern policy also prohibited the Northern Arabic–like dress Jallabiya, and using Arabic or what seemed non-indigenous names (Lesch, 1998). South Sudan was ruled as a separate state with the aim of joining East Africa, a plan never materialized due the failure of British administration to establish communication and trade between South

\textsuperscript{8} Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, in addition to Abyei, are governed under special protocols in the CPA. The three areas are known as transitional areas due to their marginalization and are contested between the North and the South; an illustration to the influence of the Closed District and colonial legacy on Sudan’s conflict.
Sudan and British East Africa (Collins, 2006). The British policy reinforced the cultural and social barriers and the result was that Sudanese of North and South were socially and culturally distant and thus could not interact or identify with each other.

*Early Sudanese Nationalism Movement (1924-1938)*

After World War I and the rise of the Egyptian nationalist movement, the British sought to put Sudan outside of the Egyptian circle of influence. The British established educational facilities to train Sudanese locals to replace the middle and lower ranking Egyptian civil servants. Consequently, Gordon Memorial College and the Military College, as well as schools to train sub-*mamurs*, were established (Deng, 1995; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). *Mamur* is an administrative title that is equivalent to a district commissioner and sub-*mamur* is a deputy district commissioner. The establishment of educational facilities “contributed, among other things, to the growth of indigenous Sudanese nationalism, by expanding the ranks of Sudanese educated” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 24). The British indirect rule policy was meant to pacify the resistance from local communities by cultivating ties and soliciting support from tribal and religious leaders. While this policy worked to some extent with this sector of Sudanese society, resistance sprang up from a different group, the Sudanese intelligentsia.

The nationalist movement began at Gordon Memorial College and the Military College where graduates formed a club for social and educational reasons. The Sudanese political scene then was influenced by the Egyptian nationalist movement and specifically, the 1919 revolution in Egypt. Egyptian nationalists were fighting against the
British and calling for independence for both Egypt and Sudan under the Egyptian king. As a result of this influence, Sudan’s political class then was divided between two camps: (1) those inspired by the Egyptian-nationalist movement who advocated for the independence of Sudan and uniting with Egypt, (2) of supporters of an independent Sudan under British rule (for detailed discussion for these two camps, see Bashir, 1975).

The Graduate Club soon split into supporters and opponents of union with Egypt. Those who advocated for Nile Valley unity formed the Sudanese Union Society (SUS) in 1919-1920. Because of apprehensions about the Egyptian nationalist movement’s influence on Sudan, the British administration was quick to suppress the SUS. Nonetheless, the seeds of nationalist consciousness were planted in Sudanese society. The SUS paved the way for the birth of the White Flag League (WFL), an armed resistance movement under the leadership of Ali Abdel Latif, a military officer of Dinka origin (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

Ali Abdel Latif was born in Egypt to ex-slave parents (a Dinka mother and a Nuba father), and grew up in Northern Sudan. He was a former military officer who was dismissed after a clash with a British officer. He rose as a national hero after being imprisoned for a year by the British authorities for writing an article in 1922 entitled “The Claims of the Sudanese Nation.” The article was sent for publication in the Hadart al-Sudan (Sudan’s Civilization) newspaper. The article was never published but Ali Abdel Latif was “tried, convicted, and sentenced to one year’s imprisonment” (Deng, 1995, p.104). After his release, Ali Abdel Latif co-founded the WFL with Obeid Haj al-Amin. In 1924, following the assassination of Sir Lee Stack, the governor general of
Sudan, in Cairo, the British decided to evacuate all Egyptian officers in Sudan. WFL led a series of demonstrations in support of the Egyptian officers, challenging the British colonial presence and calling for independence for the whole Nile Valley (Bashir, 1975; Deng, 1995; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

The WFL was a milestone in Sudanese nationalist history. Yet, the WFL’s historical significance was not only derived from its role in the nationalist movement, but also because of the “role of Ali Abdel Latif, [who], as an officer of southern origin in the nationalist movement within the northern framework, [was] one of the outstanding anomalies of the Sudan’s identity dynamics” (Deng, 1995, p. 104). The leadership of Ali Abdel Latif in the nationalist movement provided insights into the early seeds of an inclusive national identity, regardless of ethnic background, that if nourished, may have led to a different Sudanese history. Although the WFL gained popular support from a wide range of Sudanese society, and its scope was national, the political elites, who had been privileged by the British, could not see beyond Ali Abdel Latif’s ethnic background. The politics of identity surfaced in their reactions to the 1924 revolt. The Sudanese newspaper, Hadarat al-Sudan (owned by Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani and Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi), reacted to the WFL movement by calling upon the British “[to] exterminate those wayward street boys.” The newspaper further commented about their social status and posed the question: “What a lowly nation is this that now being led by people of the ilk of Ali Abdel Latif. From what ancestry [does] this man descend [from] to merit such fame and to what tribe does he belong?” (Hadarat al-Sudan, June 25, 1924, quoted in Khalid, 1990). The newspaper’s reaction revealed the identity dynamics that plagued
Sudanese society. Although risking his life for a national cause, Latif was still seen as a slave descendant and called derogatory names because of his ancestry.

The suppression of the WFL took its toll on the nationalist movement which went into a period of inactivity until the late 1930s. The British reaction to the 1924 movement had a significant impact on Sudan’s political development. First, educational development and the educated class suffered severely. The British felt betrayed by the educated class in general and Southern Sudanese educated people in particular. After the 1924 revolt “the British administration was not prepared to sympathize or meet any of the demands of the educated class but was out to destroy them” (Bashir, 1975, p. 108). Consequently, the only type of education that the British were willing to provide was traditional education, such as *khalawi* (Quranic schools) (Deng, 1995). The only exception to this policy was the opening of Kitchener Medical College, which was established to train Sudanese doctors in order to replace Egyptian and Syrian doctors who dominated the medical field in Sudan at the time (Bashir, 1975).

Secondly, in a reaction to the Southerners’ active participation and leadership in the WFL, the British reorganized the army along regional lines. This was manifested in formation of the Equatorial corps (Southern Sudanese to serve in the South), the Eastern Arab corps, and the Western Arab corps (soldiers from Darfur) (Deng, 1995). This policy “later proved an obstacle to an integrated national security system” (Deng, 1995, p. 110). The third consequence was that the British, feeling threatened by the Egyptian nationalist movement influence on Sudan, “intensified its policy of neutralizing Egyptian influence in the Sudan, deepening the separation of the North and the South and strengthening
tribal structure and institutions [in both Northern and Southern Sudan]” (Deng, 1995, p. 111).

After the 1924 revolt, the British administration sought to strengthen its ties with the religious and tribal leaders as a means to surmount the influence of the educated class. Cooperation with religious and tribal leaders, especially al-Mirghani and al-Mahdi, proved useful to the British. However, the relationship between the two leaders and the British administration, based solely on mutual interests, was not always cooperative. The British administration felt threatened by the increasing economic power, and consequently social influence, of the two leaders. This influence began to manifest in raising voices and opposition to some British administration policies. In 1935, for example, Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi published an article in his newly established newspaper *al-Neel* (The Nile), attacking the Gezira scheme\(^9\) as a “foreign enterprise” (Niblock, 1987). As a reaction, British administration tried to surmount al-Mahdi power by withdrawing the land and financial support. But it was too late.

The conflict between al-Mahdi and the British came during the world economic depression of the 1930s. As a result of economic hardships, the British administration decided to reduce the salaries of Gordon College Graduates. Resisting the salary reduction and educational policy in Sudan, the Sudanese students went on strike on October 24, 1931. Siddiq al-Mahdi, son of Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, was one of the strike leaders.

---

\(^9\) Gezira scheme is an irrigation project in Gezira province in central Sudan. The scheme was established by the British to produce cotton, which was grown on a third of its area when it started in 1926. The economy of Sudan was historically based on agriculture prior to the beginning of oil exports in the late 1990s.
leaders (Bashir, 1975). Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi pleaded with the students to end the strike. However, it seems that incident opened channels between the religious leader and the rising nationalists. Sensing the increased resentment among Sudanese, especially the educated class, al-Mahdi started establishing a coterie or a political group of supporters. In reaction, Sayid Ali al-Mirghani started establishing his own coterie (Niblock, 1987).

In 1934, Sir Stewart Symes was appointed governor general of Sudan. The Symes administration (1934-1940) was considered the beginning of the decline of indirect rule (Bashir, 1975; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). Upon his arrival, Symes made it clear that he did not support native administration and the delegation of power to local religious and tribal leaders, the policy the British had followed since the conquest. Symes called for a modernization policy and, thus, a greater role of Sudanese educated class in development projects (Bashir, 1975). Symes’ relaxed attitude towards the educated class, in addition to the victory they gained after the 1931 strike, gave the Sudanese intelligentsia more confidence in their power to influence the country’s administration. The graduates started organizing themselves for the first time since the 1924 revolution.

Meanwhile, Egypt and Britain were disputing the status of Sudan. Egypt felt that Britain was asserting more control in Sudan’s administration. In 1936, Britain and Egypt, after long negotiations over the status of Sudan, signed a treaty to reaffirm the Anglo-Egyptian rule. The future of Sudan was decided by the two condominium parties, “without either party to the treaty seeing fit to consult the Sudanese” (Niblock, 1987, p. 185). In reaction to the neglect of Sudanese opinion in the 1936 treaty, the graduates of Gordon College established the Graduate Congress (GC) in 1938.
Revived Nationalism and Independence Negotiations (1938-1956)

The Graduate Congress (GC) aspired to be an advocate for social and educational development in Sudan. However, as Collins (1983) asserted, in Sudan the social is not separate from the political, and soon the Graduate Congress became involved in politics. The first overtly political activity came when Britain declared victory over Italy in the horn of Africa region, including Kassala in eastern Sudan, during World War II. The Graduate Congress raised a memorandum to the British governor general in 1942, calling for self determination for Sudan. After that time, the Graduate Congress became the political voice in the North that led the struggle for independence (Bashir, 1975; Deng, 1995; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

The British administration dismissed the Graduate Congress memorandum, claiming that it represented a small stratum of the society, the graduates (Bashir, 1975; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). The graduates, in an effort to widen their influence, started seeking support from influential figures in society. The conflict between those who sought a union with Egypt and those who opposed it contributed to each group’s decision to turn to outside supporters to strengthen its position. Sayid Ali al-Mirghani and Sayid Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, who both started developing a coterie of graduates around them, became the most logical choice of leaders (Niblock, 1987). Once again, as was the case with the early nationalist movement, the Graduate Congress split into two groups. The first, which prompted the slogan “Sudan for Sudanese,” was supported by al-Mahdi; the other group called for unity with Egypt under the slogan “Nile Valley Unity” and was supported by al-Mirghani. These two groups evolved into the two major political
parties that led the march towards independence: the *Ashiqqa* (brothers) party which was supported by al-Mirghani (later becoming the Democratic Unionist Party), and the *Umma* (nation) Party, which was supported by al-Mahdi.

Although the 1942 GC memorandum was dismissed, “the move had opened the door for some sort of a constitutional reform” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 26). In 1943, the Advisory Council for Northern Sudan was created in an effort to increase Sudanese participation in the country’s administration. The creation of the Advisory Council, according to Khalid (1990), served two purposes: first, to decrease the influence of the tribal leaders system and shift from tribal to regional divisions, and secondly, to assure that the British administration had good intentions of involving the Sudanese in the country’s administration.

While all these political developments were taking place in the North, the South was separated and isolated by the Southern Policy, and its educational and administrative system was left in the hands of missionaries. As the nationalists in the North marched towards independence, the question of the future of the South surfaced. The South was developing in a different trajectory. The Southern Policy prevented any interaction between the two parts of the country. The Advisory Council was meant for North Sudan, and, thus, predominantly Northerners and no South Sudanese were appointed. The British administration justified the exclusion of the South from the Advisory Council by the lack of educational development in the South, claiming no Southern Sudanese leader was qualified to be appointed. As Collins (2006) explained, “to the British administrators in the South the advancing political consciousness of the North appeared to call for a re-
affirmation of Southern Policy and redoubled efforts in order to prepare the Southern Sudanese for their future, a future still to be determined” (p. 57). For the Northerners, who were suspicious of the Southern Policy and the British administration’s attitude toward the South, the South was “the lost brother, snatched away by the aliens and long due back” (El- Affendi, 1990, p. 372). Consequently, in 1946, during a special conference, the Sudan Administrative Conference10, Northern nationalists insisted that South Sudan be included in the soon-to-be formed Legislative Assembly, which was to meet in 1948 to discuss the future of Sudan and the necessary constitutional changes. The British authorities were reluctant about the idea in the beginning. However, the British abruptly reversed their policy and determined that Southern and Northern Sudan would become one independent country. No one asked the Southerners their opinion and “the future of southern Sudan was thereby determined without southern representation” (Deng, 1995, p. 129). Collins (2006) concluded that the reasons for this policy change were, “apart from the rapid political development of northern Sudan, the failure of East Africa to improve communication or develop trade with the Southern Sudan did not encourage the British officials in Khartoum to seek any political ties with Uganda or Kenya” (p. 58). Accordingly, the Southern Policy was discontinued, opening up travel and trade in the South to the Northerners. The British administration “allowed a mosque to be built in Juba, and permitted large numbers of northern civil servants and teachers to transfer south” (Lesch, 1998, p. 34).

10 The Sudan Administrative Conference was a meeting between Northern nationalists and the British governor general.
Eventually, the Advisory Council for Northern Sudan was transformed into a legislative assembly, “whose jurisdiction would encompass the entire country” (Lesch, 1998, p. 34). Southerners and British officials in the South, troubled by the history of slave trade and developmental and educational gaps between the North and the South, protested the idea of having one legislative assembly to decide on the future of both the North and the South. To stem the Southerners’ resentment, the British administration in Khartoum resolved to convene a conference in Juba (in Southern Sudan) to bring Northerners, Southerners, and British officials together to discuss the South’s representation and the necessary measures to safeguard the South. Discussing unity or separation was not the goal of the 1947 Juba conference (Collins, 2006; Lesch, 1989). Southerners, “painfully conscious of their political backwardness, were at first reluctant to assume a role in the budding political institution [the Legislative Assembly] being created in the North” (Collins, 2006, p. 60). Under pressure from both the North's representatives and the British administration, the South's representatives finally agreed to send delegates to the Legislative Assembly in Khartoum. However, the Southerners demanded special safeguards for the South’s future under a federal system, until the South developed its political and educational institutions. But when the Legislative Assembly Ordinance was drafted, no specific measures to safeguard the South’s future were included. The Civil Secretary, James Robertson, argued that “any specific references to the Southern Sudan would only be exploited by Egypt in negotiations with the British over the condominium agreement” (Collins, 2006, p. 61). No specific measures were taken to determine how the South’s voice would be heard. With the South
represented by only 13 of the 193 members of the Legislative Assembly, it was clear that the destiny of the South was left in the hands of the Northerners (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

In the Legislative Assembly meeting in December 1948 a motion suggesting that Sudan was ready for self-government passed. Hence, the assembly asked the British governor general to “approach the condominium powers to make a joint declaration” of Sudan’s independence (Deng, 1995, p. 129). In March 1951, the governor general appointed a 13-member Constitutional Amendment Committee to discuss the steps needed to move towards self-government. Only one member of the committee was a Southerner. Meanwhile, Egyptians, facing loss of control over Sudan, unilaterally declared the abrogation of the 1936 condominium treaty and reinstated King Farouq as King of Egypt and Sudan. The Legislative Assembly condemned the move and reaffirmed the Sudanese right for self determination. The Constitutional Amendment Committee suggested necessary provisions be included in the constitution to pave the way for self-government. The Committee “envisaged the creation of special ministry of southern provinces and a board for southern affairs” (Deng, 1995, p. 131). The Legislative Assembly rejected the provision claiming that “it would in effect create two cabinets in one country” (Deng, 1995, p. 131). Again the Southerners’ demands were ignored.

In 1952, the Egyptian monarchy was overthrown. The new Egyptian government declared a willingness to honor Sudanese decisions regarding independence or unity with Egypt. Northern political parties were quick to send delegates to Cairo to negotiate the
country’s future with the new Egyptian government. As an outcome of these negotiations, in 1953, the Self-government and Self-determination for the Sudan Agreement was signed, heralding a transitional period during which Sudanese prepared themselves for independence. The 1953 agreement called for “immediate self-rule, as transitional phase, after which the Condominium would be effectively liquidated” (Mahjoub, 1974, p. 52). Again, the Southerners were excluded from these negotiations. As Khalid stated, “the exclusion of the Southerners from the Cairo negotiations was perhaps the most disastrous decision taken by Egypt and the Northern parties” (Khalid, 2003, p. 55). One group of Sudanese was treated as more Sudanese than the other. The situation was made worse when the Sudanization committee, which was established to aid in phasing out British civil servants, gave only four out of 800 positions to the people of South Sudan (Collins, 2006). “No Southerners became governors, deputy governors, or district commissioners,” Lesch (1998) explained; “Northern officials ruled the South” (p. 35).

During the transitional period, 1953-1956, the Southerners began to organize themselves to make their voices heard. When Sudan was preparing for the 1954 election, as part of the transitional arrangements of the 1953 treaty, the Southerners formed their first political party, the Southern Party. The party won 12 out of the 97 parliament seats (O’Ballance, 1977).

The first elected Sudanese parliament was inaugurated on March 1, 1954. The parliament’s task was to prepare the country for total independence. A time table for British and Egyptian troop withdrawal was presented by the Sudanese Parliament to the British governor general. According to the 1953 treaty, “the transitional period should be
brought to an end by a resolution passed by the Sudanese Parliament” (Mahjoub, 1974, p. 55). Accordingly, the parliament declared that Sudan was ready for self-government. Southerners, politically marginalized and excluded, rejected the move for independence. Southern MPs declared that “they would not endorse the independence proclamation unless the south gained federal status” (Lesch, 1998, p. 35). To accelerate the independence declaration, the parliament agreed that claims of Southern MPs for a federal government for the three Southern provinces would be given full consideration once independence was declared (Deng, 1995; Lesch, 1998; Niblock, 1987).

Britain and Egypt honored the parliament’s declaration that Sudan was ready for self-rule and the transitional period should be brought to an end. British troops left Sudan in August 1955. On December 19, 1955 the Sudanese parliament officially declared independence, and on December 31, 1955, the transitional constitution was passed. Sudan became an independent country on January 1, 1956.

Torit and Yambio Clashes 1955

In July 1955, Northern Sudanese managers, taking over control of the state from the British, dismissed 300 workers in a cotton scheme in Yambio, South Sudan. When the workers threatened to strike and demanded an increase in wages, the Northern managers called the police to suppress the protest. This coincided with an imprisonment of a Southern member of the National Assembly for advocating for federalism. The protest turned into violent clashes. Soon after that incident, while the atmosphere was still tense in the South, a unit of the Southern Defense Corps in Torit was called to Khartoum to participate in independence celebrations in August 1955. With a longstanding history
of mistrust, the group was made apprehensive by rumors that the transfer to Khartoum was a plot to kill them and refused to board the trucks. The situation soon turned into violent clashes, as the soldiers killed 300 Northerners (Lesch, 1998). The clashes spread to other towns. The government in Khartoum declared an emergency situation and approximately 8,000 Northern soldiers were airlifted to the South (O’Ballance, 1977). The British intervened, urged the soldiers to surrender, and assured them that they would have a free trial. When the soldiers realized that the Northern troops, not the British, would handle the situation, they fled into the bush. Southern fears were confirmed when the only four who surrendered were executed. Northern troops also committed acts of revenge, burning villages and looting livestock. As Lesch (1998) asserted, “what was perceived as a mutiny by the government in Khartoum, necessitating a firm crackdown, was viewed as justified resistance in the south” (p. 36). The Torit clashes illustrate how the Southerners viewed the independence. For the South, it was an exchange of masters, from British colonizers to Northern colonizers, and an exchange that demanded resistance.

Post-Independence Sudan: Independent Country, Divided Society

Sudan entered its independence era with a heavy burden of mistrust, marginalization, and exclusion. Successive post-independence governments preserved the pattern of exclusion. The British separation policy, in addition to the heritage of the master-slave history, had “led to a sense of alienation that made Northerners and Southerners see each other as foreigners” (Deng, 1995, p. 111).
The First Civil War (1955-1972)


When violent clashes erupted in Torit and other Southern towns, it was apparent that the North’s attitude towards the South, “the disappointment of broken promises, the resentment at the constant overlooking of the south’s political interests, and the alienation brought on by instances of insensitivity shown by northern officials drafted to the south,” had only sown seeds of mistrust and suspicion (Niblock, 1987, p. 216). Although both Northern and Southern politicians had reached this conclusion, they conceptualized solutions in fundamentally different ways (Niblock, 1987). Southerners, who believed there were cultural differences between the South and the North, continued to fight for federalism. After independence, the national assembly appointed a committee to draft a national constitution and also to look into the federalism question. Only three of its forty-six members were Southerners (Deng, 1995; O’Ballance, 1977). The Southerners’ demand for federalism was rejected by the Northern-dominated parliament. The three Southern members walked away from the committee (O’Ballance, 1977). It was apparent that the promise of federalism was only a political maneuver by Northern politicians, not a genuine promise. Mohamed Ahmed Mahjoub, a Northern politician and nationalist leader, explained how the promise of federalism was made:

We canvassed all the parties to secure unanimity. We encountered some difficulty in convincing the Southerners so we inserted a special resolution to please them pledging that the constituent Assembly would give full consideration to the claims
of Southern Members of Parliament for a federal Government for the three
Southern provinces. (Mahjoub, 1974, p. 57)

Mahjoub was one of the Northern nationalist leaders and the first Sudanese
Foreign Minister after independence. His narrative of the independence negotiations with
the Southerners revealed the attitude the Northern political elites had towards the South,
and affirmed that Northern politicians were never serious about honoring the
Southerners’ demand. Southerners were never consulted in independence negotiations
with Egypt or Britain. But when their votes were needed to pass the independence
resolution form the parliament, Northern politicians were ready to make promises that
they knew they would not fulfill. Northern political elites made these promises just to, in
Mahjoub’s (1974)words, “please” the Southerners.

Izbone Mendiri, a Southern MP, disappointed by the broken promises, formed the
Southern Federal Party. The party’s objectives were recognition of English and
Christianity equally with Arabic and Islam, an independent Southern army, and an
independent development program for the South (O’Ballance, 1977). It took Sudan two
civil wars and loss of more than two million lives for the Southerners’ demands of
federalism to be addressed. It was not until the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)
of 2005 that South Sudan maintained not only federalism but self determination. Sudan’s
history might have taken a different direction if the promises of the federalism had been
honored in 1956.

Northerners also acknowledged the cultural differences between the North and
South. However, they had a different orientation towards resolving these differences.
Northern politicians often attributed these differences to the lack of interaction between Southerners and Northerners due to colonization. Northern Sudanese blamed the British for alienating the South through the Southern Policy. Accordingly, El Affendi (1990) explained, the post independence Northern politicians attempted “to make up for lost time by spreading the 'national' (Arab-Islamic) culture in the South as a basis for unity. This conception presupposed that the South would act as an inert mass, waiting to be reshaped anew” (El Affendi, 1990, p. 372). Many Northern politicians still blame colonization for the long history of civil war in Sudan, turning a blind eye to all the broken promises, the history of structural and cultural injustice, and the exclusion and marginalization committed by successive Northern politicians since independence.

To reverse the British policies of separation, the North attempted to substitute Christianity and Western influence with Islam and Arabism (Daly & Sikainga 1993; Deng, 1995; Deng & Khalil, 2004; Khalid, 1990, 2003). Accordingly, the government adopted a centralization policy. Arabic was declared the official language in the land. Post-independence governments adopted an education system to construct a united Sudan, with Arabic and Islamic cultures as the key determinants for national unity (Khalid, 1990). Biong (2003) explained the motives: “The ruling Northern elite saw the religious and cultural diversity of Sudan as a threat to unity and strove to eliminate it through education system as such diversity was perceived as tantamount to racio-cultural hegemony” (Biong, 2003, p. 4). Attempts to Islamicize and Arabize the Christian South were revealed in the mandates to substitute Friday for Sunday as the weekly holiday and deportation of foreign missionaries (Deng & Khalil, 2004). To the Southerners, this
brought up many fears; and as a result, they began to see independence as a mere change from the outside British masters to the outside Northerners who defined the nation “in accordance with the symbols of their Arab-Islamic identity” (Deng, 1995, p. 101).

The first national elected government did not last long. Disagreements and conflict between the two dominant Northern political parties, the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which formed the majority in the Parliament, led to the collapse of the first democracy. The prime minister and Umma Party leader, Abdalla Khalil, handed over power to the military in 1958. Sudan witnessed its first military government under the rule of General Abbud, starting a cycle of parliamentary-military governments. Before moving on to the Abbud regime, it is important to draw the reader’s attention to the influence the formation of these two parties, which remain the dominant Northern political forces, had on the way they function. Both parties were formed under the influence of their two leaders, al-Mirghani and al-Mahdi, and this fact has had an important impact on Sudan’s political development. Niblock (1987) pointed out how the two political parties gained popularity that was not based on their political agenda but, rather, on the influence of the two religious leaders:

Although the political parties which emerged from the [Graduate] congress developed strong political followings, then, these followings were mediated through the involvement of senior establishment figures. It was the religious leaders who, making use of their substantial influence, brought in their followers to join the parties, rather than the parties which succeeded in mobilizing the people on the basis of new forms of allegiance. (p. 186)
The result of the two political parties rotating around these spiritual figures was the creation of a sectarian political system, where there is loyalty to the spiritual leader not the political agenda; typical of the personality-based political parties in many developing countries. Sudan’s political system was crippled by sectarianism, and the development of independent accountable political organizations was hindered. Moreover, both leaders gained economic and political influence during colonization. Thus, they had no interest, even after independence, in changing the status quo. Many scholars conclude that the structural injustices and marginalization as colonial legacies were among major reasons for conflict. Yet, the Sudanese elites failed to address these legacies because the political leadership was the direct beneficiary of these legacies.

*First Military Government: Abboud Regime (1958-1964).*

General Abboud took over in 1958. Meanwhile, the Southern soldiers, who fled to the bush during the 1955 clashes, continued to make isolated incursions. General Abboud decided to respond with force. These steps led more former soldiers to organize themselves in small groups. These groups remained intact. They did not engage in any major military activities, but rather involved in small attacks for the purposes of hunting for food. O’Ballance (1977) explained that “the period from 1955 until 1963 was simply one of guerrilla survival . . . [it] was the bandit period” (p. 57). It was not until 1963 that the different groups came together in a forest camp and decided to unite. The new militant organization named itself the Land Freedom Army (LFA), then soon changed its name to *Anya-Nya*, which means snake poison in the Madi, Moru, and Lotuko languages.

Meanwhile, the political repression in the country after the 1958 coup muted the Southern politicians’ voices. Many of them were warned to cease talking about federalism. The peak incident was the 1959 arrest of Dominic Muerwel, a Southern MP, who was sentenced to ten years imprisonment (O’Ballance, 1977). Southern politicians went underground and started quietly going into exile. In 1962, a group of Southern leaders formed the Sudan African Closed Districts National Union (SACDNU), which later changed its name to Sudan African National Union (SANU). The new party called for complete independence for South Sudan. The SANU party was adopting a political struggle strategy when the Anya-Nya guerrilla warfare began. It is not until 1964 that SANU decided to cooperate and support the Anya-Nya. Instead of trying to understand the underlying causes of resistance and the resentment of the Southerners, General Abboud and his government blamed foreign missionaries for inciting the resistance. Consequently, 300 missionaries were expelled from the South.


These developments and the Abboud government’s harsh policies led to the overthrow of the military government in a popular uprising in October 1964. The caretaker government convened the Roundtable Conference in 1965 to look into South Sudan’s problems. The Roundtable Conference was a venue for SANU and Southern politicians to present their demands which “varied from outright independence to integration with complications” (O’Ballance, 1977, p. 74). The Southerners did not
accept less than a federal system, but the government “proposed only a system of regional government” (O’Ballance, 1977, p. 74). The two parties failed to reach an agreement and the negotiations halted. Although the Roundtable Conference did not succeed, it was an attempt to solve the Southerners’ issue politically. The elected parliamentary government that followed the caretaker government took a totally different approach to addressing the conflict. The conflict was regarded as a security issue and thus, “in June 1965 the Constituent Assembly passed unanimously a motion calling on the government to restore law and order [in the South]” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 40). In July 1965, two incidents took place: a fight between a Southerner and a Northern soldier in Juba, and an attack on a Southern wedding party by Northern soldiers in Wau. These two incidents led to clashes between *Anya-Nya* and the national government army. The result was that 473 Southern Sudanese lost their lives and total curfew was imposed in Equatoria and Bahr El Ghazal provinces (O’Ballance, 1977; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). These two incidents reinforced “the feeling that the [national] army was behaving like an occupation force” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 41). The result was that hundreds of Southerners fled the country into exile and many joined the *Anya-Nya* (O’Ballance, 1977). Failure to resolve the South’s civil war, among other issues, led to the overthrow of the government. A military junta, known as Free Officers and headed by Jaafer Numeiry, took over in a bloodless coup on May 25th, 1969. Since then, the military coup has become known as the May Revolution.

Numeiry had a different approach towards the civil war. In the first two weeks of his ascension to power, Numeiry declared that, while secession of the South was not acceptable, his government acknowledged that “the South is capable of self-rule within a framework of a unified state, and within true Socialism” (O’Ballance, 1977, p. 115). Furthermore, Numeiry stated that his government “recognize[d] the historic and cultural differences between the North and the South and firmly believe[d] that the unity of [the] country [should have been] built on these objective realities” (Quoted in Lesch, 1998, p. 46). Numeiry, who served in the South as a military officer, declared that political negotiation was the only way to end the civil war.

After the failure of the Roundtable Conference and as a result of the Northern government’s military actions in the South, Anya-Nya attracted wide support from Southerners. However, Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) argued, the expansion of Anya-Nya “opened way at the same time for more divisions along tribal and personal lines” (p. 41). In 1967, an attempt to unite the Southern politicians in exile and the Anya-Nya leaders resulted in the formation of the South Sudan Provincial Government (SSPG), with Aggrey Jaden as president and Emilio Tafeng as the commander-in-chief. But the SSPG did not last long; “tribal, religious and personality differences . . . soon led to the disintegration of SSPG” (Niblock, 1987, p. 273). In a second attempt to unite the Southern factions, the Nile Provincial Government (NPG) was formed in 1969 under the leadership of Gordon Mayen and Emilio Tafeng, who was again appointed as a commander-in-chief. However, conflicts again dismantled the coalition. Meanwhile,
Joseph Lagu, the *Anya-Nya* commander in Eastern Equatoria, emerged as a political leader. Eventually Lagu was able to unify the Southern resistance under the banner of Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) which was considered the combined political arm for the *Anya-Nya* (Niblock, 1987; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

Emergence of SSLM as a united body to represent the South, among other factors\(^\text{11}\), was influential in achieving a political agreement concerning the civil war. The Addis Ababa Agreement was finalized in March 1972 and resulted in the Regional Self-Government Act of the Southern Provinces (Lesch, 1998). Under the agreement, South Sudan gained regional autonomy, and a High Executive Council (HEC) was established. The agreement specified that the regional government of South Sudan was in charge of “the preservation of public order, internal security, efficient administration and the development of the southern region in [the] cultural, economic and social field[s]” (Niblock, 1987, p. 277). The regional government had an independent budget which was comprised of local taxes as well as central funds. English was designated the second official language, and indigenous languages were allowed in schools (Lesch, 1998).

Regarding the armed forces, the agreement stipulated the establishment of a Southern command composed of integrated units from former Anya-Nya fighters and Sudan government forces (Niblock, 1987). To avoid the promise-breaking tendency that plagued the South-North relationship:

\(^{11}\) For more discussion on the other factors see Niblock, T. (1987). *Class and power in Sudan: The dynamics of Sudanese politics 1898-1985.*
The Addis Ababa Agreement and the Regional Self-Government Act were incorporated into the permanent constitution of 1973, which specified that they could be amended only by a three-quarters vote in the national assembly and a two-thirds vote in a referendum of the southern electorate. (Lesch, 1998, p. 47) With the signing of this agreement, peace was finally restored in the South, but not for long.

*Addis Ababa Agreement and Beyond 1972-1983.*

The years following the Addis Ababa Agreement were characterized by political instability in Sudan. The major Northern political parties, Umma Party, Democratic Unionists Party, Communists Party, and Muslim Brotherhood (Islamic Charter front), led resistance against Numeiry’s military rule. This led to two failed coup attempts in 1975 and 1976. Demonstrations sprung up in different cities and towns in North and Central Sudan.

Southern Sudan, after 17 years of war, was looking forward to peace, stability and reconstruction. The regional government and regional autonomy arrangement “operated with a reasonable degree of success” (Niblock, 1987, p. 278). Elections took place in the South in 1973, and again in 1978. Abel Alier, who led the government delegation to the Addis Ababa negotiations, became the first president of the Southern High Executive Council. However, the peace did not last long. Civil conflict remerged in 1980 and resulted in a full-scale return to war in 1983. Many factors contributed to the failure of the Addis Ababa Agreement.
The history of mistrust between the South and the North fueled fears about the economic exploitation of Southern resources by the Northerners. Southerners protested against the Jongeli Canal project in Upper Nile State in 1974 because of the fear of exploitation of Nile waters by Egypt (Harir & Tvedt, 1994; Lesch 1998). Furthermore, when Chevron Oil Company discovered oil in Bentiu (Upper Nile) and Muglad (Southern Kordofan) in 1979, the Southerners were suspicious that the North would steal their oil. Unfortunately, “Northern Politicians never missed a chance to confirm their [the Southerners] worries” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 39). In 1980, Attorney General Hassan al-Turabi proposed to the people’s assembly a shift in the South-North boundary, a shift that would include northern parts of Bentiu oil fields in the North. Although the move was rejected by Numeiry, it did substantiate the Southerners’ fears and mistrust. These fears, combined with the slow pace of economic development and reconstruction in the South after the agreement, aggravated frustration. South Sudan towns witnessed isolated riots and mutinies in 1975, 1976 and 1980, mainly by former Anya-Nya soldiers (Harir & Tvedt, 1994; Lesch, 1998; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

Numeiry, in his effort to cling to power, was a master of political maneuvers and never missed a chance to play off political, regional, and tribal rivalries. In 1977, after a failed coup attempt led by opposition parties, Numeiry formed a reconciliation government. The government consisted of three parties: the Muslim Brotherhood, led by Hassan al-Turabi, the Umma Party, led by al-Sadiq al-Mahadi, and the Sudanese Socialist Party, led by Numeiry. This new alliance “gave the regime a new political base and [as] such it became less dependent on the south for its survival” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed,
Moreover, the reconciliation government strengthened the political influence of Hassan al-Turabi and his Muslim Brotherhood and eventually resurrected Sudan’s Islamization and Arabization dream (including South Sudan) (see the rise of the Islamists movement section below).

On the Southern front, Numeiry played off the Dinka and Equatoria regional and ethnic rivalries. Dinka are the largest ethnic group in the South and, historically, were perceived as dominating the region. Equatorians particularly perceived that Dinka dominated the regional government (Lesch, 1998). Numeiry encouraged Joseph Lagu (an Anya-Nya leader and an Equatorian) to demand redivision of South Sudan into three regions “in order to end Dinka domination” (Lesch, 1998, p. 50). The redivision proposal was rejected in 1981 by the Southern regional assembly because it violated the Addis Ababa Agreement and the constitution. However, with the country under one-man rule, democratic institutional decisions carried little weight. In June 1983, Numeiry decided to divide the South into three regions. He claimed that he “did not violate the spirit of [the] Addis Ababa Agreement even though no constitutional guarantee was employed” (Lesch, 1998, p. 51) (emphasis added by the author).

All these reasons contributed to tension and the eventual collapse of the agreement. However, the direct reason for the eruption of conflict was the attack on Battalion 105 stationed in Bur. Different sources disagree on why Battalion 105 mutinied
in the first place\textsuperscript{12}, but all agree that the decision to suppress that revolt by force exacerbated the situation. It seemed as if history repeated itself in Sudan. In 1955, the decision to attack the Southern Defense Corps in Torit after its refusal to transfer to Khartoum was the reason behind the first civil war. Northern politicians, who never learned from history, decided to repeat the same mistakes. Northern troops were ordered to attack the unit on May 16, 1983. A fight erupted between the mutineers and the government troops. Seventy eight died and hundreds of Southern soldiers fled the region. The government sent Colonel John Garang De Mabior, who was the head of the army research department, to the Upper Nile to investigate the matter. Instead, Garang joined the mutinous troops. On July 1983, John Garang officially announced the formation of Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), and its political wing Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), both under his leadership (Lesch, 1998; Shimaynula, 2005; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005).

\textit{The Second Civil War (1983-2005)}

\textit{The Birth of Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army.}

John Garang De Mabior was born in 1945 in Bor, Upper Nile. He joined the \textit{Anya-Nya} movement at the age of 17. After a short period he went back to school and attended Rumbek Secondary School, but he was expelled for taking part in a strike. Garang ended up in Tanzania and eventually attended Dar es Salaam University, where he was Yoweri Museveni’s classmate. He then moved to Kenya, where he lived and

\textsuperscript{12} Lesch (1998) stated that Dinka soldiers in Bur refused orders to move the North and revolted. Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) stated that delay in salaries was the reason for revolt.
worked until 1967. Between 1967 and 1971 he pursued a bachelor’s degree in Agriculture in the United States. He was back in Sudan in 1971, where he rejoined Anya-Nya fighters. After the Addis Ababa Agreement was signed, Garang joined the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) as part of the Anya-Nya soldiers’ absorption agreement. In 1974, the Sudanese military sent Garang to a military academy in Virginia, and he returned to the United States to pursue higher education, earning a doctorate degree from Iowa State University in 1981. As Shimanyula (2005) stated “not surprisingly, the description American-educated invariably became a tag especially in media news releases about Garang” (p. 18). Garang returned to Sudan in 1982, rejoined SAF and was stationed in Khartoum. Garang left Khartoum in 1983 when he joined the revolt and assumed leadership of the newly formed Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). According to Shimanyula (2005):

> Within six months more than 3000 trained government soldiers and hundreds of high ranking officers had defected to the SPLA. Prison warders, police officers and more soldiers swelled the SPLA guerilla force into a well-trained and well-equipped rebel army of 10000 troops. (p. 21)

> The SPLM/A soon embraced the other armed resistance groups in the South, including the former Anya-Nya soldiers (Shimanyula, 2005).

_SPLM/A and the New Sudan Conception/Vision (Al-Sudan Al-Jadeed)._ 

The new movement differentiated itself from Anya-Nya in various ways. Leaders of the Anya-Nya movement stated clearly that its goal was to liberate South Sudan. Unlike Anya-Nya, SPLM/A asserted its national character, portraying itself as a national,
not regional, movement. Garang, although recognizing the plight of South Sudan, made it clear that the movement is “for the liberation of the whole Sudanese people,” though it originated in the South (Garang, 1992, p. 22). The movement declared that it was unitary, not secessionists. Garang laid out the vision of SPLM/A by stating that Sudan’s conflict “can only be solved within a context of a united Sudan under a socialist system that affords democratic and human rights to all nationalities and guarantees freedom to all religions, beliefs and outlooks.” Garang continued to explain the means by which this New Sudan could be achieved: “a united socialist Sudan can only be achieved through protracted revolutionary armed struggle” (Garang, 1992, p. 23). The movement adopted a socialist orientation. Nonetheless, Garang made it clear that the movement was socialist, not communist, and pragmatic, not dogmatic (Garang, 1992).

Another distinct characteristic of SPLM/A was that, unlike Anya-Nya which was divided along regional and tribal lines, SPLM/A managed to not only include representatives of all the Southern groups, but also people from Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and a considerable number of Northerners. This inclusive character of SPLM/A was inspired by its New Sudan platform. The concept of New Sudan is probably the most influential contribution of the SPLM/A to the contemporary Sudanese political discourse.

SPLM/A rejected the South/North dichotomy that had characterized the conflict. Instead, SPLM/A asserted that the conflict is fundamentally a conflict between a “minority clique regime” that controls the country’s wealth and resources, and marginalized majorities (Garang, 1992, p. 24). This concept has significance in Sudan’s conflict analysis. For the first time, the New Sudan idea shifted the conflict from being
along ethnic/religious lines to a conflict between dominant center and marginalized peripheries. The center/periphery as an analysis tool and the discourse of marginalization became the dominant discourse in Sudanese conflict, including Darfur. This started with Garang’s New Sudan concept. Old Sudan, according to Garang, was a Sudan where all power is concentrated in Khartoum, the center. Decision making on issues from the country’s identity to national budget takes place in the center. The result was marginalized peripheries. The New Sudan vision, explained Garang, was “to create from the historical Sudan, from the contemporary Sudan, a New Sudan in which all the nationalities [and] all the religious groups coexist . . . we are involved or engage here in a process of national formation.” The path to this New Sudan was to “restructure power in the center . . . [and] all the various parts of the Sudan will be part of the new power structure in Khartoum, where power is redefined” (p. 213-214).

With the New Sudan vision, the struggle was redefined. Consequently, the SPLM/A attracted supporters from all the marginalized areas of Sudan. Specifically, the people of Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile, who were historically part of the Closed Districts and excluded from decision making and power and wealth sharing in the country, represented a considerable percentage of the SPLM/A force. Because of its unitary discourse the SPLM/A attracted Northerners who identified with its social justice
message. It is worth noting that the SPLM presidential nominee for the 2010 elections was a long-participating leader from Northern Sudan, Yassir Arman\textsuperscript{13}.

\textit{The Rise of the Islamists’ Movement and Political Islam}

The politicization of Islam in Sudan can be traced back to the Mahadiya revolution, where a political revolutionary movement adopted an Islamic appeal and nature. However, the contemporary political Islam movement which has had a significant impact on the country’s history started with Muslim Brotherhood and Hassan al-Turabi. Al-Turabi, a law professor, was a founding member of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood movement, an Islamist movement with strong ties to the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood. The rise of al-Turabi as a political activist coincided with the October 1964 popular uprising against the Abboud regime. Al-Turabi’s major contribution to the political Islam movement was his effort to unite the Muslim Brotherhood with similar Islamist movements in Sudan. The culmination of these efforts was the movement founding conference in 1964, in which the Muslim Brotherhood changed its name to the Islamic Charter Front\textsuperscript{14}. Al-Turabi was elected secretary general and won a parliamentary seat in 1956 as the Islamic Charter Front candidate (Hamdi, 1998; Jok, 2007).

For the second democratic period (1964-1969), Al-Turabi and the Islamists’ movement engaged in a strong campaign to adopt an Islamic constitution in Sudan. These

\textsuperscript{13} SPLM/A later boycotted the election in the national level and in the North and withdrew Arman’s nomination.

\textsuperscript{14} Over time the Islamist movement changed its time four times. It started as Muslim Brotherhood, changed to Islamic Charter Front in 1964, National Islamic Front (NIF) after 1985 uprising, then National Congress party (NCP) in 1989. The movement split into National Congress Party (NCP) and Popular Congress Party (PCP). However, its ideology remained the same. For the sake of clarity I will refer to it as the Islamists movement in this research.
efforts resulted in an approval of an Islamic constitutional draft in 1968. The adoption of
an Islamic constitution reflected “a complete disregard for other political forces such
as . . . a marginalized sector of the country like the non-Muslim southerners” (Sidahmed
& Sidahmed, 2005, p. 48). However, the Numeiry coup of 1969 halted the adoption of
the Islamic constitution (Hamdi, 1998). The attempts to Islamize the state was one of the
factors that led to the Numeiry coup, argued Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005). The
Numeiry coup declared that “one of its prime targets was to abolish the ‘yellow paper’ in
reference to the draft constitution of 1968” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 51).
Accordingly, the Islamists’ movement, among other parties, was banned and al-Turabi
was detained for almost seven years (Hamdi, 1998). The Islamists’ movement joined
forces with Umma Party and Democratic Unionists Party (DUP) to form the National
Front, an opposition group against Numeiry. As noted earlier the Islamists’ movement
joined the National reconciliation government in 1977 after the failure of the National
Front- led coup. The movement, which suffered continuous repression by the regime until
that point, saw the National Front deal “as a step towards their strategic goal of attaining
a dominant position in Sudanese politics, if not the dominant position” (El-Affendi, 1991,
p. 114). To achieve this, El-Affendi explained:

Two tactical goals were outlined [by the Islamists movement]. First, the
organization must be made to grow rapidly and dramatically, and second the
movement’s cadres must gain sufficient grasp of the workings of state and take-
over when the movement became stronger enough. (p. 114)
With these goals in mind, the Islamists’ movement gave Numeiry unwavering support. When the reconciliation coalition dismantled in 1980/81, the Addis Ababa Agreement collapsed and violence erupted in the South in 1983, it was apparent that Numeiry’s isolation was growing. The Islamists’ movement seized the opportunity and provided him with much needed support. The movement remained the only political party that supported Numeiry and its loyalty soon paid off. In September 1983, just three months after the declaration of the establishment of SPLM/A, Numeiry announced that Islamic *sharia* law was the supreme law of the land. Surprisingly, Al-Turabi, who was appointed attorney general in 1979, was in no way involved in the decision. However, the Islamists’ movement “decided to give the measures [its] full support, notwithstanding the fact that they were deliberately excluded from the exercise” (El-Affendi, 1991, p. 123).

The declaration of *sharia* laws led to increased isolation of the regime. The regime lost support from the West, especially from the United States, and led to the alienation of the South and secular Sudanese, who considered the *sharia* declaration a hegemonic decree that compromised the country’s diversity. These factors, compounded by poor economic conditions, led to the overthrow of Numeiry in a popular uprising in April 1985.

*Third Parliamentary Government (1985-1989).*

Weeks before Numeiry’s fall, he differed with al-Turabi and imprisoned him and other Islamist leaders. That move enabled the Islamists’ movement to distance itself from Numeiry and remerge in the political arena after the April 1985 uprising. After the uprising, the Islamists movement adopted a new name: The National Islamic Front (NIF).
Elections took place in 1986 and a coalition government between Umma Party and Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) was formed. The Islamists’ movement occupied the opposition seats. Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi from Umma Party became the prime minister. Northern political forces continued the pattern of exclusion and marginalization that had characterized Sudanese politics since independence. The South was represented by only three ministers.

Al-Mahdi attempted to bring about peace in Sudan. However, as Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) stated, “abrogating of the September 1983 [sharia] laws was seen as prerequisite for a solid foundation for the new and third parliamentary experience” (p. 55). The Islamists’ movement not only strongly opposed the move, but engaged in a fierce campaign of accusing all who were calling for sharia abrogation blasphemous (Lesch, 1998). On the other hand, SPLM/A saw in al-Mahdi the same old guard. Garang called the new democratic regime May II, referring to Numeiry’s May coup. For SPLM/A and the South, the changes were nominal. For the three years of the parliamentary government (1986-1989), conflicts between the three major players, Umma Party, DUP, and Islamists’ movement, beleaguered the political scene and “the record of the ‘third Republic’ was one of continuous making and unmaking of coalitions with no clear sense of purpose” (Sidahmed, 1996, p. 149). Five coalition governments were formed in the period of 1986-1989. As Sidahmed (1996) pointed out “the making and remaking of five governments in three years [is] in itself sufficient indication of political instability and pointless squabbles that have generally characterized the Sudanese parliamentary politics” (p. 149).
As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Islamists’ movement benefited from their years in power with the Numeiry regime (1977-1983), which expanded the movement and built its economic and organizational power. El-Affendi (1991) pointed out that the movement, after joining Numeiry’s reconciliation government, launched a campaign to increase its membership ten-fold. The movement infiltrated the civil society “by setting up numerous autonomous satellite organizations loosely affiliated to the group” (p. 115). These groups enabled the movement to expand its civil society and media organization. Through these so-called independent civil society groups the movement was able to obtain multiple venues to promote its agendas and shape the Sudanese public opinion.

For instance, in 1987, when negotiations with SPLM/A seemed to be reaching a dead end, the Islamists’ movement utilized the organization Sudan’s Security (Amaan al-Sudan) for its campaign against political settlement and to advocate for a military solution to the conflict (Sidahmed, 1996).

Yet, the two most important aspects of this strategy focused on building the movement’s economic base and infiltrating the national army, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). Through the setting up of the Islamic banking system in Sudan during the Numeiry era, the movement “extended its activities into the economic domain and strengthened its financial muscle to a degree never achieved by any other Islamic movement anywhere else in the Arab World” (Hamdi, 1998, p. 4). In addition, the movement infiltrated the army. After the declaration of sharia in 1983, the movement “introduced special training sessions at the African Islamic Center in Khartoum, where selected [army] officers undergo training and indoctrination” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed,
Through these training sessions, the movement was able to recruit some officers from SAF.

The third parliamentary government continued to face huge challenges on various fronts. As the economic situation continued to deteriorate, SPLM/A continued to expand in power and influence, and the prolonged rivalries between the political parties threatened to push the country into further chaos. Pressures from all fronts forced the political forces to seek serious solutions to the ongoing conflict and peace became a popular demand. At this time, the Kokadam peace initiative materialized. Al-Mirghani of DUP and SPLM/A agreed in 1988 to sit down and engage in peace talks. Kokadam peace initiative seemed like a light at the end of the tunnel. Since the eruption of the conflict in 1983, no other effort came as close to establishing peace in Sudan as Kokadam did. The peace initiative received unrivaled support from almost all political forces, except the Islamists’ movement, “which declared that the agreement was a ‘surrender to the rebels’” (Sidahmed, 1996, p.152). The Islamists’ movement, advocating for a military victory and not a political solution, utilized its media and civil society groups’ propaganda engine to call for support for the military. The movement “made largely successful attempts to befriend the army, and its hard line position appealed to the junior officers who bore the brunt of the escalation of the civil war” (El Affendi, 1991, p. 384). As a result of this militaristic strategy “the [Islamists’ movement] managed to establish itself as the carrier of the banner of 'northern nationalism', thus assuming a comparable role to that played by the SPLA in the South” (El Affendi, 1991, p. 384). This resulted in heightened polarization in the country. First, along regional and ethnic lines, the conflict was
characterized as a war between the “rebellious” South and the “national” North. Secondly, this strategy portrayed those who called for a political solution as persons who stand against the military.

Amidst the militarization propaganda of the Islamists’ movement, a Constitutional Conference was scheduled for September 1989. The conference was to discuss “whether Sudan should be ruled by a secular or Islamic constitution” (Sidahmed, 1996, p.187). With matchless economic power and support from officers in the military, the Islamists’ movement decided it was time to “carry out its own agenda for change” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 55). On June 30 1989, a group of Islamist army officers, with support from the Islamists’ movement, took over power; and a new chapter of Sudanese history began.

The National Salvation Revolution (Al-Ingaz Al-Watani) (1989- present)

The Islamists’ movement was finally in power. As discussed in the previous section, the movement, since the reconciliation government in 1977, engaged in organizational development and expansion with one aim in mind: to be in power in order to build the Islamic state model in Sudan. Al-Turabi, the mastermind behind the coup, explained how the expansion phase, which was achieved during Numeiry regime, prepared the movement for its final objective:

The expansion phase was intended to secure for us positions of influence and control. Once assimilated into the wider public, there was a need for another serious step towards our objectives. The expansion strategy was intended for that purpose . . . [It] prepared us for the advanced stage of taking power and laying the

The Islamists’ movement distanced itself from the coup at the beginning and left the army officers who led the coup to take over. Brigadier Omar Hassan al-Bashir, the coup leader, immediately formed the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Al-Bashir also announced himself the head of state, the RCC chairman, and the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. The new government declared a state of emergency, banned political parties and all the non-government press and information institutions. The new government, which named itself the National Salvation Revolution, tightened its grip by silencing all forms of opposition: thousands lost their lives in the war that intensified in the South; and hundreds of citizens in the North who opposed the new regime were detained and tortured. On March 1990, the Africa Watch Report claimed that:

Over 500,000 people had been killed in the civil war and resulting famine, and that thousands of women and children in the south had been sold into slavery…

Civil rights violations in the north also increased dramatically since the June 1989 coup. (cited in O’Ballance, 2000, p. 167)

The regime also decided to overhaul the army and civil service and replace many civil servants with people who could carry on the Islamization project the regime had started. During that time, it was popular to say “loyalty not qualifications is what matters,” referring to an unspoken policy. Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) pointed out that “in slightly more than four years, [the regime] laid off 73,640 people from various state organs and departments, or more than double those laid off since 1904 that had
toted 32,419” (p. 58). Any civil servant who was perceived as not loyal to the new regime was laid off. Only those who were loyal to the regime, not the most qualified, were brought into the army, security, and civil service.

For the first few years, the new regime continued to rely on three bodies to govern: the RCC, which was comprised of military officers; the government, which consisted of 20 ministers, most of them members of the Islamists’ movement; and a body known as Council of Defenders of the Revolution. Many claim that this elusive council, which was popularly known as the Committee of Forty, consisted of the most influential Islamists’ movement leaders and was the real decision making power in the country (Burr & Collins, 2010; O’Ballance, 2006; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). It was apparent to ordinary Sudanese, then, that “this sinister civilian advisory council had been delegated by [the Islamists’ movement] to see that the soldiers of the RCC would pursue the mission of an Islamic state in the Sudan” (Burr & Collins, 2010, p. 12).

In 1993, the RCC was dissolved, but al-Bashir became President of the Republic. The National Salvation Revolution transformed the political system from a multi-party system to a Congress by which members were elected from geographic and sectarian electorates to a national congress. The first national assembly election under this system took place in 1996. The majority of the elected members were members of the Islamists’ movement (Sidahmed, 1996). These developments provided the movement with the necessary legitimization to pursue its ideological project of reviving the Islamic State through the Sudanese model.
The movement, when it came to power in 1989, sought to revive the Islamic ummah (nation) with Sudan at the forefront (Al-Mubarak, 2001; Al-Turabi, 1994). In order to construct the Sudanese model of an Islamic state, the Islamist movement introduced what was known as the civilization/cultural project (Al-Mashru’ al-Hadhari). Burr and Collins (2010) depicted the situation in Sudan after 1989:

A campaign was launched to assure the Sudanese that [the regime] members were committed to orthodox Islam, Islamic law, and Islamic dress. In public discourse, the press, and television the cultural identity of the Sudanese was defined as the struggle between the sacred and profane, religious and secular, and Islamic-Arabs and Western Christians. The Sudanese were called upon to gather with the faithful, the umma [Islamic nation], to confront the neo-crusaders from the West. (p. 10)

The civilization/cultural project involved constructing a new Sudanese identity based on Arabic-Islamic values. It is true that almost all of the post-independence Northern-dominated governments attempted to construct the Sudanese identity with Arab-Islamic values as the main determinants. However, the Islamists’ movement was unique in the sense that it introduced the idea of building the Islamic ummah through establishing an Islamic state model. To understand how this new version of Sudanese identity works, it is useful to refer to the citizenship and passport law of 1994. In 1994, a new law was issued which gave the president the right to grant citizenship to any foreigner. The head of legal affairs in the Transitional National Council, Hassan al-Bili, declared that “the citizenship and passports which are recognized in our sharia state are
the words ‘la ilaha illa Allah’ there is no God except Allah and thus Sudan is open for all Muslims. Especially those who serve the directives of the Islamic state” (quoted in Al-Mubarak, 2001, p. 100). Although there are no definite figures for how many non-Sudanese Muslims were granted citizenship according to this law, the influx of Arab Afghans to Sudan in the 1990s was a clear manifestation of these stipulations. The version of Sudanese identity that is defined according to the Islamic symbols excludes non-Muslims from being Sudanese (Ibrahim, 2006).

With this exclusionary version of identity and the civilization/cultural project, a new perspective on the Sudanese problem was added to the public discourse. The country had been divided into Muslims and non-Muslims (Kufar) citizens. The once political conflict was transformed into a religious one by introducing the concept of jihad (holy war) against real or perceived Kufar (infidels) and heathens. Those who were until then rebel fighters became crusaders and apostates. With full control over mass media, the government mobilized the masses in the North to carry on their Islamic duty in fighting Kufar (infidels) in the South. The government mobilized thousands of civilians to join its Popular Defense Forces (PDF) as mujahedeen (fighters). The government also armed Arab militias (known as Murahilin) to fight SPLM/A in the South/North boundary areas (Idris, 2001; O’Ballance, 2000). With these developments, “the struggle over the country’s national identity . . . became more complex and conflictual” (Lech, 1998, p. 156).

On the Southern front, two developments had a significant impact on the SPLM/A in 1991. The first one was the fall of Mengistu Haile Mariam, Ethiopia’s emperor. The
new Ethiopian regime forced the Sudanese refugees, who fled the war in South Sudan and took refuge in Ethiopia, to make the grueling journey back to Sudan, where they were subjected to intensive bombing by the Sudanese armed forces. With the fall of Haile Mariam, SPLM/A lost a strong supporter and SPLA soldiers were expelled from Ethiopia (Idris, 2001). The second development was a split in SPLM/A between the Dinka and the Neur. As noted earlier, although SPLM/A managed to have representatives of all South Sudan, it remained dominated by Dinka. Reick Machar, Lam Akol, and Gordon Kong, all three leaders from the SPLM/A, decided to oust Garang from SPLM/A leadership. They declared that “Garang’s dictatorial behavior” prompted their actions (O’Ballance, 2000, p. 172). However, O’Ballance (2000) claimed the move had two dimensions. First, it was a conflict along tribal and ethnic lines. The three leaders belonged to Neur group and they were resisting what was perceived as Dinka dominance over SPLM/A. Secondly, a conflict existed between the unitary vision of Garang, which sought to liberate all of Sudan not just the South, and the secessionist vision, which favored an independent South Sudan. The conflict ended up in deadly clashes between the two camps.

*Peace Talks and the Road to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)*

The National Salvation government started talks with the SPLM/A as early as August 1989 through Ethiopian mediation. Another round took place in Nairobi in December 1989 through mediation by Jimmy Carter but no breakthrough was achieved because the Khartoum government would not compromise on the issue of Islamic “*sharia*” law. In 1992, the government accepted the principle of self-determination—a significant move that would push ahead the peace talks even further. Consequently, the
SPLM/A agreed to sit with the government in Abuja in May 1992 in talks arranged by Nigerian president Ibrahim Babingida. The talks reached a deadlock again. The Yoweri Museveni Ugandan presidential intervention led to the recommencement of the talks in April-May 1993, known as Abuja II round. Like the previous peace talks, the Abuja II talks also did not result in any breakthroughs.

Under international pressure, Sudan agreed to involve the African Union (AU) in seeking resolutions to the ongoing conflict. The AU, through the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), continued with its efforts to bring the Sudanese government and SPLM/A together. These efforts resulted in another round of talks in Nairobi in May 1994. The talks appeared to have achieved some success when both the government and SPLM/A agreed to meet again to draft a Declaration of Principles. The two parties met again in July 1994, and the meeting resulted in a unilateral ceasefire declaration from the government. The SPLM/A, after initially rejecting it, later agreed to the ceasefire. In September of the same year, a fourth round of talks took place. Because of the government’s refusal to reach any compromise pertaining to religion and the state, the talks reached a dead-end.

The government was engaged in a two-faced discourse. While these talks were taking place in Nairobi, the government in Khartoum did not change its jihad rhetoric, nor did it abandon promises of building the Islamic nation in Sudan. Mass media were mobilized to broadcast the Islamists’ movement propaganda. When the September 1994 talks reached a dead-end, on January 1, 1995, “in his Independence day speech, President Bashir called for a jihad against unbelievers in Sudan, meaning mainly Christian SPLA,
promising to train one million people for the task” (O’Ballance, 2000, p. 184). In exchange, the SPLM/A, with the cooperation of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which consisted mainly of Northern opposition groups fighters, formed the New Sudan Brigade and launched a military campaign in the eastern borders of Sudan. The alliance between the SPLM/A and the NDA enabled the opposition group to launch a number of insurgencies against the government armed forces. In 1997, the SPLM/A seized Kurmuk and Gissan in the Blue Nile. The war then spread from the South to the Southeast and the Eastern fronts, further straining the government.

With much military pressure from the SPLM/A and Northern opposition militant groups insurgencies, deteriorating foreign relations, isolation and charges of terrorism, the government agreed to recommence peace talks. Talks were resumed on October 1997, under The Intergovernmental Authority of Development (IGAD) supervision. Though the government delegate affirmed that the government of Sudan “would participate with all sincerity required for achieving peace,” President Bashir confirmed that his government ‘would never deviate from the Islamic trend it had opted for, whatever the cost” (Burr & Collins, 2010, p. 262). Another round of talks took place from April to July 1999. A significant advance took place when the United States, through Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, expressed support for the IGAD initiative and its Declaration of Principles, which granted South Sudan the right for self-determination and secession in case of popular support for such an option. According to Burr and Collins (2010), Albright announced that “the United States policy [intended] to ‘isolate’ Khartoum while
working through IGAD to bring peace to Sudan” (p. 264). The SPLM/A announced that the IGAD Declaration of Principles would be the platform for any further negotiations.

The years 2000-2005 witnessed major political changes in Sudan. Rivalries and power struggles within the Islamists’ movement between the army, represented by al-Bashir, and the intellectuals, represented by al-Turabi, led to a major split in the movement and in the regime. In 2000 in an internal coup, al-Bashir deposed al-Turabi from his position as a speaker of the national assembly, dissolved the assembly and declared a state of emergency. Al-Turabi and many of his supporters were imprisoned, and banned from any political activity. Al-Bashir announced a new era and “publicly urged friends and enemies, including the United States, to judge the Sudan by its present and future not the past” (Burr & Collins, 2010, p. 272). Many considered the 2000 internal coup as the end of the Islamists’ project in Sudan (Burr & Collins, 2010; O’Ballance, 2000; Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005). The same year, in 2000, Darfur began to flame, and transformed into a full scale war by 2003.

The September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States brought Sudan and its relationship to global jihad movement into the spotlight again. The Al-Bashir government, in an effort to show a new face and to distance itself from the previous Islamists’ movement policies, provided full cooperation in the global campaign on the war against terror (Burr & Collins, 2010). Meanwhile, the United States continued with its efforts to advance the negotiations between the SPLM/A and the government of Sudan. These efforts resulted in the signing of the Naivasha Agreement in 2003, which became a platform for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Progressing
negotiations were finally crowned by the historical signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 9, 2005.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)

The CPA consisted of six agreements and protocols: the Machakos Protocol, the Power Sharing Protocol, the Wealth Sharing Agreement, two special protocols on the Resolution of the Conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, the Resolution of the Conflict in Abyei, and the sixth protocol was the Security Arrangement protocol. The following section briefly summarizes these protocols (a full text of the CPA is provided on appendix E)

The Machakos Protocol, which is set out in Chapter I of the CPA, stipulated the right for self-determination for South Sudan. The protocol also laid down arrangements for a six year transitional period from 2005 to 2011, by the end of which, in 2011, a referendum will take place. In the 2011 referendum, South Sudanese will decide if they want to remain united with the Republic of Sudan or establish an independent state.

The Protocol on Power Sharing, which is set out in Chapter II, laid out arrangements for a decentralized system of government in Sudan. South Sudan gained regional autonomy through the Government of South Sudan (GOSS). The protocol also laid out arrangements for the population census which took place in 2008; national elections, which should have taken place in 2009 but were postponed to April 2010; and representation at the national government level. Regarding representation, the protocol stated that the North and the South shall be represented in the national government according to the population ratio. Accordingly, the two parties agreed that the National
Congress Party (NCP) shall be represented by 52%, Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) shall be represented by 28%, other Northern political forces shall be represented by 14%, and other Southern political forces shall be represented by six percent. According to the power sharing protocol, the Government of National Unity (GONU) was established to govern the country during the interim period. The different parties were represented according to the aforementioned ratios. In the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) the SPLM was represented by 70%, and both the NCP and the other Southern political forces by 15% each.

The Wealth Sharing Agreement, which is set out in Chapter III, acknowledged that South Sudan, Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile, Abyei and other war affected areas face serious development disparities. The signatories agreed that they “shall be brought up to the same average level of socio-economic and public services standard as the Northern states” (CPA, 2005, p. 65). Among other provisions the protocol stipulated the creation of two special funds: The Southern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund (SSRDF) and a National Reconstruction and Development Fund (NRDF) to raise funds for addressing the development disparities. The agreement laid out arrangements for the oil revenue sharing. According to the protocol the oil revenues shall be divided as follows: two percent (2%) of oil revenue to be allocated to the oil producing states/regions in proportion to output produced in such states/regions. From the remaining revenue, 50% of net oil revenue derived from oil producing wells in Southern Sudan shall be allocated to the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) as of the beginning of the Pre-Interim Period and the remaining 50% to the National Government and States in Northern Sudan.
Two special protocols on the Resolution of the Conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, the Resolution of the Conflict in Abyei Area are set out in Chapter IV and V of the CPA. The three areas (known as transitional areas) are at the North-South borders. All three areas were governed by special protocols. The Abyei protocol granted the area special administrative status during the interim period, following the definition of the Abyei areas by the Abyei Border Commission. At the end of the six-year interim period, Abyei residents will vote in a referendum either to maintain special administrative status in the north or to become part of Bahr al-Ghazal state in the South. Wealth-sharing of oil revenues from Abyei is to be split between the North and South (50:42) with 8% of revenues allocated to other states and ethnic groups in the area. Regarding the Blue Nile and South Kordofan State (Nuba Mountains), the two states will be represented at the national level in proportion to their population size. At the state level, the NCP will comprise 55% and the SPLM 45% of the State Executive and State Legislature. The two states will not participate in the referendum but a special arrangement for popular consultation should be made for the citizens in the two states to decide whether to join the South or the North.

The Agreement on Security Arrangements, which is set out in Chapter VI, stipulated that Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) be formed with equal numbers from the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the SPLA during the six-year interim period. The JIUs

---

15 Abyei’s borders are the North-South borders. Though the Abyei Borders Commission (ABC) defined Abyei borders as stipulated in the CPA, the NCP did not accept the commission report and the issue was referred to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). The court ruled on the issue on July 22, 2009. The court rule made slight modification to the original ABC rule. The modification added more oil areas to the North.
would be deployed to sensitive regions such as the three transitional areas (Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and Abyei). The SAF and the SPLA will continue to operate as separate armies with both considered part of Sudan's National Armed Forces. The signatories agreed to implement demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programs. There is to be a redeployment of SAF troops from the South to North within two years. The SPLA has eight months to withdraw its forces from the North.

The signing of the CPA was a milestone in Sudan’s history. Nevertheless, there were reservations about the substance of the agreement, as well its implementation (see El-Affendi, 2007 for example). After the pre-interim period (January-July 2005), John Garang De Mabior flew to Khartoum to be sworn in as the first vice president in the Government of the National Unity (GONU) and the president of the Government of South Sudan (GOSS). Garang was the first Southern vice president of Sudan. On July 8, 2005, Garang arrived in Khartoum after 22 years. He had not set foot in Khartoum since he defected in 1983. More than one million people greeted him as he delivered his first speech (McDoom, 2005). Garang was sworn in as first vice president on July 9, 2005. Garang held his position for only three weeks before a mysterious plane crash ended his life on July 31, 2005. As noted in chapter one, Khartoum and many other towns were swept into chaos in reaction to his death. Garang’s tragic death revealed that ethnic polarization and tension in the Sudan were rife. Silva Kiir was selected by the SPLM/A to be Garang’s successor until the end of the interim period. The intended spirit of the CPA was to create a new formula for Sudan to be at peace with itself through an expanded
democratic space, better governance, respect of human rights and a more self-embracing multiethnic society.

The CPA became a platform for wealth and power sharing formula in the country. Other peace agreements such as the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) and the East Peace Agreement followed to some extent the CPA formula. As noted earlier the New Sudan vision attracted many non-South Sudanese because it shifted the analysis of the conflict from ethnic and religious lines to center/peripheries lines. Marginalization became the dominant discourse in Sudan’s conflicts, including the ongoing conflict in Darfur. To provide better insights to patterns of marginalization in Sudan, the next section discusses the development disparities within the Sudan state. In doing so, light is shed not only on the development disparities as a catalyst of conflict, but also on how conflict contributed to perpetuating such disparities. Sudan’s margins were locked into this vicious cycle of direct - structural violence.

Development Disparities

Sudan suffers wide regional disparities in both economic and social development. This trend started during colonization, but the successive national governments did nothing to reverse the trend. During colonialism, the British government concentrated economic development in the North, whereas the South was neglected. For the British rulers “the North promised return on foreign capital [through its agricultural products, especially cotton], it thus had a claim on the government’s disbursement of funds for education, health services, and general development which the South had not” (Daly & Sikainga, 1993, p. 6). Consequently, while the Northern economy prospered, all other
regions, including the South, West (Darfur), East (Beja land), Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains were impoverished (Khalid, 2003). The neglect of the South, and other marginalized areas not only affected these regions in terms of development, but had larger consequences in the South’s (and other peripheries’) participation in the country’s decision-making and generally in national political life in Sudan. As noted before, South Sudanese were left out of the negotiations for independence from colonial rule. The lack of qualified Southerners was used to justify their exclusion. Since the South was extremely underdeveloped and its educational opportunities were limited, the independence movement, which heavily relied on the inputs and skills of leaders who were educated, was led by Northerners (Deng, 1995).

At the time of independence, Sudan was suffering from high socio-economic inequalities. In January 1956, Sudan’s national per capita GDP was about $78 “classifying Sudan among the poorest countries in the world” (Ali, Elbadawi & El-Batahani, 2003, p. 22). The South’s per capita GDP, at $39, was half the national average, reflecting years of neglect and marginalization during the colonial period (Ali, Elbadawi & El-Batahani, 2003). Moreover, despite accounting for 28% of the Sudanese population at independence (Biong, 2003), the South accounted for less than 16% of agricultural output, about 18% of industrial output, and 9% of the output of the services sector (Ali, Elbadawi, & El-Batahani, 2003). At independence, educational attainment in the whole country was very low; still, educational attainment in the South was significantly lower than the national average (Yongo-Bure, 1993).
Different post-independence regimes – democratic and authoritarian – continued the colonial policy of neglect and marginalization. Resources were unfairly divided among different provinces with the Northern and Central regions taking more than a fair share, leading to impoverishment of other regions. In 1956, According to Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005),

Of the total domestic investment on the eve of independence, Khartoum, Northern and Kassala provinces received 56 percent-64 percent of government investment and 60 percent of investment by private enterprises; while Blue Nile, Kordofan, and Equatoria received 20 percent, 15 percent and 23 percent respectively. (p.142)

The perpetuation by successive post independence governments of the trend initiated by the British colonialists resulted in the socio-economic disparities between the center and the peripheries widening sharply and laying a foundation for dissent, protest, and contention from the impoverished regions and ultimately tensions between regions to the present day. This economic dimension does not however override the other sources of difference between the various regions of the Sudan. As shown in Figure 7, the disparity between North and South that was created during the colonization period widened during the first four years of independence (1956- 1960) (Oduho & Deng, 1963).

There is high correlation between access to education and human and economic development. It has been proved that the higher the education level the greater the income one can earn, and the higher the chances of employment resulting in high association between education and quality of life improvement. The development gap
between the North and South can therefore, in part, be attributed to the limited access to education opportunities available to the South during the colonial era and after independence. The conditions have not really improved after half a century of independence. In 2005, South Sudan had only 946 of the 13,008 schools in the country (7.3%) while its population for the same year was 15.4% of the total population (Sudanese Studies Center, 2008).

Within the last four decades, estimates of national poverty rates show a steady increase in poverty from 50% in 1968 up to 75% in 1986 and as high as 86% in 1992 (Decaillet, Mullen, & Guen, 2003). Sudan’s oil production in 1999 resulted in steady economic growth average of over 7% during 1995-2004. Poverty rates in the country, however, remained high. Moreover, in 2001 GDP per capita in the south was estimated at less than USD90 per year compared to USD356 for the national average (UNDP, 2004), while in north-central Sudan, it is less than average. A study conducted in West Equatoria in southern Sudan in 2000 found that about 93% of the population lived on less than US$1 per day (Decaillet, Mullen, & Guen, 2003).
Figure 7. Access to Education 1960.

Source: Data from Oduho and Deng, 1963
When considering human development indicators, in 2001 life expectancy varied from 42 years in the South, to 55 in the North (UNDP, 2004). Accordingly, a person from South Sudan was likely to die 13 years earlier than one from the North. In 2000, 50% of boys and 42% of girls were nationally enrolled in primary education. Only 53% of those enrolled completed primary school (UNDP, 2005). According to USAID, South Sudan’s estimated indicators include a high population growth of almost 3% per year with a female population of greater than 60%; infant mortality at 150 per 1,000 births and severe malnutrition of around 21% among children under five (USAID, 2005). Educational indicators for the South are considerably lower than the North. According to UNDP, in 2000 net enrollment ratio in primary education was estimated to be around 20%. An estimated 80% of all adults, especially women, are unable to read (USAID, 2005).
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This research aims to examine the role of mass media in audiences’ perceptions about peace and social cohesion in Sudan. In this respect, the research draws on two intersecting fields: peace and conflict studies, and media effects research. This chapter provides a review of the literature the two fields, with special emphasis on media framing.

Peace and Conflict Studies

Peace and conflict studies is a relatively new discipline. Although violence and armed conflicts have characterized human history, it was not until the late 1950s, that peace and conflict studies emerged as a defined, independent academic discipline. Nonetheless, as stated by Bratic (2005), as of today there is no universally accepted concept of what the field encompasses. Some scholars go to the extent of arguing that such study is not a discipline in itself, “but it is instead a field of knowledge that utilizes methodologies, concepts and ‘tests for truth’ drawn from various units” (Okoth, 2008, p. 3). Indeed, the field is interdisciplinary as it draws from a wide range of disciplines, including political science, international relations, education, history, economics, law, and communication studies, among others. The interdisciplinary character reflects the nature of peace as a complex construct. The interdisciplinary nature is also justified by the multiple foci of the field on a number of issues including conflict resolution, security studies, human rights, causes of war, and social justice, among others. However, and in spite of the wide range of issues addressed by peace and conflict studies, the focus remains on studying conflict and ways to prevent its destructive outcomes as well as to
investigate ways to foster harmony and peaceful coexistence. In a broader sense, peace research, in Galtung’s (1964) words, is a “peace search” (p. 4). Peace researchers are concerned with understanding causes, symptoms, and manifestations of conflict in order to achieve peaceful societies.

A review of the literature on peace and conflict studies reveals that these two opposing terms, peace and conflict, have always been linked together in research. Moreover, researchers have often defined and studied peace by studying its binary opposite: conflict. The field of peace and conflict studies was birthed from the field of conflict resolution, which gained momentum at the height of the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s (Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 1999; Okoth, 2008). Historically, the rising interest in conflict prevention after the outbreak of the First World War led many scholars to develop a “‘science’ of peace which would provide a firmer basis for preventing future wars” (Miall et al., 1999, p. 40). The pioneering works in the field of conflict and peace studies were the empirical studies of Pitrim Sorokin, Lewis Richardson and Quincy Wright, which were conducted during the interwar period. The diverse backgrounds of these scholars (Sorokin was a sociologist, Richardson was a mathematician and psychologist, and Wright was a political scientist) reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline. However, these efforts, argued Miallet al. (1999) were individualistic and isolated. It was not until the years after WWII and the emergence of the threat of nuclear weapons during the Cold War era that peace research was institutionalized, and several research groups that were devoted to study and research on peace and conflict were established across Europe and North America (Rogers &
Ramsbotham, 1999). The Peace Research Laboratory in the U. S., which was founded by Lentz after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was the first center for peace and conflict research. Following the launch of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (JCR) in 1957 by Kenneth Boulding and a group of researchers at the University of Michigan, The Center of Research on Conflict Resolution was established in 1959. These efforts were followed by the establishment of several research centers across the globe (Bratic, 2005; Miall et al., 1999; Rogers & Ramsbotham, 1999).

During the early period of peace and conflict studies, researchers perceived peace as the absence of war. Thus, peace research focused, at least partly, on the struggle of power among nation-states. Peace and conflict studies pioneers, such as Quincy Wright, suggested that power struggle is the main cause for wars (Beer, 2001; Elias & Turpin, 1994; Groff & Smoker, 1996). Another approach to peace research, led by Boulding and his colleagues at The Center of Research on Conflict Resolution, recognized the shortcomings of limiting the conflict and peace studies to international relations and called for “an interdisciplinary enterprise, drawing its discourse from all the social sciences and even further” (An editorial, 1957, p. 1). However, conceiving peace and conflict studies as a war-preventive discipline was still a dominant way of thinking of the early peace and conflict studies scholars (for example, see the editorial of the first issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1975).

This concept of peace and conflict studies as a war-preventing enterprise was not surprising as the conception of peace as a mere absence of war characterized the early stages of research in the field. This trend continued until the Norwegian scholar Johan
Galtung introduced a major shift in this way of thinking. Galtung, the founder of what would later be the International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), made a breakthrough by introducing the concept of positive peace, in contrast with what he called negative peace. Galtung (1964) defined negative peace as simply the absence of violence. Positive peace, on the other hand, aims to achieve harmony and integration. Negative peace deals only with the manifestation of conflict, and thus, peace researchers who conceptualize peace as absence of war are concerned with finding ways to control violence in its physical materialization. This concept characterized peace research for many years and reduced it to studying inter-state war and disarmament, and narrowed peace movements “to reactive anti-war movements which tend to fade away between wars, without building serious peace-sustaining institutions” (Kavaloski, 1999, p. 1). On the other hand, the positive peace concept aims to go beyond the manifestation of violence to addressing the causes of violence (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990, 1996). Positive peace involves active interaction, while negative peace does not need interaction, simply an absence of violent conflict.

Transformation on thinking about peace in terms of negative peace and positive peace changed the thinking about what peace studies encompassed. This new perspective has broadened peace studies, and the discipline has moved gradually from international relations and macro-level conflict to an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary field that thinks about peace at all levels: international, national, community, group, and individual level. Although, as mentioned earlier, Boulding and his colleagues had called for including new perspectives in the field beyond international relations prior to Galtung, it
was Galtung (1964) who expanded the boundaries of peace research to “concern itself [peace research] with the reduction of violence and promotion of integration regardless of the basis of group organization” (p. 2). In other words, Galtung called for expanding the focus of peace and conflict research from studying the conflict along nation-state borderlines to studying conflict along all other lines, be they ethnic, religious, class and/or any others.

Another factor that contributed to the expansion of the boundaries of the peace and conflict studies was the rise of the civil rights and feminism movements in the West as well as decolonization and related independence movements in the Global South. These new perspectives extended the concept of peace to include not only the macro and international levels, but also the micro-level of individual relationships, and provided an opportunity for multiple levels of analysis starting from inter-state relations to the family and even interpersonal level (Bratic, 2005; Elias & Turpin, 1994; Galtung, 1964, 1990, 1996; Groff & Smoker, 1996). In addition, ecological and environmental issues came to the forefront of peace and conflict studies agenda (Rogers & Ramsbotham, 1999, p. 745).

These shifts in the theorizing of peace and war were accompanied, as Alger (1994) noted, by three fundamental transformations in peace thinking: First, the definition of peace was broadened. This was reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace of 1978. In the aforementioned UN declaration, peace was no longer defined as the absence of violence but included structural inequalities, cultural threats, and global threats to environment, among others. The second transformation was the recognition of the role of the grass roots in peace-
building. Peace was no longer perceived as leaders’ only business. The third
transformation was the perception of “peace as unfolding from the pursuit of peace” (p.
283). As the concept of peace was no longer narrowly perceived as absence of war, the
pursuit of peace was no longer perceived as preventing war but as encompassing
humanity’s ability to live in harmony and eliminate all forms of injustice.

By the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, the nuclear arms race
intensified. Thus, the 1980s witnessed the emergence of peace and antinuclear and
disarmament movements as well as increasing interest in peace studies programs. This
period also witnessed development in two other related areas: negotiation and mediation,
and intractable conflicts. Researchers seeking non-violent approaches to conflict
resolution and management started undertaking empirical studies (Rogers &
Ramsbotham, 1999). The developments in studies of intractable conflicts, paralleled
with mediation studies, had led to the introduction of Track I, which involves direct
negotiations between governments on the official level and the use of international
organizations, and Track II or citizen diplomacy, which involves unofficial actors, such
as civil society, business, community or religious leaders (Miall, 2004; Rogers &
Ramsbotham, 1999).

One of the major contributions of Galtung to the field of peace and conflict
research, beside the concept of positive peace, was the triangle of violence concept.
Galtung (1969, 1990, 1996) made a distinction between three levels of violence: direct
violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Direct violence can be thought of as
the physical act of violence, while structural violence is the type of violence that results from social injustices. Cultural violence can be attributed to

. . . those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence. Stars, crosses and crescents; flags, anthems and military parades; the ubiquitous portrait of the Leader; inflammatory speeches and posters all these come to mind. (Galtung, 1990, p. 1)

Generally the three levels of violence are connected. If society starts with cultural violence that preaches, teaches, and legitimates structural violence, then the direct violence comes either from the oppressed rejecting oppression and then counter violence from the oppressor, or direct violence from the oppressor as a result of the dehumanization that results from cultural and structural violence. On the other hand, direct violence leads to poverty and displacement resulting in structural violence. Violence, as Galtung (1990), explained, can start from any corner of the triangle, “the underlying assumption is simple ‘violence breeds violence’” (p. 295). Direct violence, stated Galtung (1990), “is an event, structural violence is a process and cultural violence is an invariant, ‘permanence’ remaining essentially the same for long periods” (p. 294). In other words, the three kinds of violence “enter time differently” (Galtung, 1990, p. 294). Direct violence, as an event, can take place at a specific point in time. Killing and maiming, for instance, are examples of direct violence, while exploitation and repression are examples of structural violence. Structural violence happens over time. Cultural
violence, such as prejudices, is deeper and normally imbedded in social institutions. Cultural norms and symbols take a longer time to form, and are normally deeply rooted in society. However, Galtung (1990) warned against totalizing cultures; the cultural violence concept refers to certain aspects of culture because “entire cultures can hardly be classified as violent” (p. 291). We can only talk about aspects and examples from certain cultures.

To change the vicious triangle of violence, Galtung (1990) suggested the need to work with a virtuous triangle of peace. While the violence can start from any corner of the violence triangle, cultural peace, argued Galtung (1990), “would be obtained by working on all three corners at all the same time, not assuming that basic change in one will automatically lead to change in the other two” (p. 302). Whereas political negotiation deals with direct violence and policies deal with structural injustices, addressing “cultural violence requires attitude change” (Bratic, 2005, p. 68).

The concept of the violence triangle, along with negative/positive peace, broadened the scope of peace and conflict research to include issues of culture, social justice, and cultural and social institutions. These transformations were not linear, and they were demonstrated in the ways peace movements set their agendas, both in the developed and the developing world. As Alger (1994) noticed, “in building coalitions . . . the peace movement has broadened itself” (p. 283) to include not only the arms race and direct violence in its agenda, but also issues of social justice, human rights and environmental and ecological issues. As a response to these perspectives emphasis was put on peace education, and peace research centers were formed in the United States,
Japan, Latin America, Europe, and Africa (Elias & Turpin, 1994). After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the former Soviet Union, internal civil wars received more media and scholarly attention. Issues of structural and cultural violence, as catalysts to direct violence, gained more prominence in the field of peace and conflict research (Lacina, 2004).

With the increasing interest in internal civil wars, the concept of the violence triangle made discussing issues of social justice, social institutions, and cultural norms equal in importance to addressing direct violence through peace talks and negotiations. Addressing cultural and structural violence is especially important in intrastate and communal conflicts. In intrastate conflicts, noted Broom and Hatay (2006), even after resolution through political peace agreements and ending of direct violence, societies are often left suffering from distrust, trauma, and grievances that last long after the peace treaty and can be transmitted through generations. Conflicts, especially those along ethnic and religious lines, can divide societies and be deeply embedded in cultural norms thus creating vicious cycles of cultural-direct violence. Cultural violence creates negative interdependence where each party sees the elimination of the other as a prerequisite of its own survival. The example of Rwanda, where both the Hutu and Tutsi perceived the elimination of the other group as vital to their existence, is a case in point. Conflicts create a state of polarization in the affected society that can lead to a physical separation. With these effects of conflict, it is essential that polarization and distrust among conflicting parties be addressed. In conflict situations, media institutions can be manipulated to perpetuate cultural violence; on the other hand, they can also be used to
promote cultural peace. Media, as argued by Janusz (2001), “exert a predominant influence on the forging of attitudes, judgments and values, that they create images and often determine the relation to ‘others’” (p. 21). Because cultural violence, according to Galtung (1990), legitimates or masks direct and structural violence, mass media can play a significant role in forging cultural peace. Mass media can address those aspects of culture that legitimize violence. Mass media can also bring to light issues of direct and structural violence that are normally buried under the surface because of prejudices from the side of the dominant group or marginalization of the dominated group.

*Conflict Settlement, Management, Resolution and Transformation*

Conflicts have been part of human history, and scholars of peace and conflict studies have devoted considerable time and intellectual energy to finding ways to handle conflict. Different theories and terminologies are applied to conflict studies, including conflict resolution, management, settlement, and transformation. This list is not exhaustive and the distinctions between the different approaches are not clear cut. In many occasions, these terms are used interchangeably. However, basic underlying assumptions about the nature and causes of conflict can be recognized between the different approaches. The following section discusses the different theories and characteristics pertaining to each of them. Finally, this section provides a rationale for choosing conflict transformation for this research.

As indicated earlier, the intensity of the nuclear arms race in the 1980s contributed to an increasing interest in intractable conflicts. By the end of the Cold War, the study of intractable conflict moved from concentrating only on interstate conflicts and
conflicts between Cold War rivals, to include intrastate and internal intractable and protracted conflicts. Intractable conflicts are “conflicts that are recalcitrant, intense, deadlocked, and extremely difficult to resolve” (Coleman, 2000, p. 429). Intractable conflicts normally revolve around a complex and multidimensional set of issues and tend to persist over time. In the context of this research, the concept of intractable conflict is especially significant, as the conflict under study possesses all of the characteristics of an intractable and protracted conflict. The North-South conflict in Sudan has lasted for fifty years, and it evolved over time around a complex, interrelated set of issues (see Chapter Two for historical overview). Most of the post-Cold War and intrastate conflicts are protracted conflicts (Colman, 2003; Miall, 2004).

Coleman (2003) defined conflict as “the experience of incompatible activities (goals, claims, beliefs, values, wishes, actions, feelings, etc.)” (Coleman, 2003, p. 6). Although, argued Bratic (2005), scholars have reached a consensus on what causes conflict and its manifestations, there is still a debate about how to handle conflict. However, it is clear that different approaches to intervention are needed if conflict escalates. In this aspect, scholars suggested many approaches ranging from conflict management, to conflict settlement, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation.

As mentioned earlier, new approaches in the field of peace and conflict studies have resulted in a shift of research on conflict from focusing only on interstate conflicts to include a wider range of conflicts. This shift was accompanied by alternative approaches to conflict intervention. The alternative approach in conflict resolution, argued Burton (1987), went beyond the nation-state as the unit of analysis and suggested
group identity as the unit of analysis. Accordingly, new approaches to conflict intervention emerged.

The literature does not provide a clear distinction between dispute and conflict. There is no agreement between scholars as to whether these terms are synonymous, two different concepts, or different states of the same phenomena. For instance, Burton (1987) and Burton and Dukes (1990) made a distinction between disputes and conflicts based on the nature and the underlying causes of the situation. Incompatibility of interests, which are normally negotiable, can be considered disputes. On the other hand, situations which include the incompatibility of human needs, which are normally non-negotiable (e.g., values, identity, security), can be considered conflicts. Other scholars consider disputes as possible outcomes of conflict. For instance, Yarn (1999), conceptualized conflict as a state where dispute is a process: “a dispute is an articulation of the conflict, a symptom so to speak” (p. 114-115). Others (e.g., Bercovitch, 1996) have used the two terms interchangeably. For the purpose of this research, the term conflict will be used to describe the situation in Sudan.

Burton and Dukes (1990) distinguished among three approaches to handling conflict: settlement, management, and resolution. This distinction was derived mainly from the conceptualization of the causes of a conflict in the first place. For Burton and Dukes, settlement processes are most appropriate for disputes or cases where there is conflict over interests. Settlements can be imposed or enforced by some authoritative force, for example judicial authority, to preserve legal and social norms. However, Burton and Dukes noted, different Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods, such
as arbitration and the use of an ombudsman, exist outside the authoritative norms/law enforcement realms. Dispute settlement therefore refers to bringing conflicting parties to an agreement, but it does not necessarily involve addressing the causes of the dispute (Burton & Dukes, 1990).

Conflict resolution, on the other hand, deals with deeply rooted conflicts. These are conflicts over human needs, such as incompatibility of moral or cultural values, need for security, or need for identity and recognition. Unlike dispute, conflict resolution needs a more analytical, problem solving approach, and does not require any coercion or enforcement. Conflict resolution requires identifying and analyzing the root causes of the conflict in order to effectively resolve them (Burton & Dukes, 1990). Conflict management is an approach to control conflicts that arise from "disagreements and arguments over choices and preferences that result from interactions between parties who have common interests and goals, and who differ only on the means of achieving them" (Burton & Dukes, 1990, p. 17). Conflict management normally deals with conflicts of personal relationships and interaction. This approach seeks to control the situation, normally through mediation, from escalating to a conflict or dispute. Conflict management does not address the underlying cause of the conflict.

Miall (2004) distinguished between conflict management, resolution, and transformation. Conflict management, according to Miall, is controlling conflict without resolving the causes of the conflict. Conflict management refers to “the art of appropriate intervention to achieve political settlements, particularly by those powerful actors having the power and resources to bring pressure on the conflicting parties in order to induce
them to settle” (Miall, 2004, p. 3). Conflict management thus includes a powerful third party that can intervene in order to control the conflict. On the other hand, conflict resolution requires intervention by a skilled but powerless third party.

Conflict Transformation.

Conflict transformation is a new, emerging approach to dealing with conflict. Conflict transformation theorists identify four major areas that distinguish transformation from the previous approaches of conflict management, settlement, and resolution. The first is that conflict resolution and management consider conflict a negative phenomenon that needs to be controlled or eliminated (resolved). Conflict transformation, on the contrary, conceptualizes conflict as a normal, continuous dynamic that can be a force toward positive change (Lederach, 2003). Lederach stated,

Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships (p. 14, italics in the original)

The conflict transformation approach does not seek to end the conflict but, rather, to transform it to a positive, constructive force towards social change. The transformation approach, therefore, emphasizes transforming the relationships and social structures that support and contribute to the continuation of violent conflict or injustices. This, asserted Miall (2004), “suggests . . . emphasizing support for groups within the society in conflict rather than for the mediation of outsiders” (p. 4). This is the second difference between
conflict transformation and other approaches. Other conflict intervention approaches emphasize the role of third party intervention and outsiders imposition of a resolution. Conflict transformation emphasizes the power of indigenous parties to transform conflict from within, rather than relying on third party to impose conflict settlement. Conflict transformation, explained Lederach (1995),

must actively envision, include, respect, and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting. This involves a new set of lenses through which we do not primarily ‘see’ the setting and the people in it as the ‘problem’ and the outsider as the ‘answer’. Rather, we understand the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting (Lederach, 1995, p. 212).

The third distinction is that conflict transformation seeks to understand the root causes of the conflict in its contexts. Therefore, according to Lederach (2003), “conflict transformation seeks to understand the particular episode of conflict, not in isolation, but in the greater pattern. Change is understood both at the level of immediate presenting issues and that of broader patterns and issues” (Lederach, 2003, p. 16). Conflict transformation avoids an “episodic view” of the conflict and engages in analyzing the histories (past), manifestations (present), and consequences (future) of the particular conflict.

Conflict transformation also recognizes that conflicts that are deeply rooted in societal systems cannot be transformed overnight. Thus, conflict transformation calls for gradual change. This leads to the fourth distinction. Conflict transformation
conceptualizes peace-building as a process that needs to be multidimensional, multifaceted, and over time. In the conflict transformation approach, peace is understood not as a static state but, rather, as an ongoing process that needs to maintained and developed continuously. As Miall (2004) explained, “The key dimensions of this process are changes in the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict, brought about over different time-periods (short-, mid- and long-term) and affecting different system levels at different times” (p. 6). As mentioned earlier, the conflict transformation approach endeavors to reduce violence, increase justice, enhance direct interaction and transform social structures, within the conflict context (Lederach, 1995, 1997, 2003).

The conflict transformation approach recognizes that conflict, especially intractable conflicts, are long term phenomena. Therefore, addressing the personal, structural, relational, and cultural aspects of conflict needs to be done over time. Transformation, thus, is a long-term goal that is a move forward from immediate crisis and humanitarian intervention to sustainable peace. According to Lederach (1997), “Transformation . . . represents the change from one status to another. In more specific terms of conflict progression, transformation is the movement from the latent stage to confrontation to negotiation to dynamic, peaceful relationships” (p. 75). As such, conflict transformation necessitates a distinction between the response to immediate needs and long term goals of building sustainable peace. To address the different needs, Lederach (1997) suggested a nested time dimension that consists of four levels to respond to the short term as well as long term needs. The first level is crisis intervention or immediate action, where conflict transformation practitioners respond to immediate and
humanitarian crisis. The second level is a mid range level where the society is prepared by training social change agents and capacity building is the focus. That leads to the third level, social change, which Lederach called the decade thinking level. The fourth level, or the generational vision level, is preparation for the desired future. The fourth level is a conflict prevention level, where the promotion of “a vision of a more peacefully and socially harmonious future” takes place (Lederach, 1997, p. 76).

From the above discussion, it is apparent that the conflict transformation approach combines elements of conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict prevention. However, conflict transformation goes beyond the immediate manifestations of conflict to address the histories and future of the societies undergoing the conflict. With multifaceted, multidimensional, and multi-time-frame aspects, conflict transformation has the ability to address direct as well as structural and cultural violence dimensions. Conflict transformation also stresses the relational dimension of the peace-building process, which is vital when dealing with intractable conflicts. Protracted social conflicts, unlike interstate conflicts, “are typically drawn along group identity lines, [resulting] in long standing conflicts” (Lederach, 1997, p. 17). Thus, intractable intrastate social conflicts, such as Sudan’s conflict, demand an approach that goes beyond political negotiations and peace agreements to a more reconciliatory approach that addresses deeply-rooted post conflict negative emotions and trauma. Such an approach needs to go beyond just ending violence to achieve sustainable peace. Conflict transformation provides such a “comprehensive, multifaceted strategy” (Lederach, 1997, p. 18), which makes it more suitable to address intractable conflicts, such as the Sudanese one. In terms
of the conceptual framework of Galtung’s conflict triangle, conflict transformation thus is a step towards cultural peace.

Peace and Conflict Studies in Africa

Peace and conflict studies, as an institutionalized field of study, is relatively new in Africa. The research network on ethnic conflicts in Africa, an initiative of the Council of the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA), established in 1990, was the first effort to engage in systematic research on peace and conflict in Africa. Osaghea (2001) attributed this trend to the intolerance of African governments to the study and research on conflict in Africa, especially ethnic laden conflicts. Following decolonization in Africa, research on ethnicity and ethnic conflicts “was considered epithetic and researchers who studied them were labeled ‘unprogressive’, subversive’ and ‘agents of opposition and imperialism’” (Osaghea, 2001, p. 13). This view against study of ethnicity and conflict in Africa was, in large, a reaction to the dominant paradigm and modernization theory that labeled African and underdeveloped countries as backward and primitive. As Mafeje (1976) stated, “for the [Western] political scientist ‘primordial loyalties’ or ‘ethnicity’ become the major explanation, if not the only one for the failure of ‘nation-building’ in the new states or for any manifest antagonisms among groups” (p. 325). Consequently, African governments and intellectuals developed growing distrust and hostility towards research on ethnicity and ethnic conflict, which was considered along with anthropology a colonial enterprise. This led to lack of research on peace and conflict even by indigenous African scholars until the mid 1980s and 1990s.
In the late 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, peace and conflict studies all over the world witnessed rapid growth and increasing interest. Africa experienced this global trend as well, and peace and conflict research began to grow. Many factors contributed to this trend globally, but in Africa, the end of apartheid in South Africa accompanied by the post-Cold War rejuvenating interest in intrastate and civil conflicts led to the rise of governmental and non-governmental institutions, groups, and research networks. As of 2004, Africa had 121 peace and conflict studies departments in 109 institutions in 34 African countries (University of Peace, 2004).

Despite the relative newness of peace and conflict studies in Africa as an institutionalized scholarly discipline, African research centers and universities seem to have established a distinct research framework that considers the distinctive realities of the continent, while incorporating the global theoretical and methodological frameworks that already are well-established in the Western industrialized societies. A survey by Malan (2002) of African universities and other institutions concluded that,

In the field of dealing with conflict there seems to be an increasing realization of the importance of the culture or cultures of the people involved. What we find more and more, in training projects and actual interventions, is that culture is no longer a mere afterthought. In our world, where multiculturality is (or should be) duly recognized, culture has become a most relevant and justified starting point of discussion in training sessions and talks. Cultural sensitivities are reflected in the questionnaire data, and cultural perspectives are probably embedded in many of the courses and projects. (p. 16)
A quick look at the survey revealed training programs and courses in African Ways of Dealing with Conflict, Comparative Indigenous Approaches to Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management in Africa, Conflict Management and Peace Methods in Africa, in addition to courses on general concepts and theories of peace and conflict studies (Malan, 2002). This revealed that the state of peace and conflict studies in Africa has moved from reactionary rejection of the discipline as a neo-colonial endeavor to adapting the knowledge in the field to suit the African context and contributing to the discipline by providing indigenous African knowledge to the world. Considering the newness of the field in Africa, this research adds to the literature on peace and conflict studies within the African context.

Media Effects Research

Investigation of media influence in the political sphere has been a growing field of research. Consequently, the need to understand the relationship between mass media and politics has become more pressing. In contemporary societies, both in developing and developed countries, media represent some of the most important sources of information that help people understand the world around them (Downing, 1996; McQuail, 1994; Musa, 2009). Although some scholars have argued that “the entire study of mass communication is based on the premises that the media have significant effects” (McQuail, 1994, p. 327), the nature and the extent of mass media effects on audiences are still a matter of debate among scholars. Because of this debate, varieties of approaches and theoretical frameworks have been adopted to explore mass media’s influence on society and audiences. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the documented genesis of the
media effects research traditions began in Western industrialized societies, and there is little research to document the media effect theoretical assumption in non-Western societies in general and Africa in particular (Kalyango, 2009; MacBride, 2004; Mytton, 1983).

Media effects research in the West has witnessed significant changes. These changes, argued Bryant and Miron (2004), are tied to rapid transformations in media content, and ownership patterns as well as in media technologies. On the other hand, there are also major changes in the social, economic, and political spheres globally. All these changes contribute to growing and significant changes in mass communication research.

McQuail (1994) explained that mass communication research in the West can be divided into four broad phases. The first phase started after the end of the First World War and lasted up to the 1930s. After the war, attention was drawn to the role of media in war propaganda. Lasswell’s Propaganda Technique in the World War was considered the beginning of systematic research on media effects (Mattelart & Mattelart, 1998). During that period, the positivist approach dominated social science research. Positivism sought to understand social phenomena through objective, value free, and scientific empirical inquiry. Primarily drawing on social psychology and psychology traditions, media effects models, such as the magic bullet theory, were developed. Magic bullet (also known as hypodermic needle theory) proposed that the media are immensely powerful and have strong and direct effects in shaping public opinion. The strong effects paradigm assumed a direct correlation between exposure to media messages and the shaping of public
opinion. Audiences were thought of as passive, susceptible, and vulnerable to media messages. During the powerful effect phase of media effects research little consideration was given to the significance of mass communication in social, economic, and political spheres.

Following the positivist approach of empirical inquiry, systematic studies, using surveys, were conducted to determine the effects of media on audience members’ attitudes and behavior, especially towards political campaigns. However, instead of confirming the strong effects paradigm, a new assessment of media power emerged. One significant work during this second phase was Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet’s *The People’s Choice: How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, which was a study of media influence on voters in the 1940 presidential elections in Ohio. The People’s Choice paved the way to the minimal effect paradigm, under which models, such as the two-step flow communication model, were developed. The two step-flow model emphasized the opinion leaders’ influence on audience members’ perception of the media messages to which they were exposed. Accordingly, the media strong and direct effects paradigm was reconsidered. Exposure to media was no longer considered a sufficient cause of attitude change. Rather, audiences were thought of as part of social networks and particular social and cultural contexts. Media were thought of as one of the factors, not necessary the primary factor, of attitude changes (Mattelart & Mattelart, 1998; McQuail, 1994, 2000).

Scholars started challenging the minimal effects paradigm based on the premise that this paradigm was concerned with media’s immediate effects on audiences, such as
the period during election campaigns, but did not consider the long term cognitive effect. Consequently, a new phase of research developed to understand long term, rather than short term cognitive media effects. This phase of research, which dominated the 1970s, revisited the strong effects paradigm and cultural effects theories. Researchers sought to understand media effects in terms of broader contexts. Unlike the magic bullet theory and direct effects paradigm, which were characterized by experimental and psychological models, this phase of mass media research sought to understand the “collective phenomena such as climates of opinion, structures of belief, ideologies, cultural patterns and institutional forms of media provision” (McQuail, 2000, p. 420).

The fourth phase, influenced by social constructivism, started in the 1980s. This stage of media research combines elements from both the limited and strong effects theories of mass media in a new perspective that recognizes the “the human agency for communicative practices” (Hardt, 1999, p. 179). This approach conceptualized media effects as a product of interaction between media and audiences (Bryant & Miron, 2004; MacBride, 2004; Scheufele, 1999; Williams, 2003). Mass media, within this paradigm, have significant effects not by casual effect through exposure but, rather, through interaction with and meaning construction by audiences. Mass media, according to researchers within social constructivism, offer meaning constructs “in a systematic way to audiences, where they are incorporated (or not), on the basis of some form of negotiation, into personal meaning structures, often shaped by prior collective identification” (McQuail, 2000, p. 420-21). Unlike previous approaches, the fourth approach to media effect research does not engage in the binary position of asking who is
powerful: mass media or audiences? Rather this approach recognized the audiences’ power to negotiate meaning without denying the mass media influence on this meaning construction process.

This paradigm shift, argued Hardt (1999), was a result of introduction of an alternative theoretical approach to the study of communication that “proposes that facts cannot be separated from the domain of values, that the relationship of meaning and language to culture is central to constituting reality” (p. 180). That is to say, this emerging theoretical approach considered communication a process “which entails studying media institutions, not in isolation, but in relation to other institutions in broad social, national and international context” (MacBride, 2004, p. 226). Within this paradigm, framing theory has emerged.

_Media Framing_

Framing theory scholars argue that “mass media actively set the frame reference that readers or viewers use to interpret and discuss public events” (Scheufele, 1999, p. 105). However, rather than studying media effects on individuals, framing scholars seek to understand the dynamics of interaction between the story organization and presentation and the audiences’ experiences, perceptions and orientations (Entman, 1993, 2007; Goffman, 1974; Graber, 1994; Scheufele, 1999).

Although framing theory is a growing area in the field of communication research (Bryant & Miron, 2004), it is not exclusively a communication theory. The term _frame_ has been used in many disciplines, such as social psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science. The term frame, according to Goffman (1974), was first coined by
the anthropologist and social psychologist Gregory Bateson (1972) in his collection *Steps to an ecology of mind*. Bateson (1972) considered human communication a map of interaction and meaning that guides our interaction by constructing the cognitive structures that we use to make sense of the world around us. Goffman (1974) later used the term *frame* to describe the organization of social experiences in order to make sense of them. Goffman (1974) defined frames as interpretive devices that individuals use to “locate, perceive, identify and label” events together in order to make sense of these events and their experiences (p. 21). Goffman (1974) acknowledged that frame construction can be influenced by an individual’s personal and past experiences, contexts, and culture. The literature on framing proposed that framing is also influenced by social and institutional factors. Individuals’ perspectives and experiences are key factors in the interpretation of any event.

Goffman (1974) stated that the interpretive devices that individuals use to organize a particular event can be called a primary framework. A primary framework, according to Goffman (1974) is “one that is seen as not depending on or harking back to some prior or original interpretation . . . [it] is one that is seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful” (p. 21). Thus, a primary framework is the frame that individuals use to interpret, characterize and create meaning of the events and experiences around them. However, Goffman (1974) distinguished between two classes of primary frameworks: natural frameworks and social frameworks. Natural frameworks, according to Goffman (1974), are unguided frameworks; they are purely physical with no interference from an outside agency. Social
frameworks “can be described as ‘guided doings’. These doings subject the doer to ‘standards’” (Goffman, 1974, p. 22). For instance, death can be a natural framework, but how one interprets death is a social framework that depends on one’s spiritual, social, and individual beliefs. Some might interpret death as the end of life, while others perceive it as a transitional stage to a new life. Individuals apply primary frameworks to make sense of a given event. However, since these social frameworks are “guided doings,” they are not isolated from the event itself and cannot be built in isolation from one’s culture, social status, setting, and personality.

Many scholars argued that the way information is organized and presented affects the way information is processed and perceived, and consequently, this affects which frames individuals apply to understanding and interpreting an issue (Iyengar, 1987; Price, Tewksbury & Powers, 1997; Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001). For example, when studying the way television frames influence audience members’ frames, Iyengar (1987) concluded that “individuals’ explanations of political issues are significantly influenced by the manner in which television news presentations ‘frame’ these issues” (p. 1). However, while media sets the frames through information presentations and attributes, audiences, on the other end, process and comprehend this information in a way that appropriates the information as meaningful. The process of appropriation of certain media texts as meaningful by audience members “depends very heavily on what . . . [audience members] bring to the situation” (Graber, 1989, p. 148). For instance, Price, Tewksbury and Powers (1997) investigated how media frames, presented in a fictitious story concerning the possibility of reductions in university state funding, affect students’
thoughts and feelings. While the findings of the study illustrated that the story’s frames “did evoke distinctive patterns in the activation of thoughts. Not all of the thoughts generated by participants, however, were explicitly directed by the articles” (p. 496).

In *Processing the News*, Graber (1984) referred to frames as schema and defined schema as “a cognitive structure consisting of organized knowledge about situations and individuals that has been abstracted from prior experiences” (p. 23). As such, frames, as cognitive constructs, are organizational devices that enable audiences to process information so that this information fits into prior established systems, fills in the missing information from previously established frames, and process and comprehend information presented to them through the media. According to framing theory, information will remain neutral and meaningless until some frame has been applied to it.

Gitlin (1980) went beyond conceptualizing framing as cognitive constructs and defined frames as persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual. (p. 7)

Framing, as stated by Gitlin (1980), is a process of cognition, and representation, as well as interpretation. That is to say, the framing process not only takes place at the individual level but also at the media level. Information presentation and attributes can be thought of as media frames, and information processing and comprehension can be considered audiences’ frames.
Pan and Kosicki (1993) defined media frames as “a system of organized signifying elements that both indicate the advocacy of certain ideas and provide devices to encourage certain kinds of audience processing of the texts” (p. 55). Pan and Kosicki (1993) conceptualized media frames as organizational devices that not only help audiences to comprehend information but advocate certain ideas and specific interpretations. Media framing as such is not a neutral enterprise but rather a deliberate process to direct audiences’ interpretation and meaning construction. Many scholars have argued that the way media professionals frame an issue is linked to the role of media in promoting the dominant ideology or producing frames that serve elitist interests (Gitlin, 1980). Entman (1993) stated that the “the frame in the news text is really the imprint power – it registers the identity of actors or interest that competed to dominate the text” (p. 55). The research on framing and political communication suggested that media professionals, intentionally or unintentionally, adopt the dominant power frames and promote them through the media. As a result, dominant groups’ frames dominate the media outlets leading to adopting them as frames of reference for interpretation. In other words, media reflects the power relationships in a given society, as the dominant group’s frames have more access in media. Consequently, Carragee and Roefs (2004) warned against reducing framing to study of media effects and called for the importance of studying frames within “the context in which they are produced, including the influence of power on frame production” (p. 227). Namely, Carragee and Roefs emphasized the importance of including frame sponsorship within framing research agenda.
While the relationship between hegemony and the process of framing has been the subject of growing scrutiny within framing research, another body of the literature offers a different perspective. Gamson and Modigliani (1987) defined frame as a "central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (p. 143). Media frames are “symbolic devices” that enable audiences to optimize the complex information presented in the media in a way that audiences can comprehend the information (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 143). Yet, as Hall (1980) stated, “before [the] message can have an ‘effect’ (however defined), satisfy a ‘need’ or be put to ‘use’, it must first be appropriated as meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded [by audiences]” (p. 130). The central idea here is that framing is a process of construction of meaning. This construction of social reality takes place on both the media level and audience level. At the media level, the frames are produced through interaction between various levels of the journalistic production process and routines. However, unlike the body of literature on framing and political hegemony mentioned above, Gamson, Modigliani and Hall suggested that media frames are not always adopted as audience frames. Hall (1980) recognized the audience members’ autonomy on negotiating meaning construction from media frames. Gamson (1989) went further and suggested that a news message can carry multiple, even competing frames. The way an issue is framed does not depend totally on the sources quoted or official interviewed, but media professionals have the autonomy to infuse their own frames on certain issues. Gamson (1989) went on to argue that
The etiology of content does not lie entirely in these political, economic and organizational factors; part of it must be explained at the cultural level. The frames for a given story are frequently drawn from larger cultural narratives and myth. (p. 161)

That is to say, media frames do not develop only in relation to elite or hegemonic power framing. Media frames, according to Gamson (1989), do not develop in a vacuum but in a political, social, and cultural context. At the audience level, the framing process takes place through interaction between media texts, audience, and the social context in which frames are constructed (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Scheufele, 1999; Wicks, 2001, Van Gorp, 2007). This orientation in framing research can be summarized by Rees’s (2001) definition of frames as “as organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p. 11). In this sense, frames can be considered organizing symbolic devices which result from the interaction of media text, individual experiences, and the contexts in which the frames are produced.

_Framing Research: Different Research Paradigms or Multiparadigmatic?_

The above review of literature on framing reveals the multiplicity of frame and framing definitions, applications, and research approaches. This diversity has led to “scattered conceptualization” regarding what exactly the terms frame and framing mean (Entman, 1993, p. 51). For instance Entman (1993) called framing a “fractured paradigm” (p. 51), and called for clarification and development of framing as a research paradigm. Fourteen years later, Van Gorp (2007) suggested that framing “is gradually becoming a
'passe-partout’ [or passkey]” (p. 60). D’Angelo and Kuypers (2010) stated that, in communication research, there is still “a continuing and unresolved debate about the composition and location of frames and about the mechanisms and processes of frame building and framing effects” (p. 19). This debate is reflected on the different approaches that are applied to framing analysis. A survey of Reese, Gandy and Grant’s (2001) volume on framing reveals the diversity of concepts and approaches applied to framing as a theoretical and methodological approach. Other scholars, however, have argued that this diversity can be considered a strength of framing, as framing can be thought of as a “model that bridges parts of the field that need to be in touch with each other: quantitative and qualitative, empirical and interpretive, psychological and sociological, and academic and professional” (Reese, 2007, p. 148).

Responding to framing research’s diversity of approaches, D’Angelo (2002), identified three paradigms that he argued framing scholars often employ to “examine the interaction of media frames and individual- or social-level reality” (p. 870). D’Angelo (2002) argued that framing scholarship can be positioned within one of these paradigms: the cognitive, constructionist, or critical paradigms. For cognitive paradigm researchers, audience members rely on prior knowledge and experiences to construct meaning, evaluate, and make connections when they come in contact with news. The work of Graber (1984), Iyengar (1987), and Price, Tewksbury and Powers (1997) who consider frames as cognitive constructs are examples of the cognitive paradigm.

Critical paradigm, researchers argued D’Angelo (2002), claim that the way an issue is portrayed in the media influences audience perceptions about that issue. Critical
framing advocates hold that media framing is part of a hegemonic process by which dominant groups construct direct public opinion through infusing certain frames in the media, and thus leading the audience members to adopt these frames. The work of Entman (1991, 2007), Gitlin (1979, 1980) and Carragee and Roefs (2004) are examples of the critical paradigm. Cognitive and critical paradigms differ in the way they conceptualize the framing process. While critical paradigm researchers, influenced by the hegemony thesis, hold that media professionals deliberately select certain frames that serve the dominant elites, cognitive researchers hold that media create different and multiple frames, and audience members’ prior knowledge activate certain frames.

The constructionist paradigm, nonetheless, offers a third perspective. Framing researchers within the constructionist paradigm assert that “journalists are information processors who create ‘interpretative packages’ of positions of politically invested ‘sponsors’ (e.g., sources) in order to both reflect and add to the ‘issue culture’” (D’Angelo, 2002, p. 877). The constructionist paradigm, while in agreement with the cognitive paradigm that media offers multiple frames, hold that media frames and social context, not just individual prior knowledge, inform audience members’ frames (e.g., Gamson, 1989). Constructionists also conceptualize media frames as interpretive packages. Yet, contrary to critical paradigm, these interpretative packages, although created by the media, are not binding to audience members. Audience members still possess the power to construct their own frames.

Framing studies within different paradigms, according to D’Angelo (2002), are concerned with different issues and consequently adopt different methodological
approaches. The interests of the cognitive paradigm reside in the process by which exposure to media frames activate certain trains of thoughts. Consequently, cognitive studies often use experiments “to detect slight variation in activated knowledge because they think individuals can flexibly decode frames and use them to make decisions and judgments” (D’Angelo, 2002, p. 877). On the other hand, critical scholars “often measure public opinion in the aggregate,” examining how frames that dominated the media influenced individual frames. While cognitivists are interested in the framing processes at the individual level and investigate the development of individual frames in relation to media frames, they also try to understand the social contexts in which these frames are developed (D’Angelo, 2002).

D’Angelo called for considering framing a multiparadigmatic research program that integrates different theories to understand complex communication processes. However, D’Angelo argued that “it is difficult to empirically examine frames and framing effects under simultaneous guidance of more than one paradigmatic image” (p. 878). He went on to suggest that “for practical and epistemological reasons, particular studies settle within a paradigmatic image of frames and framing effects” (p. 875). However, a review of the literature reveals that scholars draw from different paradigms and traditions. While different studies ask different questions that reflect the different assumptions held by researchers about epistemology, ontology, and, accordingly, methodologies, most media framing scholars conceptualize framing as interaction between media and audience. This conceptualization, as Scheufele (1999) and Van Gorp (2007) have argued, places framing research within the larger constructionist paradigm of
social science. The differences between the three suggested paradigms by D’Angelo (2002) represents different angles that framing scholars use to look at different issues rather than blatant paradigmatic differences. Framing can be an encompassing theory that seeks to understand the relationship that occurs between the text, frame sponsorships, the audience, and “finally, the stock of frames that is available in a given culture” (Van Grop, 2007, p. 63).

**How Does Framing Work?**

How does the process of framing happen? In answering this question, Entman (1993) stated that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52). Entman (1993) noted that framing essentially involves selection and salience. An issue or a piece of information is first selected and then made “more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (p. 53). Framing scholars have suggested that the way an issue is selected and made salient informs the way audiences create meaning from the issue. It is worth noting, however, that it is not only selection and salience that matters but also exclusion, because the way an issue is ignored or disguised somehow reinforce attributes of nonsignificance or unworthiness, which is never a neutral attribute.

The literature on framing suggests that different factors influence the construction of frames. Among these factors are power relationships and cultural associations, as well as organizational culture and journalistic work routines. Ideological and hegemonic
factors influence which frames are more prominent in the media. Framing literature suggests that centers of power as well as the ruling elite’s interests can influence promotion of certain frames in mainstream media (Entman, 1991, 2007; Gitlin, 1979, 1980). There is a growing body of scholarly research focusing on the news coverage of minorities and social movements. These studies have focused on how certain aspects of reality are highlighted in order to produce frames that are in agreement with the authority’s or dominant group’s construction of social reality (Avraham, Wolfsfeld, & Aburaiya, 2000). In covering conflicts, word choices such as “rebels” versus “liberation army” or “revolutionists,” for instance, suggest that whoever is in control sets the frames through which the other group should be viewed. However, framing is not limited to centers of power and elites; Benford and Snow (2000) found that social movements also produce counter-frames and reframes.

Cultural association is another factor that might influence the construction of certain frames. The coverage of the controversy of the Mohamed cartoons in a Danish newspaper is one illustration of how culture influences the production of frames. While most of the Western media used the press freedom frame, Arabic and Islamic countries’ media used the respect and cultural sensitivity frame to address the controversy. The framing difference reveals a cultural difference in the angle from which each side approached the issue. This difference resulted in different characterization frames that are an important element when addressing issues of peace and conflict. Another case in point was Musa’s (2009) comparative study of U. S. media framing of conflict in Bosnia and Rwanda. Musa (2009) contended that New York Times and Washington Post journalists’
past experiences, cultural association, and perceptions about the two countries influenced the frames they applied to the two situations. Musa (2004) argued,

   The images of Bosnia as a military zone, the notion that the Bosnian conflict had a higher chance of being resolved by negotiation, and the impression of Rwandan crisis as motivated by tribal rather than political or economic disputes, all reflect a déjá vu mentality in the framing of the issues. (p. 66)

   Journalists do not always deliberately select the frames that they apply to a certain issue. Reporters report on what they see. However, since one function of framing is to organize information in order to make sense of it, reporters seek to fill in missing pieces in what they see in order to make the story understandable to their audiences. Journalists’ work routines and the political and economic interests of news organizations set what attributes of news are selected and emphasized. For instance, Kuypers and Cooper (2005), in their research about the mass media coverage of the Iraqi war, illustrated how a journalist’s location (embedded or behind front lines) played a role in which attributes were selected and made salient and, accordingly, which frames were applied. The study compared embedded and behind the front lines reporting and found that embedded reporting focused on the weakness of the Iraqi army’s resistance, thereby assigning a victory frame to the representation of the war. Behind the frontline reporting, on the other hand, focused on war causalities and the potential of Iraqi forces to counterattack.

   Organizational culture can dictate journalist practices and work routines and, consequently, the framing of the news. Organization of information can frame the same issues differently. Thus, the way news is selected and how certain attributes of an issue
achieve salience influences the reception and meaning derived from such events. In *Framing war and genocide: British policy and news media reaction to the war in Bosnia*, Kent (2006) explained how the objectivity and balance routine that was practiced by British journalists resulted in the production of a “moral equalization” frame, a frame that shied away from naming a responsible agent for the atrocities in Bosnia.

Frames perform four basic functions: 1) selection or salience; 2) evaluations and organization, so that the information presented fits into the established system; 3) filling in the missing information from previously established frames and perceptions; and 4) seeking solutions, with those solutions normally based on past scenarios and experiences (Entman, 1993; Garber, 1984; Plaster, 2002):

1. Defining a problem: the first function of a frame is to define the problem in order to make sense of what is going on. That is, for media as well as audiences. For media, defining a problem sets the context of the problem. By defining the problem, media set for audiences the parameters of how to think about the issue being covered.

2. Organizing information to fill in missing pieces from previous experience: the second function is to use what is at hand and organize it in a frame, which is influenced by past experience and perception, in order to fill in the missing information. Reading news, we can identify this function by looking at how journalists associate one piece of news with previous issues that are somehow related to the issue being covered.
3. Evaluation: the third function of framing is to make evaluations and causal interpretations. By framing, media and audiences try to assess the issues to create an interpretation and /or suggest solutions or actions.

4. Suggesting solutions: based on the problem definition and evaluation, media professionals as well as audiences might come up with solutions or actions to deal with the issue at hand. A case in point was the SRS coverage of the International Criminal Court indictment of al-Bashir. SRS selected the fact that there is collective rejection of ICC decision and highlighted the aspect of Sudan not recognizing the ICC to promote the interpretation that ICC has no authority over Sudan’s internal affairs. In addition to that, SRS positioned the ICC decision in conflict with the country’s peace and stability as a way to provoke moral evaluation. Accepting ICC, consequently, meant risking the whole country’s stability and the CPA in particular. The next logical step was to recommend solutions. The solution SRS was promoting was seeking internal solutions. (Guta, 2010)

In media effect research traditions, agenda setting and priming look specifically at how salient the media (news media) make an issue. Both theories are based on a theoretical foundation that sees salience as making issues more prominent in people’s minds. However, unlike agenda setting and priming, framing “is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11). Framing not only
focuses on addressing whether an issue is reported, but how it is reported. Framing deals not only with object salience but also with object attributes. For example, Mahtani (2001), reviewing studies about the relationship between Canadian media and minorities, illustrated how the coverage of minorities in Canadian media sets frames that only served to humiliate minorities. Canadian media, according to Mahtani (2001), although covering minorities’ issues, continued to broadcast negative and stereotypical images of minority members. The issue is not whether minorities’ issues were salient in the media, but what attributes are linked to the salience. The negative attributes that are linked to minorities set certain frames through which the representation of minority can be understood.

Selection of different attributes and making these attributes salient can lead to adoption of totally different frames for the same news story, as in the case of the 1999 NATO Air Strikes on Kosovo. An analysis of how the strikes were framed in Chinese media in comparison to U.S. media revealed that, while the Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as a violation of Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territory, the U.S. newspapers framed the air strikes as humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians (Yang, 2003).

Media Framing in the Context of Peace and Conflict

The relationship between communication (and mass media as instruments of mass communication) and peace is well articulated in the UNESCO constitution, which reads “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” The media’s role in inciting and escalating violence has been the subject of numerous studies in the field of mass communication (Allan &
Seaton, 1999; Frere, 2007; Seib, 2005). Since many scholars have concluded that media can incite conflict, it seems reasonable to assume that media can influence peace-building as well. In conflict situations, as Hattotuw (2002) argued,

The media can emphasize the benefits that peace can bring, they can raise the legitimacy of groups or leaders working for peace, and they can help transform images of the enemy. However, the media can also serve as destructive agents in a peace process, and can choose to negatively report on the risks and dangers associated with compromise, raise the legitimacy of those opposed to concessions, and reinforce negative stereotypes of the enemy. (p. 1)

In the context of conflict and peace, how an issue is framed by conflicting partners is particularly significant. Since frames are the interpretive lenses through which disputants see, conceptualize, and interpret the conflict, it is important to understand that frames are not objective devices but, rather, a subjective perception or the “view that one person [or group] has of what is going on” (Goffman, 1974, p. 8). Framing not only influences how an individual sees conflict from his or her point of view, but also the way he or she understands “the motivations of the partners involved, and how the conflict should be settled” (Gray, 2003, p. 12). Therefore, in intractable conflict situations, framing analysis can offer insights into ways to transform the conflict by changing the frames which disputants adopted and through which they interpreted the conflict.

The literature on framing suggests that the way issues of peace and war are framed can influence the way they are understood and eventually addressed (Avraham, Wolfsfeld & Aburaiya, 2000; Benford & Snow, 2000; Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001;
Many scholars have stated that the way issues are framed can contribute to either conflict escalation or conflict transformation (Lewicki, Gray & Elliot, 2003; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994; Shmueli, Elliot & Kaufman, 2006). Lewicki, Gray and Elliot (2003) concluded that framing is one factor that contributes to conflict intractability, and consequently conflict reframing has the potential to increase conflict tractability. Lewicki et al. (2003) and Shmueli et al. (2006) identified the following frames as salient in conflict situations: the identity frame, the characterization frame, the power and social control frame, the conflict management frame, the risk and information frame, the whole story frame, and the loss and gain frame. In the context of this research, four frames are relevant and will be discussed in detail: identity frame, characterization frame, power and social control frame, and whole story frame.

The identity frame represents a major frame in conflict situations. As many scholars have contended, most conflicts, especially along ethnic and religious lines, escalate when people feel that their identities are threatened (Broom & Hatay, 2006). Feelings of threatened identity create a state of negative interdependence through which the elimination of the other becomes the only way to “resolve” the conflict. In this sense, as Hamelink noted, media can play an influential role by “suggest[ing] to their audience that ‘the other’ pose fundamental threat to security and well-being of the society and that the only effective means of escaping this threat is the elimination of this great danger” (quoted in Terzis, 2008, p. 144). For instance, Kellow and Steeves (1998) stated that the kill-or-be-killed frame was a salient frame that Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines
used during the Rwanda genocide to mobilize the Hutu masses. In this case Tutsi were presented as an existential threat to the Hutu.

Characterization frames consist of “reductionist labels, associating positive or negative characteristics with individuals or groups” (Shmueli et al., 2006, p. 4). The power of the characterization frame, argued Shmueli et al. (2006), is derived from the fact that this frame is often a collective frame, and can be communicated and shared in the community. In the context of Sudan’s conflict, framing all Northern Sudanese as *Jallaba*, which simply means merchant but carries connotation of exploitation and evokes memories of the brutality of the slave trade, is one illustration of the characterization frame. In the context of conflict transformation, the characterization frame, when applied, “may undermine opponents’ legitimacy, cast doubt on their motivations, or exploit their sensitivity,” and hence hinders conflict transformation (Shmueli et al., 2006, p. 4).

The power and social control frame refers to perceptions concerning how the decision making process takes place or, in other words, who is in control. In conflict situations, disputants can become reluctant to enter into any form of negotiation if they feel that they don’t have control over the situation. In intractable conflicts, framing the conflict in terms of power and social control can lead to the framing of “events as mutually exclusive power struggles, resulting in polarization” (Shmueli et al., 2006, p. 5).

The whole story frame is the disputants’ perceptions of what the conflict is about. Basically, this is the encapsulated frame of the conflict (Lewicki et al., 2003). As noted earlier, most intractable conflicts revolve around a set of complex and interconnected issues. Therefore, isolating a single issue or a set of issues and transforming it/them to a
whole-story-frame can lead to complicating the conflict, especially if the disputants adopt a different whole-story frame. The case of the Mohamed cartoons is a case in point. While the Muslim world media framed the issue in terms of cultural sensitivity, Danish media adopted freedom of expression as the whole-story-frame. The result was escalation of the conflict and failure of each side to listen to the other. Media can contribute to adopting certain frames by highlighting certain aspects of the issue and promoting certain definitions.

Although different frames can escalate conflict, Coleman and Rider (2006) noted that most of the conflicts are identity-based conflicts, in the broader sense of identity. Therefore, the infusion of the cultural peace perspective through social institutions can be effective in conflict transformation. In this aspect, media can play a role in either reducing or escalating conflict by the way they frame issues of identity. Bratic (2005) argued that “inherently, media are responsible for good or bad interpretations of the things outside our immediate perceptions; in wars, media frame our enemy for us” (p. 69). In this context, mass media, among other social institutions, play an essential role in defining “Us” and “Them.” The representation of “We” and “Others” through mass media has the potential to be influential in shaping collective public opinion. Keen (1991) stated, “We first kill people with our minds, before we kill them with weapons.” (p. 18). If we think of media as part of the cultural institutions that create “the symbolic sphere of our existence” (Galtung, 1990, p. 1), then it is important to understand the role media might play in creating or transforming cultural violence. However, it is still necessary to acknowledge that it is the way the media frame the message and how the audience members negotiate
and interact with that message that decide the effectiveness of media intervention in conflict situations.

Galtung, in developing a framework of peace journalism, emphasized these concepts and argued that the way conflict is framed differentiates peace journalism from war journalism. By highlighting peace initiatives, focusing on peace makers, toning down ethnic and religious differences, and focusing on people’s suffering, the peace journalist works towards preventing further conflict. On the other hand, war journalism focuses on “our” suffering and frames the conflict as an Us/Them dichotomy (cited in Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005).

Conclusion

This chapter provides a review of the literature pertaining to this research. The research draws on two major bodies of scholarly work: peace and conflict studies and media effects research, namely framing theory. The first section provides an overview of history and issues in peace and conflict studies. Different theoretical models of conflict intervention are also discussed with special emphasis on conflict transformation. The second section provides an overview of media effects research, and then delves into a detailed discussion of framing theory. The section concludes with a discussion on the role of media and media framing in conflict situations.

A review of the literature reveals relative scarcity of research on media effects in Africa. This trend, accompanied by the fact that peace and conflict studies is also a relatively new field in Africa, make the contribution of this research to the literature on media and conflict in Africa timely and necessary.
The field of conflict and peace studies, birthed out of the international relations and political science scholarship, has undergone major changes since its inception in the late 1950s. In the early stages of the peace and conflict studies, researchers perceived peace as the absence of war and therefore, peace and conflict research emphasis was on preventing war between nations and states. Transformation in the field and introduction of new concepts such as positive peace in contrast with negative peace expanded what constituted peace and conflict studies to include not only conflict along the macro lines of nation-states, but also micro level such as conflicts at the ethnic, religious, family, and interpersonal levels, among others. Another major transformation in the peace and conflict scholarship was the concept of violence triangle by Johan Galtung. The violence triangle concept moved peace and conflict research beyond the emphasis on manifestations of violence in physical coercion to include issues of structural and cultural injustices. The contribution of Galtung opened the door to the study of the role of social institutions, such as media, in fostering cultural peace or vice versa.

The review of the media effects and framing theory revealed that framing theory emerged out of the constructivist approach that sought to understand the interaction between media texts and audiences in the process of meaning construction. Framing theory offers theoretical as well as analytical tools to analyze this process of interaction both at the media and the audiences level. In the context of peace and conflict, framing theory is especially helpful, as the literature suggests that frames that disputants adopt can contribute to conflict escalation or transformation.
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This research seeks to understand the ways media inform audience members’ perceptions of conflict and peace-building in Sudan. Specifically, this research applies framing analysis to compare media frames and audience frames regarding issues of peace and conflict. In this chapter, I address the core methodological issues underlying this research and provide an account of field research and data analysis. The chapter starts with a historical overview of audience research, to situate the research within audience research traditions. I then provide a rationale for choosing a qualitative method, media ethnography, for carrying out the field study and framing analysis for the research data. The chapter also provides an overview of media ethnography as field study tool, before going into details about the field study in Sudan and Kenya and data collection. The chapter then provides a description of the methods and procedures of data analysis.

Introduction

Audience research and theorizing audience reception have undergone many changes in the last two decades. Many communication scholars have challenged the notion of passive audience versus powerful media (Alasuutari, 1999; Ang, 1996; McQuail, 1997). Framing analysis is informed by this theoretical approach that does not conceptualize the communication process as a linear sender-message-receiver relationship. Media framing research considers communication as a process resulting from interactions between media and recipients (Entman, 1993, 2007; Goffman, 1974; Graber, 1989, 1994; Scheufele, 1999). The ultimate goal of this research is to investigate interactions between media and audience members. This is done by comparing media
frames to audience members’ frames in an attempt to understand the way the former informs the latter. To achieve this goal, the methods for this research combine aspects of media ethnography for field research and framing analysis as an analytical tool. Media ethnography highlights the audiences’ socio-cultural context and recognizes the role of audiences in negotiating and constructing meaning from the media messages to which they are exposed (Bryant & Miron, 2004; Scheufele, 1999; Williams, 2003). Framing researchers argue that media discourse is presented in a “set of interpretive packages” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 3). Framing analysis enabled me to deconstruct these “interpretive packages” embedded in the media texts in order to compare the receiver’s interpretations.

Mass Communication and Audience Research

McQuail (1997) identified three main approaches in audience research: structural, behavioral, and sociocultural. The structural approach was the earliest and focuses on demographics, patterns of media use, and the amount of exposure. The structural approach is essentially advertising and market research.

The behaviorists’ approach, according to McQuail (1997), focuses on media effects and media uses. The early stage of the behaviorists’ approach followed psychological and experimental studies, such as the propaganda model and, in a later stage, the magic bullet theory (see, for example, Payne Fund studies on media and violence (McQuail, 1997). This tradition was also characterized by the direct effects research, which conceptualized media as powerful tools in shaping public opinion and audiences’ behavior. A second phase of this tradition started when the focus shifted from
thinking of media as determinants of behavioral change to thinking of media as one of the factors, not necessarily the primary factor behind behavior changes (Mattelart & Mattelart, 1998; McQuail, 1994, 1997; Wicks, 2001). With the second phase, which conceptualized media effects as limited effects, audience research focused on media uses. The notion of the passive audience that was “impacted” by the media was challenged; the behavioral approach to audience research sought to understand “the origins, nature, and degree of motives for choice of media and media content” (McQuail, 1997, p. 18)

The cultural studies approach highlights the audiences’ socio-cultural context and recognizes the audiences’ role in negotiating, decoding and creating meaning from the media texts (Bryant & Miron, 2004; Hall, 1980; Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; McQuail, 1994; Scheufele, 1999; Williams, 2003). While the behaviorist approach emphasized the impact of media on audiences, cultural studies researchers focus on “the ways on which people interact with media to construct social reality” (Wicks, 2001, p. 23). The cultural studies tradition, argued McQuail (1997), represents the borderland between the humanities and social science. However, cultural studies traditions can be thought of as a divergence from both the classic literary research and media effects model. While both classic literary criticism and the media effects model were concerned with what the text (literature and media content) does to the audience, the cultural studies scholars’ emphasis was on meaning construction through the interaction between audiences and text (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; McQuail, 1997; Wicks, 2001). Another aspect of the cultural analysis approach involved studying media consumption as a part of “everyday life” (Hall, 1980; Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; McQuail, 1997).
Alasuutari (1999) identified three historical moments, or three generations, within the cultural studies scholarship: reception research, audiences’ ethnography, and the constructionist view. Reception research can be traced to Stuart Hall’s encoding/decoding model, which was articulated in Hall’s *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*. Hall’s (1980) model suggested conceptualized communication as a process whereby messages encoded from the sender end and are received and decoded by the receiver. Hall (1980) identified three “ideal” positions from the decoding process: dominant or hegemonic position, the negotiated position and the oppositional position. Within the dominant-hegemonic position, the audience member decodes the message in terms of the encoded meaning. Within the dominant –hegemonic position, Hall distinguished the professional code. The professional code is the code media professionals “assume when encoding a message that has already been signified in a hegemonic manner” (Hall, 1980, p. 136). Professional codes, though they are independent, still work within the dominant-hegemonic position. The second position is the negotiated position. Within the negotiated position, audience members, while acknowledging the legitimacy of the hegemonic meaning in general, contextualize the message and construct their own meaning when it comes to specific and particular events. On the other hand, when an oppositional position is adopted, audience members begin with an assumption that the message is initially misleading. Accordingly audience members, who are oppositional decoders, might understand the literal and connotative meaning but reject this reading. Oppositional decoders, instead, adopt an alternative frame of reference for decoding the message. For example, Hall (1980) provided an
illustration with a debate on wage decrease where audience members operating in oppositional code interpret every mention of the “national interest” as “class interest” (Hall, 1980).

Hall’s contribution to reception research is found in his conclusion that the encoding/decoding model “did involve a shift from a technical to semiotic approach to messages” (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 3). In other words, Hall’s model represents a shift in mass communication and audience research from a behaviorist approach to an interpretative approach. Media texts are no longer thought of as static stimulants that trigger prescribed effects but the effects result from interactions between audiences and texts. However, it is important to point out that Hall did not argue against media effects or dismiss the idea that media texts can have an effect on audience members. Hall rather acknowledged that “before [the] message can have an ‘effect’ (however defined), satisfy a ‘need’ or be put to ‘use’, it must first be appropriated as meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded [by audiences]” (p. 130). Hall’s encoding/decoding model can be considered, according to Alasuutari (1999), the foundation of media studies within the context of the broader cultural studies tradition.

Hall’s encoding/decoding model prompted a number of qualitative empirical studies such as Morley’s (1980) Nationwide Audience. This was soon followed by a number of reception studies; and, consequently, an audience ethnography paradigm emerged (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 4). Nationwide Audience marked a breakthrough in audience research traditions and “forms a major moment in the growing popularity of an ‘ethnographic’ approach on media audiences” (Ang, 1996, p. 35). The audience
ethnography tradition was characterized by a growing interest in identity politics, especially gendered identity. As Alasuutari (1999) pointed out, “feminism scholarship especially has had an important role in breaking new ground and addressing new questions in reception research” (p. 4). Another distinction that characterizes audiences’ ethnography research from the first generation of reception studies is its emphasis on reception from the audience point of view. The audience ethnographic researcher “does not try to explain a reception of a program by probing into an ‘interpretive community’ . . . Instead, one studies the everyday life of a group and relates the use of (a reception of) a program or a medium of it” (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 5). Audience ethnography usually involves in-depth-interviews and participant observations in order to understand reception from members of the audience’s point of view, on one hand, and reception as an everyday life experience, on the other (Ang, 1999; Alasuutari, 1999).

The third generation, the constructionist approach, emerged out of the critique of audience ethnography for placing too much emphasis on interpretative communities to the extent that mass communication research became more about these interpretive communities and less about media (Alasuutari, 1999; Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). As Alasuutari (1999) pointed out, “the third generation brings the media back to media studies” (p. 7). The main objective of the constructionist view is to understand the cultural place of media and media messages in everyday life. The constructionist view attempts to broaden the scope of media studies. Audiences’ ethnographic research, as a methodological approach, can still be carried out, but “the main focus is not restricted to finding about the reception or reading of a program by a particular audience” (p. 6). The
focus in the constructionist approach shifts from studying only the interpretation of the message to a broader perspective within which media are studied not as an isolated text, but, as part of social reality and everyday life. It is worth noting, however, that, as Alasuutari (1999) argued, the constructionist approach is not a definite paradigm or an abandonment of the second generation audience research but, rather, an emergent research that set out to investigate “the role of media in everyday life, both as a topic and as an activity structured by and structuring the discourses within which it is discussed” (p. 6). This approach can entail questions about the meaning and the use of particular programs among particular groups of people, but also includes “questions about the frames within which we conceive the media and their contents as reality and as representations- or distortions- of reality” (Alasuutari, 1999, p. 7).

Using framing analysis, this research situates itself within the constructionist approach as an emerging trend in media studies and audience research. This research addresses the criticism that faced audience ethnography of concentrating on an interpretative community in isolation from the media. By conducting comparative framing analysis, I attempt to bring in both the audience, as interpretive community, and media texts to the research agenda.

From a framing research perspective, Entman (1993) pointed out that “frames have at least four locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver and the culture” (p. 52). Entman (1993) acknowledged that frames are interpretive devices that are fused in the text by the communicator and are interpreted by the receiver. However, this framing process takes place within a specific cultural context.
Entman (1993) called for consideration of not only the text when conducting framing analysis, but also the context. In this research, I attempt to address this issue. The goal is to consider the text (through media framing analysis), the meaning construction, through audience framing analysis and context within which audience frames are constructed.

Methodologically, emphasis on the context as well as the text made qualitative inquiry the most appropriate method to carry out an audience research within the constructionist framework. Qualitative inquiry challenges the notion of audience as a unified aggregate and “unravel[s] the minutiae of difference and variation as they manifest themselves in concrete, everyday instances of media consumption” (Ang, 1996, p. 70). Qualitative methods can be used to study a given phenomenon in its natural context (Patton, 1980; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative methods are also used to understand meaning for the participants (Maxwell, 2005). Since this study seeks to understand audience members’ perceptions, a qualitative method, namely media ethnography, was most appropriate.

**Media Ethnography**

Scholars stressed the significance of identifying suitable methodologies based on the nature of the research problem as well as the researchers’ world view and assumptions (Burrell & Morgan, 1985; Creswell, 2009; Dixon, 1977). This research seeks to understand the ways in which media inform audiences’ perceptions and meaning construction about issues pertaining to conflict and peace-building in Sudan. As noted by Burrell and Morgan (1985), from an anti-positivist epistemological standpoint—a standpoint with which I identify—“the social world is essentially relativistic and can
only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the activities which are to be studied” (p. 5). Qualitative inquiry, namely naturalistic method, is often used to understand the meaning of the social world from the point of view of the social actors (Maxwell, 2005; Schwandt, 2007). Qualitative research can be used to study a given phenomenon in its natural setting (Marshal & Rossman, 1995; Maxwell, 2005; Patton, 1980). As such, qualitative methods were most appropriate to carry out this research. The methodology for this research combined aspects of cultural/reception analysis and media ethnography.

Although using ethnographic methods is relatively new in mass communication studies, it has a long history in other fields, such as anthropology and sociology. Researchers in these fields have a long history of documenting ways of life, customs, and cultural practices of different social groups. Anthropologists traditionally immersed themselves in field research, during which they engaged in a close investigation of people’s daily lives and cultural practices (Lindof & Taylor, 2002; Marcus, 1995).

In the field of mass communication and media studies, and since Morley’s (1980) *The Nationwide Audience*, media ethnography has received more prominence as a metrology that enables the scholar to move beyond textual determinism and “problematize the experience of . . . audience within their natural viewing and living environment” (Lull, 1988, p. 18). As already noted, the constructionist approach to audience research seeks to study the interaction between media texts and audience members and also contextualizes this interactive process. This approach calls for, according to Moores (1990), “[consolidating] our theoretical and metrological advances
by refusing to see the texts, readers and contexts as separable elements” (p. 24). To bring
media texts, audience members and contexts to the research agenda, a “methodological
situationalism” that positions media consumption and meaning construction within its
natural context is essential (Ang, 1996, p. 70). For many communication scholars,
ethnography was the method of choice because it “facilitates the researcher’s ability to
examine most fully the way media are read in conjunction with situational and
interactional relations” (Murphy, 1999, p. 481).

Essentially, ethnography entails studying a given social phenomenon “from the
native’s point of view” (Moores, 1993, p. 3). Therefore, media ethnography research is
usually carried out in the form of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observations
(Alasuutari, 1999; Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Lull, 1988; McQuail, 1997; Moores,
1993). The purpose of the in-depth ethnographic interviews, explained Kvale (1996), “is
to understand themes of the lived daily world form the subject’s own perspective” (p. 27).
Interviewing is conceptualized as a conversation with a purpose (Lindof & Taylor, 2002).
The purpose of qualitative interviewing is to gain a better and deeper understanding of
the interviewee’s thoughts, opinions, experiences, perspectives, and conceptualization
about the social phenomena under study; “we interview people to find out from them
those things we cannot directly observe” (Patton, 2002, p. 340). In the context of this
research, interviews, as a method, has a special significance since the research deals with
perceptions, meaning construction, and interpretation, areas that can hardly be identified
by observation alone. Patton (1980) categorized interviews into three general categories:
the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach, and the
standardized open-ended interview. The informal conversational interview, also known as the ethnographic interview, normally takes place while the researcher is in the field and relies on the natural flow of conversation (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Patton, 1980, 2002). The interview guide approach “involves outlining a set of issues that are to be explored” during the course of the interview (Patton, 2002, p. 342). However, the order and the wording of questions are very flexible and depend on the flow of the conversation. The open ended interview comprises a set of predetermined topics to be explored with the participant. This research used a mix of ethnographic interviews and general interview guide approach. The rationale behind this decision was to utilize the strengths of both approaches. Ethnographic informal conversational interview enabled me, as stated by Murphy (1999), “to deliver the kind of interpretive depth and introspection that I was really looking for” (p. 492). Using an interview guide helped me to keep my conversation focused, but without losing the flexibility of engaging in conversation.

Qualitative research is characterized by “its attention to the historical and situational context in which the objects of interest is embedded” (Lindlof, 1987, p. 8). To gain a richer understanding of the mechanisms of meaning construction, it is imperative to locate interviews “in relation to broader frameworks of interpretation and to structures of power and inequality” (Moores, 1993, p. 5). Participant observation is used in qualitative research to contextualize the data collected during field research. The participant observation method is also used to reveal the many-sided context of the research setting and to establish an “appropriate relationship with a human association in
its natural setting” (Lofland, Lofland, Snow, & Anderson, 2006, p. 17). As explained by Lofland et al. (2006), participant observation involves “the interweaving of looking and listening” as well as intensive interviewing (p. 18). Participant observation analysis was used in this research to collect rich data as well as to reveal unspoken realities.

Before the Field: Research Journey

As I started writing the fieldwork section, I realized that I needed to not only reflect on what my participants told me in the interviews, but also on my intellectual journey. This journey did not start in 2008, the year I started putting my research proposal together. It was also a non-linear journey. Thus, I cannot pinpoint a definite starting point or moment. Like a river flowing in one general direction in its bed, so was my research journey. Yet upon close examination, it was also flowing sideways, in circles and even backwards. There were points at which I had to stop, reflect, and many times change direction.

As noted in the first chapter, this dissertation is part of a broader project that seeks to understand the role of social institutions in peace-building and conflict transformation in Sudan. I started this intellectual journey during my master’s thesis entitled “A Nation in Turmoil: Is Education to Blame? An Analysis of Sudan’s Basic Education Curriculum.” Through this research, I concluded that schools, as a social institution, have contributed to the polarization witnessed in Sudanese society in recent years. When I started my doctoral program in the fall of 2006, I wanted to take my master’s research to another level. I wanted to explore matters of mass media, peace, conflict and culture in Sudan. However, when I look back on my journey, I see myself through Guthrie’s (2007)
analogy, as that medieval artisan who undergoes an apprenticeship and training under the supervision of the master and has to produce that final masterpiece to be accepted into the guild. As that medieval artisan, I started collecting my tools, techniques, and materials in order to create a masterpiece, the dissertation.

The first tool in my basket was language training. Early in my graduate studies, I came to the realization that any research on Sudan should always factor in the large group of Sudanese living as refugees in East Africa. Over the years, Kenya has played host to thousands of South Sudanese refugees who fled Sudan during the civil war which started in 1983. Given the civil war length, a whole generation has grown up in the refugee camps, and some have never seen Sudan. Indeed, many of these Sudanese have come to consider Kenya their second home. Because almost all of these refugees, some of whom have spent all their lives in refugee camps, have learned Swahili, I decided to learn Swahili. Swahili, the lingua franca, in Kenya borrows heavily from the Bantu languages of Eastern and Southern Africa with a considerable part of its vocabulary coming from Arabic. Swahili, it might be said, brings together the Arab North Africa and the most of Sub-Saharan Africa where Bantu languages are spoken. The African Union has also adopted Swahili as one of its official languages. The Swahili language turned out to be not only a communication tool during my research, but a significant factor in the politics of my identity negotiations. Many South Sudanese were forced to learn Arabic in Sudan’s centralized national educational system. For many South Sudanese, Arabic is the language of the oppressor.
Language training also indirectly opened the door for me to do formative research for one of my case studies, SRS. I came across SRS in 2005. In the course of one interview as I carried out my thesis research, the conversation touched on the issue of language and hegemony rather frequently. My interviewee told me about SRS and their use of Sudanese local languages. I started listening to SRS web-streaming. Arabic was the dominant language in mainstream Sudanese electronic media, and English was not widely used, let alone specific dialects from South Sudan. I was amazed by the wide range of languages SRS used for its programming.

In summer 2007, I travelled to Kenya under the Yale Swahili summer program. I spent eight weeks in Mombasa city, Kenya’s cradle of Swahili and augmented my Swahili speaking skills. During the same period, I also visited SRS. I started establishing a rapport with SRS employees in the fall of 2006, when I started my doctoral program. By this time, I knew my topic would be media’s role in peace-building. SRS, “radio for peace and democracy,” as its motto stated, seemed to be an interesting research topic. Like those medieval artisans who “pursue the creative blending of materials, tools, techniques, design, form, and function, often to enable them to realize the vision which inspired them” (Guthrie, 2007, p. 2), I set out to explore what specific research question, research design, and tools would enable me to study the role of media in peace-building in Sudan and what role SRS plays in that pursuit. Through email, I established frequent communication with SRS’s Chief of Party, then Jeremy Groce, from the fall of 2006 through the summer of 2007. These conversations helped to clarify some of the issues
around how I went about doing research in SRS. It also opened the door to do informative research in the summer of 2007.

After the end of my Swahili program in Mombasa, I stayed three weeks in Nairobi, during which I explored the data availability and accessibility in SRS. I established that SRS had a complete digital archive of all its newscasts since its launching in 2003. My informative research helped me to gain access to SRS facilities, staff, and archives. I had conversations with some of the SRS staff, toured the radio facilities, and discussed possible research designs and specific aspects of inquiry. However, the most important aspect of my informative research in SRS was the realization that SRS philosophy and organizational culture is very different from SNR, the government national radio service. SRS branded itself explicitly as a radio for peace and democracy. According to SRS’s staff, SRS tried to maintain its independence and objectivity in a politically volatile and polarized environment in Sudan. SRS’s commitment to the appreciation of Sudan’s diversity was evident by the wide range of local languages used in their programming. On the other hand, SNR always branded itself as a national radio but was dominated by the government’s news, views, and Northern languages. SRS is a donor-funded project (USAID funded), and SNR is government-owned and controlled. It was during that period the idea of conducting a comparative analysis started to form in my mind. I also tried to establish contacts with members of the Sudanese community in Nairobi. It was a long winding journey of trial and error as I tried blending the different pieces together for the ultimate masterpiece.
Once I started thinking of the comparative study of SRS and SNR, I began establishing rapport with SNR. During that same summer of 2007, I started contacting Ayman, an SNR official. My friend, a freelance journalist, through an exchange of phone calls and emails, helped me correspond with Ayman. However, I was informed that gaining an official access letter was very difficult. It is important to explain the political and policy environment in Sudan, especially regarding the media in order to contextualize the fieldwork experience. In Sudan, the Minister for Information appoints the board members of the media regulatory body – The Sudan Radio and Television Corporation (SRTC). Although private FM radio stations began to appear, SRTC is in charge of issuing licenses for transmission/broadcasting and the allocation of frequencies. SNR remains the major radio station for news and other political messages, especially since “The programming of all… [other] FM stations is based on entertainment rather than news or current affairs” (International Media Support (IMS), 2007, p. 24). With such tight control over the media sector by the government, gaining access to the radio was a challenge for me. The two people I contacted, Ayman and another official, although they were in senior positions, refused to give me any official document to guarantee me access to the radio station. However, they assured me that I would be able to collect my data once I was ready. For both SNR officials, being non-committal was a way of not putting themselves on the spot should anyone question my motives for collecting data from a government institution, as this might jeopardize their position with the station. Coming from Sudan, and knowing that a lot of business can be conducted through personal
contacts and networks, I remained hopeful that I would be able to collect the data I
needed.

I returned to the U.S. from Kenya in the fall of 2007. I spent the time between
September 2007 and October 2008 (the start of my fieldwork) completing my coursework
and necessary requirements before embarking on the fieldwork. I spent most of the
2007/2008 academic year developing my proposal. I started my research journey in 2006
with a plan to conduct an impact assessment of SRS. By 2008, my research proposal had
developed into a comparative framing analysis of media frames and audience frames with
SRS and SNR, as case studies. Securing a generous scholarship from the Fulbright-Hays
Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) was a huge boost toward the fulfillment
of my field research. I set out to start my fieldwork in the fall of 2009. Prior to my
departure, I started recording SNR news from their web site. In October 2009, I
conducted a pilot framing analysis and made necessary adjustments to my coding sheet,
which I will discuss in detail in the data analysis section of this chapter.

Overview of Data Collection

I collected a composite sample of SNR of six days per month for the period
October 2008- February 2009, resulting in a total of a 30-day sample. As a part of this
process, I recorded newscasts from the radio directly and then transcribed them. For SRS,
I collected a composite sample of six days per month for the period of March-July 2009,
resulting in a total of 30-day sample. To gather data, I listened to newscasts from the SRS
archives compact discs in the radio station and transcribed them.
SNR broadcasts news in Arabic only. On the other hand, SRS broadcasts news in Arabic, English, simple (Juba) Arabic, Dinka, Zande, Moru, Nuer, Bari, Shilluk, and Toposa. News is aired in Arabic and English daily, and once a week in the other local languages. Arabic and English often aired versions of the same stories translated from one language to the other. Local language newscasts were a compilation of important national news and local interest stories. For instance, in Dinka language newscasts, important national news and news that editors considered to be of special importance to the Dinka community was translated to Dinka language and then aired once a week. Thus, Arabic and English news were SRS’s most comprehensive news programs. I decided to select the English version so that I did not have to deal with translation again when reporting on findings.

I started recording and transcribing radionews two months prior to starting interviews at each site, as indicated (see Figure 8 and Figure 9). This period enabled me to familiarize myself with prominent issues being reported in the news before starting the interviews. Once I started the interviews, I continued radio messages collection concurrently. This helped me analyze the ways recently broadcasted media messages informed the participants’ perceptions. A total of 34 semi-structured interviews were conducted in Sudan, four with SNR staff. A total number of 38 interviews were conducted in Kenya, five with SRS staff. The objective in each case was to explore the perspectives of the two parties (audience and news editors). The following section provides a detailed description of the fieldwork scene and the activities I conducted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio messages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 8. Time Frame of Research Activities in Sudan.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio messages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 9. Time Frame of Research Activities in Kenya.*
Fieldwork

Ethnographic data is always collected in situ or “in place” (Ortiz, 2003) and requires sustained interactions and sufficient time to establish rapport\(^\text{16}\) in order for the researcher to understand the participants, their worldviews and the influences that underpin them. This understanding is crucial in enabling the researcher to analyze data collected from a more informed and emic standpoint that is responsive and sensitive to the realities of the research participants. I spent five months in Sudan and Kenya; during this period, I established relationships with the research participants and was able to develop a richer understanding of the social contexts in which they lived. The following section details the fieldwork in Sudan and Kenya respectively.

*Field Research in Sudan*

*Field Research in Sudan National Radio (Radio Omdurman).*

I arrived in Sudan in November 2009. Once there, I went to the radio station to meet with Ayman, one of my earlier contacts. From the beginning, I realized that I had to go through a lot of screening to gain access to the materials I needed. SNR is located in the Sudan Radio and Television Corporation (SRTC) building. The building also hosts the Sudan National Television. The building seemed like a castle. A passerby would have the impression that whatever was inside of the building needed to be protected from outsiders. The building was huge with two guard gate entrances (see Figure 10). An old military tank lies outside, lending an intimidating feel to the imposing building. I had to

\(^{16}\) I use the term participants and not informants because I think of “research” participants as stakeholders of the research and not just people who will provide me with information.
pass through daunting security officers every time I went into the building. I could not go
past the security officers without having my name sent in advance as a visitor and only
then did someone from inside the station come to escort me into the building.

During my first visit to SNR, I found out that I needed to have a research permit
to start accessing the archives. It took me three weeks to secure that research permit. I
wrote a cover letter explaining my needs and research objectives. One of SNR’s
employees told me frankly that being a graduate student in the United States might delay
my research permit due to the hostile political relations between Sudan and the United
States. After three weeks of daily telephone calls as well as going in person four times, I
finally received my research permit from SNR’s general manager. It turned out that the
research permit would not spare me from experiencing the suspicious looks of security
officers and their ignominious security screenings, as I still had to have my name sent to
the security/reception office for the rest of my visits. With the research permit in hand,
however, I was ready to start my formal collection of archived radio messages. During
the period when I pursued a research permit, I started having informal conversations with
the news writers and editors. In every visit, I observed the working routines and
interactions among the SNR news department staff.
Figure 10. Sudan Radio and Television Corporation Main Entrance Guard Gate.

Source: http://www.sudanradio.info
After securing the research permit, I started the quest for accessing the archives. For a whole week, I was referred from one office to the other. Soon, I realized that SNR no longer kept news archives. I found out that SNR broadcasts live news and the written transcripts were updated every two weeks. SNR kept abridged online versions of its transcripts on its website. These transcripts, though not accurate as archival materials, helped me to understand the evolution of SNR’s peace and conflict coverage over time, which was the main purpose of conducting archival research. In spite of the disappointment of the missing archives, the research permit helped me to gain access to the SNR facilities, observe the working routines, and more importantly, conduct interviews with news writers and editors.

My contact, Ayman, soon introduced me to the news department staff. I explained my research and solicited participation in interviews. Although many of the staff initially showed interest and even enthusiasm to participate in the research, working schedules and other personal matters hindered the participation of some. I started by trying to set up appointments for interviews. It turned out this procedure was not useful, as people normally gave me their availability in the radio station as their availability for interviews. More than once, I came ready for an interview only to find out that someone had work to do, or an event to cover, and was not available for our meeting. After four failed appointments, I decided to come to the radio station anyhow, and interview whoever was available. I tried to target senior staff members because they were more likely to have more insights into the framing process. Over the period of November 2008- March 2009, I conducted four semi-structured and two informal interviews with SNR news department
staff. Two members of staff refused to conduct a recorded interview but agreed to answer my questions. Accordingly, I had one conversation session with one of them and three conversation sessions with the other. I did not record any of these four sessions, but I kept a journal of the topics we discussed and their answers. All interviews were conducted in SNR facilities.

Intercultural communication scholarship refers to the difference in time concept between Western societies and the non-Western societies (Dahl, 2004; Dixon, 1977). For instance, Edward T. Hall identified two types of time orientations: polychronic versus monochronic time. The monochronic time concept is schedule oriented, while the polychronic is personal relations oriented. In the monochronic time orientation, the time is inflexible, the schedule determines tasks to be handled, and tasks are handled one at a time. On the other hand, in the polychronic orientation, the time for appointments is flexible and schedules are subordinate to personal relations. The polychronic orientation is also characterized by multitasking (cited in Dahl, 2004). The monochronic orientation follows the notion of “one thing at a time,” while the polychronic concept focuses on multiple tasks being handled at one time; and thus, time is subordinate to interpersonal relations. These different orientations can be understood in the context of Ohio University, where I spent six years, and Sudan, where I was conducting my field research. When conducting the interviews in SNR, I realized my time orientation had become monochronic and schedule oriented. I always insisted on having fixed appointments, and was disappointed and irritated to always receive answers such as “just come and will figure something out,” or “what about Monday. Come on Monday and if I
have time we can talk.” In one incident, I was trying to make an appointment with Amar for more than a week; twice he did not show up and one time I called to confirm and he cancelled. After three failed appointments, I walked into his office to schedule a new appointment, and he asked me if I “have time now to talk.” As it turned out, it was one of the most informative interviews. It was also a learning experience for me. I realized that I needed to let go of my schedule and be more flexible to accommodate my participants. I always thought that being a native to Sudan gave me cultural understanding, but I realized that having a native knowledge of a culture does not mean one does not have new things to learn about said culture.

Field Research in Khartoum State.

Khartoum State was my base for the field research in Sudan. Metropolitan Khartoum is the capital of Sudan and consists of three major cities: Khartoum, Omdurman, and Bahri. Khartoum stands on the confluence of the two Niles – White and the Blue – where they meet to form the Greater Nile. Omdurman lies west of the greater Nile, while Bahri occupies the east side of the Greater Nile (see map). According to the official 2008 census, Khartoum’s population is 5,274,321, though other sources estimate that Khartoum’s population is around 8 million people. I selected Khartoum as a field study site because its more ethnically diverse than the majority of Sudanese cities. According to Country of Origin Information Centre (Landinfo) in the Norwegian Immigration and Administration, 1.2 and 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), who migrated mainly from the western and southern regions of Sudan, lived in Khartoum in 2008 (Country of Origin Information Centre, 2008). I was no stranger to Khartoum. I
grew up there; and my extended family still lived in Khartoum at the time of my fieldwork. I had the option to stay in Omdurman or Khartoum, but I chose to stay in Omdurman because of its residents are middle to low class families and social life in Omdurman is more communal.

Following my arrival in November 2008, I started familiarizing myself with radio listening patterns in Khartoum17. My key observation was that television, especially satellite television, was taking over in middle class areas and was popular among the youth. During my informal interviews, I found out that it was more likely that radio would be used as a source of information when there was no access to television. For instance, most people in Khartoum listened to radio either while using public transportation or while driving in private vehicles. Women, in particular, seemed to listen to the radio while performing household chores. With these preliminary observations, I decided to conduct my interviews in low-income areas. I zeroed in on low-income areas because of my interest in interviewing those who trace their roots to war affected areas, namely South Sudan, Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and Darfur. These low income groups are mainly comprised of persons of humble educational backgrounds and persons displaced from their traditional homelands because of war. I presumed the conflict that has characterized Sudan over the years, and peripheral regions for that matter, influenced audiences’ (relative to their position in the conflict) perception and interpretation of media messages.

17 From now on I will use Khartoum to mean metropolitan Khartoum.
Audience ethnographic research attempts to understand the meanings participants construct from media consumption in relation to the role of media in the broader context of social reality. This involves understanding not only patterns of media consumption and the production of meaning but also the day-to-day social settings that influence and inform these constructions of meanings (Alasuutari, 1999; Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Moores, 1993). To gain a better understanding of the day-to-day life experiences of my potential participants, I utilized my social networks and began engaging in informal conversations with different people to understand the role of radio in their daily lives from a broader context. For instance, I frequently visited my aunt who, at the time, lives in albank alagari, a low-income area in the outskirts of Omdurman. My aunt is a homemaker, and she has four daughters and a niece who lived with her. My aunt and her daughters often organized “coffee meetings.” Female neighbors would gather in one household around noon on selected days, and each contributed ingredients, such as sugar, coffee beans, and charcoal. These meetings characterized the communal life of the neighborhood. The meetings were rich sites for me to engage in unstructured interviews about radio broadcasts and how these women interpreted the stories. From that neighborhood, I identified my first participants. Through the snowballing method, I recruited other interviewees. I conducted my first formal interview on December 2008 and last interview in March 2009. I conducted all the interviews in household settings. Over the same period, I also travelled to the Kadugli in Nuba mountain areas and Demazin in the Blue Nile State.
Field Research in Kadugli, Nuba Mountains.

On January 2009, an unexpected window of opportunity came my way. I met a former classmate, who learned about my arrival in Sudan and invited me over for coffee. During our informal conversation, I found out that he was working on an assignment with the South Kordofan Ministry of Rural Development. I shared with him that I was in Sudan conducting field research as part of my doctoral program. We discussed the ways audience members’ perceptions in rural areas, especially war-affected areas, might be different from listeners’ perceptions in Khartoum. To take the discussion further, I asked about possibilities to visit Kadugli in Nuba Mountains, where he was based at the time. After a discussion with my advisor, we decided to pursue every possible opportunity. Because my family traces its roots back to the Blue Nile and still part of my extended family resides there, I assumed it would not be difficult to access communities there too. Therefore, I thought including Blue Nile, Nuba Mountains and Abyei would add to my findings. As I explained in Chapter Two, the three areas were administered by special protocols under the CPA. Blue Nile and South Kordofan lie on the North-South borderline. The two states, especially the southern parts that border South Sudan, had been war zones during the civil war. Both states fall under what is referred to, by SPLM/A supporters, as “liberated areas,” which are areas that were under SPLM/A control during the war. Abyei is a contested area between the North and the South and it
had been a home for deadly conflicts, even after the signing of the CPA. For these reasons, I decided to include these three areas in my field study.\textsuperscript{18}

The Nuba Mountains area is a part of the Southern Kordofan State, of which Kadugli is the administrative capital. The state’s population can be divided culturally into two major groups: the Arabized (mainly Misseriya and Hawazma) and the Nuba (non-Arabized group). The years of war divided the state’s population because:

In the early 1990s, the Nuba took up arms and joined the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) to resist marginalization. Simultaneously, successive Khartoum governments co-opted the Misseriya and other Arab tribes, to maintain a buffer zone intended to protect Northern Sudan and the oil fields adjacent to their homelands from the rebellion and to fight proxy wars against their African neighbors. A pan-Arabist and Islamist ideology was used to mobilize support and promote divisions between Nuba and Arab tribes.

(International Crisis Group, 2008, p. 1)

In addition, the area also suffers from natural resources-based interethnic violence. Different ethnic groups often fight over grazing fields.

After a grueling eleven-hour trip, eight on a bus to Dilinj, followed by a three-hour trip on an unpaved road, I arrived at Kadugli around midnight on January 12, 2009. The South Kordofan Ministry of Rural Development planned my visit to coincide with a workshop organized by the Ministry on issues of development and inter-tribal conflicts.

\textsuperscript{18} Plans to visit Abyei never materialized due to security reasons.
The workshop targeted decision makers from the Nuba Mountains and the Southern Kordofan state. The attendees were legislators, executive directors (officers), and umara (princes) of civil administration. The workshop provided me the opportunity to interview people in positions of responsibility from all over the state, not only in Kadugli. The workshop lasted for three days.

My friend picked me up on arrival and I spent the rest of my days in Kadugli staying in a World Health Organization guesthouse. I found out that the facilitators of the workshop booked the same guesthouse, and they already knew about my research and my arrival. Moreover, they asked me to attend the workshop in order to establish relationships with the attendees before conducting interviews. The next morning, I started walking around the house to explore the area. Kadugli is a small town of sandy soils. The most noticeable thing in the town is the heavy presence of the United Nations and international aid organizations’ vehicles. The heavy presence of the UN was a mark of the post-conflict environment that characterized the area.

The workshop started at 9 a.m. with around 40 participants. The workshop discussed the issues of conflict, among other development issues. Participants pointed out issues of conflict, elaborating on the poor communication among ethnic groups and tribes. The workshop lasted the whole day with two one-hour breaks for lunch and dinner in between. During these breaks, I had informal chats with many of the participants (see Figure 11). Most of the participants were men with only three women among them. The second day of the workshop, I only attended the second and third sessions. I spent the morning with the ministry employees. I wanted to learn more about the work they are
doing and the challenges the area was facing. I found out that the area is still highly polarized along ethnic and political lines, an assumption later confirmed during the interviews. As mentioned earlier, there was a divide between the Nuba, who historically supported the SPLM/A, and the Arabs, who were supporters of the NCP. Before the CPA was signed, the Kordofan area was divided into three states: West Kordofan, South Kordofan, and North Kordofan. There were also parts of the Nuba Mountains that were controlled by the SPLM/A. The CPA stipulated that West Kordofan had to be dissolved into South and North Kordofan. However, according to a report by International Crisis Group in 2008, “due primarily to mutual mistrust between and lack of commitment within the NCP and SPLM, however, this administrative integration has only begun to materialize more than halfway into the agreement’s six-year transition period” (p. 2). The politics of partisanship and the lack of trust between the NCP and SPLM/A heavily influenced the atmosphere in the area. People were characterized as either supporters of NCP or SPLM/A. In the conversations, it was not uncommon to hear titles like “so and so, the SPLM guy.” The second day morning chats helped me to tap into the local information and gain a better understanding of the sociopolitical and economic environment in Kadugli.

The second session of the second day, one of the workshop facilitators provided me the opportunity to introduce myself to the participants, give a brief presentation about my research, and to informally invite potential participants to take part in my research. I introduced myself and started my presentation with Johan Galtung’s violence triangle concept. I wanted to situate my research in a context that was understandable to non-
scholars. I planned for ten minutes presentation but, to my surprise, the research topic and the violence triangle concept spurred a lengthy discussion about issues of structural and cultural injustices. Many participants shared stories of ethnic prejudices and marginalization of their communities. Interestingly, since the workshop participants came from different communities, the violence triangle concept provoked a discussion about issues pertaining to conflicts between their respective communities. Most of the participants showed interest in sharing their insights with me regarding the role of radio in peace-building and conflict transformation in Sudan. Another fascinating observation was that most participants adapted the violence triangle model to real issues facing their communities. After the second session, when I gave my presentation, the workshop participants were divided into groups and were assigned problem solving exercises on issues affecting their communities. Five out of seven groups adapted the violence triangle and came up with a modified triangle to address issues of conflict and development in their communities. This was one of the most satisfying moments during my fieldwork. I have always struggled with the notion of knowledge mining, where researchers enter communities, collect data and leave. I felt I had contributed in a small way to these communities, especially given that the workshop attendants came from all over the South Kordofan state.

After the second session of the second day and during the dinner break I had many informal conversations with the workshop participants. I had also received invites from some to visit their communities in order to have firsthand experience and a better understanding of the issues presented during the workshop. However, the eruption of
violent clashes in the eastern part of South Kordofan state within a week of this conversation made it impossible for me to go there. I started interviews after the final session of the second day and continued during the third and last day of the workshop. The second day of the workshop, I interviewed Hassan and Rashsad. Although many expressed interest in participating, I could only interview two people because of time constraints. I decided that in-depth interviews need time, and if I was concerned with quantity, I might compromise the quality of the interviews. I conducted four interviews over the last two days of the workshop.

As I indicated earlier, during the three days of the workshop, I had informal conversations with staff members from the Ministry of Rural Development. After the end of the workshop, I continued these conversations and expanded it behind the Ministry’s walls in order to recruit potential participants. After a few days, I identified key participants and started my interviews. My trip to Kadugli lasted for 12 days, during which I conducted ten interviews. In addition to SNR listeners, I had a chance to visit the Kadugli regional radio and interview the manager.

I returned to Khartoum and soon I was eastbound, this time to Blue Nile State.
Figure 11. South Kordofan Ministry of Rural Development, During a Coffee Break with Workshop Facilitators and Participants.
Field Research in Blue Nile State.

I boarded the eight o’clock bus from Khartoum on the morning of February 16, heading to Demazin in Blue Nile state. Demazin occupies the west side of the Blue Nile, while Rosairis lies on the east side. As noted earlier, Blue Nile state was home to my family and part of my extended family lived there during my fieldwork. I was based in Rosairis for the duration of my fieldwork in Blue Nile. In addition to my extended family, before departure to Blue Nile I had contacted the Community Development Fund (CDF) in Rosairis. CDF is a Multi-Donor Trust Fund funded, World Bank (WB) administrated project. The CDF is a part of a national program that targets war-affected areas, especially the three areas that the CPA stipulated as transitional areas: Blue Nile, Nuba Mountains, and Abyei. The project aims at developing community driven social and economic infrastructure as “a means to facilitate conflict resolution and ensure peace dividends to the war-affected populations” (World Bank, 2005, p. 2). The trip from Khartoum to Demazin took around eight hours. On arrival, I waited for half an hour for my cousin who was supposed to pick me up at the bus station. I dragged my suitcase and headed to a small coffee place (see Figure 12). As the coffee-lady started preparing my coffee, I began exploring my surroundings. The coffee shop was a small shelter with scattered small traditional Sudanese seats for customers. A small stove and table stood in front of the coffee-lady. Behind her was a small table with a radio on it. The radio was broadcasting some songs. I asked her if she listens to radio regularly and her answer was “it keeps me busy and entertains my customers.” As the conversation went on, I realized how important radio was in the lives of rural dwellers whose entertainment options are
limited. Soon thereafter, my cousin, with whom I stayed for the duration of my fieldwork, appeared and we bid the coffee-lady goodbye.

I woke up the following morning to a familiar voice of a well-known Sudanese radio anchor reading the news. It was my cousin’s father-in-law listening to the morning news before going to work. The radio stayed on, even after employees and students of my host household left for work and schools (see Figure 13). Soon after they left, a group of women from the neighborhood arrived for a morning round of tea – a socializing practice among Sudanese homemakers. It was a daily routine: after men and students leave, women would gather for a morning tea and chat before they start their daily household routines. Like the Omdurman coffee meetings of the womenfolk I mentioned earlier, these morning gatherings were rich occasions for conversations for me during my stay in Blue Nile.
Figure 12. Coffee place-Demazin Bus Station.

Figure 13. Morning Tea in Blue Nile State.

Notice the radio on the kitchen wall
I spent the first three days familiarizing myself with the town, and reestablishing rapport with the CDF and my social networks. Since Blue Nile was a war-affected area, there were many IDPs who moved into the Demazin area during the war. These IDPs normally gather in small settlements on the outskirts. CDF worked with these communities to meet their basic needs and to provide them with infrastructure, such as water supplies, schools, and health facilities. In coordination with the CDF, and my relatives, I identified four communities to visit and from which to recruit participants: Tulungush, Mapan, al-Gerif and al-Disa, in addition to Rosairis. I selected these communities for different reasons. The first was accessibility. I gained access to these communities either through CDF or through one of my relatives. Secondly, I was striving to gain access to a diverse population in terms of ethnicity and political affiliation. Tulungush and Mapan were IDP communities, with a predominantly African population. Al-Gerif and al-Disa were indigenous to the area and predominantly Aarabized groups.

I started with the Mapan community (see Figure 14 and Figure 15). I was introduced to the Mapan community through my uncle who was a teacher and a social justice activist. Mapans are originally from Upper Nile state in South Sudan. They migrated from upper Nile in 1986, as the war intensified in their area and settled in the eastern side of Rosairis. They are predominantly Christians, thus, according to them, they face discrimination in terms of social and economic services. During my visit, they shared with me that their church and homes were once destroyed by the neighboring Muslim community of Falata. My uncle was an advocate for the Mapans and other minority groups in the area. During my visit, I was introduced to Gabriel who seemed to
be a community leader, and more importantly, spoke Arabic and English. Gabriel took us
on a tour of the settlement. The settlement consisted of scattered huts with no fences or
hedges around them. People sat outside their huts either on the ground or on small beds
(\textit{angareehs}). There was a water pump in the middle of the compound and it seemed like
this was the gathering point for the women and children. It was apparent that everybody
knew Gabriel and he was well-respected. I spent the first day listening to Gabriel and
others as we visited different households. I returned to the community the next day to
conduct interviews. Although there were few radios in the settlement, I found out that
few Mapans spoke Arabic or any other language other than their native Mapan language.
Since SNR broadcasts mainly in Arabic, the radio for this community was useful only
when they listen to music, but not for news. Based on this limitation, I decided to rule
out the Mapan community from the research.

My next research site was al-Gerif. Al-Gerif is a small village north of Rosairis\textsuperscript{19}. I
gained access through CDF and my cousin who was born and spent part of her life
there. I first visited al-Gerif with my cousin and an employee from CDF. It was a Friday
and we went there around noon, just before the start of the Friday prayer. The CDF car
driver dropped off my cousin and me at my cousin’s grandfather house, while all the men
went to the mosque that was a few meters away from the house. My cousin’s grandfather
\textit{Abuy} (father) Sidiq, as people in al-Gerif call him, was an elder in the village, so his

\textsuperscript{19} I could not determine the distance exactly from Rosairis, but I estimated as 70 kilometers
house was a gathering place. After the Friday prayer was over, many men and women gathered in the house for socializing.

I spent that day engaged in conversations and explaining my research. I conducted only one interview with father Sidiq. We were sitting in the yard and we were talking about Sudanese politics when someone suggested that I interview him since he was the village elder. I asked him to separate from the crowd so I could record the interview. To my surprise, his response was that he had nothing to hide. I reluctantly agreed to conduct the interview in that setting. His answers were very short and I soon realized power dynamics were at play. Father Siddiq was an eighty-five year-old man. While he did not turn down my request for an interview, I sensed that, as an elder, he was not comfortable being “questioned” by a young female in front of everybody. I kept the interview short and thanked him but realized that it was not an “in-depth” interview and therefore, I was not going to use it. Later that afternoon, I attended a village annual festival. In the early evening, we boarded the car heading down south to Rosairis. By the end of that day, I had identified potential participants. After this first visit, I returned to al-Gerif twice to conduct interviews.
Figure 14. Meeting with Mapans.

Figure 15. Mapan Women Enjoying Coffee
The third site in the Blue Nile area was Tulungush. Like the Mapan community, Tulungush was a settlement for those who fled from the Kurmuk area during the civil war. Tulungush is three kilometers outside Rosairis. I gained access to Tulungush through the CDF. A CDF officer called the Tulungush community leader to arrange my visit. I visited Tulungush with a CDF officer who introduced me to the community members. I spent one day in Tulungush, during which I conducted three interviews.

The fourth site in Blue Nile area was al-Disa (see Figure 16 and Figure 17). Al-Disa is a small town to the west of Blue Nile and about 35 kilometers north of Demazin. Al-Gerif is a small town to the east of Blue Nile and about 38 kilometers north of Demazin. Al-Disa and al-Gerif occupy opposite sides of the Blue Nile. Residents of the two towns often used locally made boats as a means of transportation between the two towns. I visited al-Disa for the first time when I accompanied a relative on a casual visit to see friends. During that visit, which lasted a day and a night, I observed the site and radio listening patterns. Like Rosairis, radio was an integral part of residents’ lives. In each of the homes I visited there was a radio in a prominent place, like the kitchen or yard\(^{20}\), so all household members could listen. However, unlike Rosairis, al-Disa residents’ major economic activity was vegetable and fruit farming. Many of al-Disa’s male residents spent a considerable amount of time on their farms. During my second visit, I had the chance to spend a day on a farm, where I observed how radio was the most important source of entertainment and news for busy farmers who often spent their

---

\(^{20}\) Due to hot climate in Sudan most Sudanese socialize and sleep in outdoor yards.
days working alone or in small groups in places where there is no electricity. During these two visits, I engaged in unstructured conversations about politics in general, the peace agreement and radio coverage of peace and conflict. I was able to identify potential participants. I returned for a third visit to conduct more interviews.

As noted earlier, I stayed with my cousin in Rosairis. I continued conducting interviews in Rosairis between my visits to other sites. I spent three weeks in Blue Nile, and then I returned to Khartoum State.

*Figure 16. Visiting the Fruit Farms in Al-Disa.*
Figure 17. During an Interview in Al-Disa.
Field Research in Kenya

Field Research on Sudan Radio Service (SRS).

Before flying to Kenya, I had to obtain a research permit from the Kenyan Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. The permit enabled me to conduct research within the country. I flew to Kenya on April 8, 2009. Once I was in Nairobi, I contacted the SRS chief of party to inform him of my arrival and to arrange for the start of my field research. SRS broadcasts over shortwave frequencies, which made it difficult to listen to it off the air in Nairobi, and consequently forced me to change my interview site from Nairobi to Kakuma Refugee Camp as I will explain later in greater detail.

During my first week in Nairobi, I had a meeting with John Newstorm, SRS’ chief of party, who introduced me to Emily in the marketing department; she would also be the person in charge of facilitating my access to the SRS archives. Emily and I set up a meeting time in which Liza, another SRS staff member, joined us. In that initial meeting Emily and Liza explained to me that SRS broadcasts daily newscasts in English and Arabic and weekly newscasts in local languages. As I explained earlier, I decided to transcribe the English news because Arabic and English were more comprehensive. By choosing English, I avoided translation issues when writing my final findings. We also agreed that access to the archives’ compact discs would take place in the station facilities. SRS provided me with an office where I could listen to the archive CDs and transcribe the news. This arrangement provided me the opportunity to interact with the staff and observe the daily working routines in the station. That day, Emily and Liza introduced
me to the SRS staff. The SRS staff was multinational as it is a Kenya based, Educational Development Center administered and USAID-funded Sudanese radio. The majority of the staff were South Sudanese, Kenyan, and American.

I started the radio messages collection in the second week of April 2008. I began with background data for the years of 2005-2008. For this period, I selected one day per month whenever there was no historically significant event. When there was a historically significant event, I transcribed three days of the week when the event took place. For example, the week of signing of the CPA (January 8-15, 2005) I selected every other day from that week and similarly for the week of July 31 – August 5, 2009 in which SRS aired the special coverage of John Garang’s death on July 31, 2005. This data, although not part of my framing analysis, helped me gain better understanding on the SRS’ coverage evolution over time.

SRS staff held a production meeting every day from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. A typical day of my fieldwork at SRS would start at 10 a.m. After the production meeting, I walked to Emily’s desk to hand her the list of the CDs that I needed for the day. I picked up the CDs, went to my assigned office and started transcribing (see Figure 18 for SRS facility and daily routines). For the first three weeks, my relationship with the staff was formal, but soon I started engaging in conversations with many, especially during the lunch breaks. The SRS facility consisted of two buildings, one for the offices and the other for the studios. Most of news gathering and writing took place in an open space hall where the staff had their desks and computers.
After a few weeks, I began engaging in conversations with staff, particularly during the morning hours, after the production meeting, and during the lunch break (which was usually between 1 and 2 p.m.). My relationship with the Sudanese staff developed over time. Many of them started visiting me in my office and we talked about Sudan’s politics. When I started my fieldwork at SRS, I was apprehensive about the politics of identity. As a Northern Sudanese woman, I had experience with how my identity could influence other Sudanese perceptions of me. In SRS, however, I experienced such identity politics with only one staff member. Almost all of Sudanese staff received me very well. As I reflect on that now, I would attribute such a warm reception to two factors. The first was the in-group/out-of-group dynamics. As I mentioned earlier, SRS was an international and multicultural organization. With staff from all over the world, I was perceived as a “Sudanese,” thus an in-group member. The other reason, as many Sudanese staff articulated in our conversations, was the fact that I had “enough interest to take the trouble and come to Kenya and research on SRS” (David, personal communication, May 2009).

After six weeks, I felt that I had developed a comfortable relationship with the staff and I decided to start to engage in semi-structured interviews with some key personnel. In the first meeting with John Newstorm, I received permission to interview some SRS employees. When I was ready, I informed Liza about this and she identified ten names. All expressed their willingness to participate. However, due to time constraints and schedule conflicts I managed to interview only five of the SRS personnel. Interviews took place in my office at the station.
In addition to the interviews, I conducted analysis of some key SRS documents. For example, I had access to the mission statements of SRS programs. The respective program producers formulated these mission statements to outline the program and its goals and objectives. The SRS website also carried a description of its mission and objectives.

*Figure 18. SRS Staff Working on the Newscast of the Day.*

*Field Research in Kakuma Refugee Camp.*

Based on the pre-dissertation research at SRS in 2007, I planned to conduct interviews with SRS listeners in Nairobi. Nairobi was a sanctuary for many Sudanese refugees during the height of the civil war and many have since settled in the city and the
surrounding areas. As of 2009, there were 2,224 registered Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Nairobi (UNHCR, 2010). During my pre-dissertation research, many of SRS Sudanese staff expressed their willingness to help me access the Sudanese community in Nairobi. However, from conversations with SRS Sudanese staff and other Sudanese residents in Nairobi, I came to an important realization: with the growth in the number of FM radio stations in Kenya in the last three years, very few Sudanese still actually listen to SRS, which broadcasts only on shortwave frequencies. I thus adjusted my proposal. The adjustment came out of an interview with George and later was confirmed by Kate. Both George and Kate suggested that I visit the Kakuma Refugee Camp where many refugees listened to SRS on a regular basis. I later confirmed that with Chris, who was a resident of Kakuma himself before joining SRS. Chris told me that, for many refugees, SRS was their only link to Sudan and what goes on there. I started finding out ways of establishing contacts with Sudanese refugees in Kakuma.

According to UNHCR, out of the 21,223 Sudanese refugees in Kenya, 18,409 live in Kakuma as of 2009 (UNHCR, 2010). With the help of Chris, I began contacting Sudanese community leaders in Kakuma. Later, I had a meeting with Ernest Waititu, a former Ohio University student and a Kenyan journalist who had just returned from Kakuma at the time of our meeting. Ernest informed me about the steps that I needed to take in order to get permission from the Kenyan authorities to visit the camp.

In June, I began the process of applying for a permit to visit the camp. I had to submit a cover letter to the Kenyan Department of Refugees Affairs detailing my purpose
of visit, a mini research proposal and my permit to do research in Kenya. Once I secured
the Kakuma visit permit, I contacted the UNHCR office in Nairobi to ask for their help in
facilitating my transportation and accommodation in Kakuma. Communicating with
UNHCR office in Nairobi and sub-office in Kakuma, I was able to secure
accommodation in the UN compound in Kakuma, and a seat in the UNHCR biweekly
flights to Kakuma. Meanwhile, I was maintaining communication with three Sudanese
community leaders in Kakuma.

On June 30, 2009 I boarded a UNHCR flight from Wilson airport, Nairobi at 7:00
a.m. (see Figure 19). There were only four of us on the flight. It was a strange experience
for me to fly on such a small flight where I can see the pilots (the cockpit was not
separated from the passengers area with any barrier). In the two hours flight I went
through waves of mixed feelings: I was apprehensive to be in a refugee camp for the first
time in my life. I had read a lot about Kakuma and life there, but could not really
comprehend what it means to be in a “camp.” I was anxious about how Sudanese
refugees would receive me, how my own identity (or identities) would be perceived, not
only as a Sudanese, but as a Northerner, U. S.-based student, Nubian, female, and/or
another researcher out to collect data from which nothing ever comes back to the
refugees. I wondered to myself about how each one of these identities could play a
significant role, depending on which one the potential participant would choose to apply
on me. At the same time, I had feelings of excitement and adventure. I would have never
thought that I would be able to visit the place where many Sudanese whose lives affected by the ongoing conflict in Sudan were living.

The plane landed in Lokichoggio, a small town about 30 kilometers from the Sudan/ Kenya border and about 95 kilometers north of Kakuma (see Figure 20. Map of Kenya Showing Location of Kakuma and Lokichoggio). The presence of UN and other international development and relief agencies there was very evident. Lokichoggio was originally an airstrip that missionaries used to provide aid to Turkana district residents. As the civil war broke out in Sudan in 1983, international aid organizations started using the airstrip to provide humanitarian assistance to South Sudan. In 1989, Lokichoggio was established as a base for Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), an international collective relief operation to Southern Sudan (Kenya Airports Authority, 2010). In Lokichoggio, a UNHCR representative informed us that a UN car was waiting to take us to Kakuma. As soon as the UN four-wheel drive hit the tarmac road, I noticed the military escort that was following us. “Welcome to the war-torn zone!” I told myself. Later I found out that it is a rule that a military escort should accompany all UN cars in the Turkana due to security concerns in the region. The trip took around an hour. The area between Lokichoggio and Kakuma was a dry desert, with a few scattered shrubs, a few rocks and endless sea of aridness. The mirage in the distance gave a false hope of arriving at some water pond. The drought that hit the region in 2009 was conspicuous. Every now and then, we passed a group of Turkana people in their colorful attire.
After about an hour, I saw the “UNHCR Kakuma” sign (see Figure 21. UNHCR Compound, Kakuma.). I was expecting to see tents as a sign of a refugee camp. Instead, the international aid tankers dominated the scene from the road. I arrived at the UNHCR Kakuma compound around 10:30 a.m. I met with the UNHCR Kakuma sub-office administrative assistant and once I showed her my visit permit from the Kenyan Department of Refugees Affairs, she called someone to take me to my room and show me the cafeteria to take breakfast. She also informed me that I had to undergo a security briefing before I could start my research. After the security briefing I had to meet with the repatriation unit (at the time of the research Sudanese refugees were being repatriated) assistant who would help me in getting access to the Sudanese communities.
Figure 19. UNHCR flight at Wilson Airport, Nairobi.
Figure 20. Map of Kenya Showing Location of Kakuma and Lokichoggio.
Kakuma is located in the semi-arid desert Turkana district in northeastern Kenya. The average daytime temperature is 104 degrees Fahrenheit. The first thing I spotted when entering the compound was a vulture resting on a small dry shrub in the middle of compound. The sight of the vulture in the middle of this deserted area coupled with the high temperature instilled a strange feeling in me—a sense of foreboding. I felt a spirit of “death” and lifelessness in the surroundings (see Figure 22). Later during the security briefing, I was told that the area had always been full of dust storms, poisonous spiders, snakes, and scorpions. Additionally, I was told that inter-clan and cross border cattle rustling amongst the predominantly pastoralist communities in the region is a long-standing custom. This, coupled with the proliferation of small arms following the civil wars and insurgencies in the region, has made the availability and use of light arms for cattle rustling and armed robberies very common. Due to its close proximity with Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia, this border area is particularly vulnerable. (Sub Office Kakuma Operations, 2009, p. 1)

The area witnessed violent clashes between the host community and the refugees. In the security briefing, I was instructed that I could not leave the UN compound after 6 p.m. A barbed wire fence surrounded the compound and security guards were always present everywhere I went throughout the compound. The security briefing, the wire fence, the overwhelming presence of security guards in addition to the military escort from Lokichoggio gave me this strange mixed felling; I was not sure whether to feel secure, insecure or both.
Figure 21. UNHCR Compound, Kakuma.

Figure 22. Dryness in UNHCR Compound, Photo Taken from My Room.
When I was coming to Kakuma, I had many issues with which I felt I was
callenged. I was anxious about tensions that I might encounter in my interviews and
how to navigate the delicate politics of identity in a society that is very polarized like
Sudan. However, the last thing I thought I would encounter was dealing with the politics
of international aid organizations. Before the meeting with the repatriation unit, I
thought the purpose of the meeting was to go over the logistics of my access to the camp.
Indeed, that was one of the meeting agendas. However, I was soon to realize that there
were tensions between the repatriation unit of the UNHCR and Sudanese refugees in the
camp. The meeting started with a statement from the repatriation unit personnel that the
unit wanted me to know the “facts” and what the unit is doing because Sudanese refugees
will bring these issues up in the interviews. I was informed about the “voluntary”
repatriation\(^\text{21}\) operation that the UNHCR was conducting. I was even told that there
would be a daily meeting with a repatriation officer before I go to the camp and I had to
do a debriefing once I returned. I felt that these regulations were obstructive and I
expressed that, but the officer told me it was not a regulation but rather a request so they
could know what the needs of refugees were. I made it clear that protecting my
participants’ confidentiality was a priority to me. We reached an agreement that I would
retain the decision to share what I wanted to share and that there would be no strings

\(^{21}\) While it was ideally voluntary, UNHCR is currently not providing education to Sudanese refugees.
Based on my observations and conversations with refugees, this policy forced the Sudanese refugees to go
back to Sudan, because life in the camp is deliberately made difficult and unbearable.
attached to my accessing the camp. On my first day in Kakuma, I came to the realization that the politics of identity was only one form of politics that I was going to inevitably deal with in the course of my field research.

In 1992, 16,000 Sudanese unaccompanied minors (lost boys and girls), alongside 200 adults who took upon themselves the caretaker role, arrived in Kakuma after crossing over from Sudan on foot. This marked the start of the camp. These Sudanese refugees had initially fled to Ethiopia. After war erupted in Ethiopia they went back to Sudan before being forced to make their way into Kenya through Lokichoggio where they were transferred by Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies to Kakuma. Later in 1992, when the security situation worsened in Ethiopia after the fall of the Mengistu regime, Ethiopian refugees arrived in Kenya and joined the Sudanese in Kakuma (Sub-Office Kakuma Operation, 2009). The Kakuma Refugee camp was divided into four sites: Kakuma I (mostly South Sudanese with few other nationalities), Kakuma II (predominantly Somalis), Kakuma III (mixed nationalities), and Kakuma IV (predominantly Somali Bantu and Sudanese from Darfur). The Sudanese refugees comprised 37% of the camp total population (16,072 as of 06/03/2009) (Sub-Office Kakuma Operation, 2009). The majority of the Southern Sudanese refugees were Dinka, Nuer, and Bari speakers from the Equatorial region of Southern Sudan. In addition to Southern Sudanese, small numbers of Nubians and Darfurians were also present. Kakuma I, where most South Sudanese were settled, was divided into five zones, and each zone was divided into groups. Zones and Groups, in most cases, were ethnically and
linguistically homogeneous. For instance, Equatorians, who are Bari speakers, were settled in zone 1. Likewise, all Nuer (who are Nuer speakers), were settled in Zone 5. Dinka, because they were the largest ethnic group, were settled in Zones 2, 3 and 4.

In the meeting with the repatriation unit, the repatriation unit assistant assigned me four Sudanese refugees as assistants (see Figure 23). These assistants were hired by UNHCR as community workers to mobilize refugees to return to Sudan. I found out that one of the persons with whom I established contact before visiting Kakuma was a community mobilizer and one of the people who would be assisting me in gaining access to the Sudanese communities. The second day I had a meeting with the four community mobilizers: two Dinkas, a Nuer and an Equatorian. We discussed my research, how to gain access to the communities and the recruitment of participants. Each of the workers took up the responsibility of informing their respective ethnic groups and zones. My trip to Kakuma was planned for two weeks; accordingly, we came up with a schedule to cover all zones in these two weeks. However, I decided to start the interviews on the fourth day of my trip. I spent the rest of the second day and the subsequent two days visiting communities and establishing connections with community leaders before engaging in informal interviews. Contacting leaders was important in these highly patriarchal communities, as attempts to bypass them and delving directly into the communities could be interpreted wrongly and could turn counterproductive.

Sudanese refugees’ communities were organized along ethnic lines. As noted earlier, each ethnic group occupied a specific zone. Each group had an administrative
unit/structure that was responsible for dealing with UNHCR and other organizations on behalf of that group. Each group had its own judicial and law enforcement system. These judicial units were an extension of existing traditional structures that the Sudanese refugees brought to the camp from Sudan. However, UNHCR was in charge of training and administering the law enforcement personnel. Administratively, the ethnic group represented the largest unit; the ethnic groups were divided into zones and zones to groups. Each one of these units (zone and group) had a leader. A group, which was the smallest unit, consisted of a number of families.

As I mentioned earlier, I started my field research by conducting informative visits to the different zones for two and a half days. With the help of the four community mobilizers, I held meetings with the administrative unit leader, zones and some of the groups’ leaders. I held these meetings in the respective administrative units’ buildings. During these meetings, I explained my research and the procedures of gaining consent. I also listened to the leaders explain the role of the radio in the community, SRS listenership, and how I should go about recruiting participants for interviews. When I revealed to the Sudanese refugee community that I was not in any way affiliated with the UNHCR, their perception of me changed and cooperation increased. A tense relationship had developed between the Sudanese refugees who were still in the camp and UNHCR because of the repatriation operation. The UNHCR was keen to repatriate all the refugees. I had no idea of these institutional politics until I started holding informal conversations with different Sudanese leaders. Interestingly, the tension between
UNHCR and the Sudanese community, and the fact that I was not affiliated with UNHCR, gained me the trust of the community faster than I could have ever expected. Again, I experienced the in-group/out-of-group politics at play. Many refugees perceived me as a “Sudanese,” not Northern Sudanese, an insider in contrast with UNHCR outsiders. Although, being a Northern Sudanese was in play in many incidents (as I will explain in greater detail later in the final chapter), the politics of repatriation assisted me in gaining acceptance to the Sudanese communities.

I started my interviews on the fourth day of my stay. The community mobilizers, in addition to community leaders, spread the word about my research and solicited participation from the camp residents. Each morning I would meet with a community mobilizer, depending on which zone I was visiting, and s/he would take me to the interviewees’ homes or interview sites (see Figure 24, Figure 25, and Figure 26). I held between three and five interviews daily. Most were in the participants’ homes, although some were held in the administrative units’ offices. Most interviews were conducted in English, although few were conducted in local languages with the mobilizer acting as interpreters. I conducted a total of 33 interviews in the Kakuma Refugee Camp.

After I returned from Kakuma, I continued the radio message collections in SRS until the end of July. I spent the month of August revising my transcripts and conducting more interviews with SRS staff. I also conducted some unstructured interviews over the phone with Kakuma participants just to clarify some of their statements or ask about new information.
Summary of Field Research in Sudan and Kenya.

I spent the period of November 2008 to April 2009 in Sudan. During this period I recorded radio newscasts from SNR and conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with SNR listeners in three sites: Khartoum state, Kadugli, Nuba Mountains, and Blue Nile state. In addition to SNR listeners, I conducted four semi-structured interviews with SNR staff. Additionally, I utilized participatory observation and document analysis methods. Unstructured and informal interviews were integral part of the field research in Sudan as well.

I spent the period from April to August 2009 in Kenya. During this period I listened to and transcribed newscasts from SRS for the period of 2005 to 2008, and March- July 2009. I also conducted five interviews with SRS staff. I travelled to Kakuma Refugee Camp in the Turkana district of northeast Kenya and conducted a total of 33 interviews with Sudanese refugees. I returned to Ohio in September 2009, where I started the data analysis. The next section provides details for the data analysis procedure.
Figure 23. Meeting With Community Mobilizers during Lunch Time in Kakuma.

Figure 24. Conducting Interviews in Kakuma Refugee Camp.
Figure 25. Budabuda (Bicycle) Public Transportation in the Camp.

Figure 26. A Street in Kakuma Refugee Camp.
Data Analysis

This research used framing analysis for data analysis. In this section I explain the operationalization of framing analysis as a tool to identify the frames. Then I explain the procedures of identifying media frames and audience frames.

As I explained earlier, this research positions itself within the constructionist paradigm of framing, a paradigm that conceptualizes media discourse as presented in a “set of interpretive packages” or frames that serve as the central organizing idea of any news story (D’Angelo, 2002; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). In terms of media frames, these organizing ideas or frames can be thought of as themes that “[connect] different semantic elements of a story (e.g., descriptions of an action or an actor, quotes of sources, and background information) into a coherent whole” (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 59).

However, it is important to distinguish between frames and narratives. Narratives are descriptive formats of particular issues, while frames are “broader interpretive definitions of social reality” (Van Gorp, 2009, p. 63). While the framing process involves interaction between media production, content and audience reception, it is important to point out that the way the media frame a certain issue does not always result in “intended” audience perception. Audiences rely on an active interpretive mechanism to create meaning from the information presented to them by mass media. It is equally important to understand that frames are not objective devices but, rather, a subjective perception or “view that one person [or group] has of what is going on” (Goffman, 1974, p. 8). Thus, to identify frames (particularly audience members’ frames), it is imperative to engage in
conversations with audience members to solicit these interpretative devices or lenses through which meaning is constructed. For the purpose of this research, audience ethnographic research methods (in-depth interviews and focus groups discussions) were utilized to capture the frames from the audience members’ end.

Identifying Frames

Tankard (2001) identified three empirical approaches to conducting framing analyses. The “media package approach” is one in which the researcher develops a paragraph that includes the keywords and common language that would help identify the certain frame (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). The second is “framing as multidimensional approach.” In this approach, various elements or dimensions of the story are recognized and included in the framing analysis. An example of this approach is the study of the coverage of abortion news by Swenson (as cited in Tankard, 2001). The third approach is the “list of frames approach” in which the researcher identifies a list of frames and defines each frame by specific words, catchphrases, and images. After compiling the list of frames, coders will be asked to conduct framing analysis and place each story in the list of frames.

For the purpose of this research, I applied the multidimensional approach to conduct framing analysis. The multidimensional approach was more suitable in this research because of its potential to be applied to media frames as well as individual frames. I followed Capella and Jamieson’s (1997) criteria for recognizing and classifying frames. I recognized three criteria that frames should meet to be considered frames: (a)
they have identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics, (b) they are commonly observed in journalistic practice, and (c) they are reliably distinguishable from other frames (p. 47). Regarding media framing analysis, I was looking for three dimensions in each story: master narrative or storyline, language, and frame sponsorship or selection of sources quoted and in quotations. Frame sponsorship was less relevant when applied to audience members’ interviews; as such only master narrative and language were taken note of in analyzing interviews.

Identifying Media Frames.

Thinking of frames as interpretive devices, framing analysis poses a methodological challenge. Any text can have multiple meanings; therefore, different frames can be extracted from the same text (Gamson, 1989; Graber, 1989). Gamson (1989) suggested using the preferred reading in framing analysis in order to solve the methodological dilemma. The preferred reading is the meaning that is intended by the sender and is usually represented in the story line. In journalists’ practices, a story is organized according to an “inverted pyramid” structure. According to this inverted pyramid, the information in the news story is arranged in descending order of importance. The most important point is placed at the beginning of the story in the lead sentence or paragraph. Thus, master narrative or story line can be identified from the lead paragraphs. However modern radio writing often has a more flexible narrative structure. Therefore, I used the news headlines in addition to the story opening to identify the
master narrative. On a few occasions, I used personal judgment to identify the emphasis of the story.

I recorded newscasts from SNR web streaming over the period from August through September 2008. I developed a coding sheet in which I developed a multidimensional interpretative package that included master narrative, language choice, frame sponsorship and type of story (thematic or episodic). After transcribing the stories, I coded them. After a discussion with my advisor in which I expressed concern that I was projecting my personal views on the frames I had identified, we decided to seek other coders and run intercoder reliability. One of the limitations of framing analysis is projection and isolation of text from its context. Projection can be thought of as “reading into or attributing to another person something that is your own characteristic, emotion, value, attitude or such” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 13). Familiarity with the data or phenomena increases the risk of projection. Using additional coders will minimize these limitations. A Sudanese graduate student and my mother recoded the stories and an intercoder reliability of 96% was reached. From this pilot analysis, I revised my coding sheet. For example, in the original coding sheet a note of the tone was taken. However, after the pilot analysis, I realized normally the tone is formal when reading news and the tone category revealed nothing significant about the framing process.

In qualitative frame analysis “categories are not predefined, which allows categories to emerge as the researcher becomes immersed in the data” (Perkins, 2005, p. 67). I transcribed the recorded newscast from the two radio stations under study. I went
through the transcripts and coded the news stories according to the revised multidimensional interpretive package. These dimensions were identified: The story master narrative, language use such as words choices, and frame sponsorship which the number and affiliations of sources quoted, quotes selected, and thematic or episodic tendencies of coverage. Using an inductive or data driven approach to identifying frames, I compiled a list of the emerging categories and again went through the stories and broader categories that were created. I repeated the process until no more broader categories could be identified.

Identifying Audiences’ Frames.

Most of the interviews were tape-recorded. Only four interviews were not tape-recorded due to participants’ preferences. In qualitative interviewing, use of a tape recorder maintains the accuracy of the interviewee’s words. Recording interviews also enables the researcher to focus on the conversation rather than trying to write down the interviewee’s words (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006; Patton, 2002). I hired someone to transcribe them at the site of the interviews. I provided the transcriptionists with a procedural guideline to follow during the process. After receiving the transcripts, I listened to the interviews and went through the transcripts. This procedure helped me not only to correct any discrepancies in the transcripts but also to immerse myself in the data. Transcribing the interviews at the site in which they were conducted (Sudan and Kenya) enabled me to go through the transcripts and do follow-ups whenever needed.
In terms of audiences’ frames, Gamson (1988) suggested that “personal anecdotes that make a point about an issue frequently play the same role in conversation that historical exemplars play in conveying a package in media discourse” (p. 171). In identifying audiences’ frames, I entered the interview transcripts into ATLAS ti, qualitative data software. I used ATLAS ti to initially code and retrieve the interviews. However, as noted by Pope, Ziebland, and Mays (2000), “no [computer] package is capable of perceiving a link between theory and data or defining an appropriate structure for the analysis” (p. 115). The software replaced the process of cutting and pasting described in the literature of qualitative data analysis. I repeated the process of coding to focus the data until a satisfactory number of frames was reached. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) warned against reducing the qualitative data to codable materials and let lose “the form and content of the interpretive activity” (p. 41). To avoid decontextualizing the data, during the analysis phase I referred often to the field notes.

In reporting the findings, I used the participants’ real names, unless they chose otherwise in the consent form. However, I decided to use aliases for professionals from SNR and SRS regardless of their preference as indicated on the consent form. Therefore, all names of SNR and SRS journalists used are pseudonyms.

Interpretive Inquiry, Situated Knowledge and Positionality

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) noted that “qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 10). In qualitative
ethnographic research the researcher functions as “a witness to the lives of others” (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 3). However, the qualitative researcher is not merely a witness, a fieldworker, and observer, but also the writer, and eventually the interpreter, of qualitative data. How a researcher interacts with data is something that largely depends on socialization, environment, and experiences. These factors normally influence the “lenses” the researcher puts on and what they “see” in the data. Qualitative scholars have argued that knowledge is situated in context and experience (Brooten, 2003; Haraway, 1988). Knowledge derives from the political, historical, cultural, and personal norms that shape not only the research subjects but the researcher’s identity as well. I am no exception. I bring to this research, my background: that of an African Arabized woman from Northern Sudan brought up in a middle class family in Omdurman. Prior to my graduate school, I lived all my life in Northern Sudan. I received my post graduate academic training in the United States. All these factors shaped not only my interactions in the field, but also the analysis I provide in the following chapters. Therefore, I want to explain to the readers where I came from and how I ended up conducting this research. In qualitative research this is particularly important, because such research “is by nature a reflective and recursive process” (Anzul, Ely, Friedman, Garner, & Steinmetz, 1991, p. 179).

There is a growing trend in social science and feminist scholarship that leads researchers who grew up in non-Western societies and are being trained in emerging research methods in the West to go back to their own societies to do research. These
researchers often attempt to uncover and/or provide new interpretations for social realities that have been either dominated by Western scholarship or obscured by linguistic and cultural barriers (Narayan, 1993; Ryang, 2005). Yet, as Narayan (1993) articulated, the question remains: how native is a “native” ethnographer? Narayan (1993) criticized the trend of labeling native anthropologists as “insiders regardless of their complex backgrounds” (1993, p. 677). It was true that being Sudanese gave me the advantage of the cultural and linguistic skills that afforded me access to some communities. However, when I embarked on my field research, I realized insider/outsider labels are problematic. I came to the realization that

the loci along which we are aligned with or set apart from those whom we study are multiple and in flux. Factors such as education, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, or sheer duration of contacts may at different times outweigh the cultural identity we associate with insider or outsider status. (Narayan, 1993, p. 671-72)

To address the dilemma of insider/outsider researcher, Steedman (1991) suggested “a stereoscopic account for construction of meaning; one lens is on the individual context of interpretation, the other is on the social context which creates the individual” (p. 55). Such a suggestion allows the readers to understand how the process of interpretation and meaning construction from the part of the researcher has been influenced by the researchers’ socialization, education, and location. The following paragraphs are an attempt to reveal the complexities of the layers of my identity. In doing
so, I am trying to situate the knowledge I derived from my interpretation of the field data within my broader positioning and experience as a researcher.

Coming from Sudan, I cannot deny how the realities of the local social, political, cultural, and religious environment have influenced my journey. Sudan stands out in the 21st century as a country that was embroiled in one of history’s longest civil wars. The war pitted Northern Sudanese who are culturally Arab and mainly Muslim by religion, against Southern ethnic groups who are seen as African and who practice both traditional folk religions and Christianity. Sudan’s conflict is complex and multidimensional. At one level, it was an ethnic conflict, as the civil war was between Arabs, and what might loosely be called the Black population. On another level, it was a religious conflict between Islam on one side and Christianity along with traditional folk religions on the other. Both the racial and religious conflicts combined to form a cultural conflict (Loisa, 2005). The conflict can be generally understood in the context of cultural hegemony, whereby the successive Northerners-dominated governments often made, and continue to make, attempts to identify the country’s identity according to Arabic-Islamic cultural determinants (Deng, 1995; Khalid, 2003; Lesch, 1998). In the end, Sudan is a highly polarized society divided right across its middle. One section of the population feels a sense of belonging, yet another feels excluded. One group is “us”. Another is “them”. To each group whether the “us” or “them” group, the alternative group is “other”. This is the context in which I grew up and in which I started developing my self-consciousness.
Although my family is of Nubian extraction, we too became victims of the all too familiar hegemonic influences and grew up speaking only Arabic. However, in spite of my Nubian background, in the Sudanese ethnic hierarchy, I am considered an Arab [sic]. My parents, although they both came from an economically underprivileged background, managed to acquire higher education and consequently climb the social ladder. Although my family settled in Khartoum, where I grew up, it traces its roots to the rural Blue Nile region in southeastern Sudan, one of the marginalized areas in the country in terms of ethnicity and economic development. It is a countryside that I often visited, as a child, with grandparents and other members of our extended family. I witnessed how the dynamics of hegemony work in these three dimensions: economy, ethnicity, and culture. Growing up in a middle class Arabized family in Khartoum gave me first hand experience of how economic inequality divided the country into a center and margins. I have also witnessed how the war destroyed people’s lives. Internally displaced people in Sudan, mainly from the South, who lost everything during the war, were forced to move to an environment that is not only new, but also unwelcoming and prejudiced against them. Sudan, which has suffered a long history of slave trade practices, also suffers deep ethnic polarization. Northerners see themselves as superior to the Southerners who were considered slaves. As described by Jok (2001), it is not uncommon while walking in Khartoum to hear to the cry of “abid!” (slave) directed towards people from the South.

22 The Nubians are one of the communities that are known to have inhabited The Sudan long before the Arab/Islamic conquests of 7th Century. The Nubians still live in Sudan with a distinct language and culture, but urban social life is making many in cities lose their native tongue.
As a consequence of the civil war, displacement, and poverty, many South Sudanese, as well as others from marginalized areas, found themselves forced to take low-paying and labor-intensive jobs as domestic servants, human excrement transporters, construction workers, and watchmen. One of the painful and memorable experiences in my life was when a friend from South Sudan came to visit my house. I was in college and he was my classmate. My friend rang the bell, and my father went to see who was there. My father let my friend in and came to tell my mother to sort out our clothes for laundry because the houseboy was here. It had never occurred to my father that a 23 year old Southerner could be anything other than a houseboy, a domestic worker. South Sudanese can tell many similar stories of stereotypes by Northern Sudanese. I was angry and sad that such inequality and prejudices existed in my country.

These were the kinds of experiences that shaped my world view and made me a firm believer in social justice and being part of a progressive force that is working to see that all inequalities in Sudan are addressed. I have been a member of the civil society movement in Sudan in a spirited attempt to address injustices that have become commonplace in the country. However, all I was thinking about was economic and structural inequalities. Indeed, I was aware of ethnic prejudices and the long history of slave trade that dichotomized the country to free, *ahraar*, and slaves, *abeed*. However, my privileged background as a Northerner, who is culturally Arabized, and my middle class urban upbringing blinded me to the extent of these cultural realities. I was always a member of the dominant group, and I belong to the center, so I understood very little
about what it means to be a member of the dominated group, and to be on the margins. I understood nothing about the war experience, about coming home from school to find one’s village in ashes. Understanding the structural patterns of inequality is very different from living with the pain of holding one’s child who died of thirst in one’s arms and feeling helpless. Therefore, for a long time, my activism addressed only the manifestations of injustice rather than the root causes. Participation in peace campaigns and literacy programs was good but was not enough.

Coming to the United States in 2003 was one of the turning points in my life. As a “foreigner,” I experienced what it means to be “the other” and on the “margins.” Suddenly, I found myself a minority, in a new culture, and in supposedly a non-Muslim country. I was also faced with the dilemma of who I am: my identity. Am I Arab or African? A similar dichotomy has been at the center of Sudan’s conflict. A dichotomy that I had never thought about, until I was faced with providing demographic data and choosing “Black or African American” as my identity. It was in the United States that my self-consciousness about my identity as a Black subject was formulated.

Coming from a predominantly Muslim country, I have witnessed how Muslims are stereotyped in the United States; how praying on Fridays (and not Sundays) was deemed “strange!” and how wearing headscarves raised eyebrows. However, my personal experience was not limited to being a Muslim in an allegedly Judeo-Christian society. While in the United States, I started studying Christianity and attending church. This experience has taken me to a new level of understanding because it revealed to me the
other side of the story, namely how Northern Muslim Sudanese misunderstand, misinterpret, and totalize Christians and Christianity.

When I joined the Communication for Development master’s program in 2004, I began my studies with the intention of researching the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in development. Given my academic background in electrical and network engineering, and my voluntary experience in civil society in Sudan, that seemed the logical path to follow in my graduate studies. When I look back at my journey, I see it as a spiral loop, too many turns but always moving forward. After my first quarter, I went back to Sudan. It was my first visit to Sudan since coming to the United States, and little did I know that it would be another turning point. In that visit I experienced firsthand how “cultural identities come from somewhere, [and] have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation” (Hall, 1994, p. 394). Experiencing being on the margins in the United States, I started seeing the practices of cultural prejudices in a new light. In a conversation with my niece, I discovered how a 13-year-old girl was full of prejudices against Southerners. Continuing the conversation, I found out that she based her views on what she learned in school. I was alarmed! The product of that conversation was my masters’ thesis, which was an analysis of the Sudanese educational system and its role in creating social cohesion/division. The thesis, entitled *A Nation in Turmoil, Is Education to Blame? An Analysis of Sudan’s Basic Education Curriculum* has become a part of a civil society project that seeks to investigate the role of social institutions in peace-building in Sudan.
In the course of my academic coursework, I have read Johan Galtung’s concept of the violence triangle: direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence, a concept I explained earlier. Galtung explained how the three levels of violence are generally connected. Violence, as Galtung (1990) explained, can start from any corner of the triangle; and “the underlying assumption is simple ‘violence breeds violence’” (p. 295). This concept of a violence triangle marked a transformation in the way I think about conflict in Sudan. Until that moment, I had been active in addressing direct and structural violence. I thought by being politically active in peace campaigns and fighting for the signing of the peace agreement, I would help to stop the war and lead to post-conflict reconstruction and, consequently, address social injustices. I began to understand that it was culture that made my father think my Southern friend cannot move beyond a houseboy, a slave. It was cultural violence that made my niece warn me not to use public transportation when the vehicle is full of South Sudanese because they might rob me. For many Northern Sudanese, like my father and my niece, addressing structural injustices would do little to address the ethnic prejudices that were deeply rooted in culture. The violence triangle concept sparked my interest in the role of social institutions in promoting and legitimizing conflict, and, in contrast, how these institutions can be used to build social cohesion. I decided to expand my thesis project from only looking into educational institutions to including other institutions. I turned my attention to media for my dissertation, though my ultimate goal is to study family and religious institutions and connect all these pieces of the puzzle together.
Going back to Steedman (1991), meaning construction in qualitative research can be understood by looking through the individual context as well as the social context “which creates the individual” (p. 55). Being on both sides of the equation, dilemma or dichotomy gave me a unique insight of how in-group and out-of-group dynamics work in shaping interpretations, perspectives, and meaning. It has also sharpened my analytical skills and afforded me the latitude to go beyond the surface in studying culture, religion, and social realities in Sudan.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter situates the research within the audience research traditions. In this chapter, I attempt to provide the reader with a detailed description of the procedures of fieldwork, data collection and analysis. The process of analyzing and interpreting qualitative data is a creative and complex process that entails making sense of what has been learned (Denzin, 1998). However, this process is not value-free, for it “embodies the writer’s self understanding, which now inscribed into the experiences of those studied” (Denzin, 1998, p. 316). The interpretive text of the qualitative research is the researcher’s story of the field experience. In the following two chapters I will tell my story about the field work.
CHAPTER 5: SUDAN NATIONAL RADIO AND ITS AUDIENCE

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of Sudan National Radio (SNR) frames and audience frames regarding peace and conflict in Sudan. Messages analyzed were collected from SNR between October 2008 and February 2009. Audience frames were identified by analyzing 30 interviews conducted with listeners in Khartoum, Blue Nile State and the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan State. Four additional interviews were conducted with SNR employees.

A composite of a six-day sample from each month for the period from October 2008 to February 2009 was selected, with a total of 30 days in the sample. One news podcast for each day of the sample was randomly selected. Of the sample selected, SNR broadcast 197 stories, 57 of which were about peace or conflict issues. Table 3 shows the breakdown of the number of stories by month.

Table 3

*SRS Stories Breakdown by Month*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total number of stories</th>
<th>Peace/conflict stories</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is worth noting that newscasts and interviews were conducted in Arabic, recorded, transcribed by a native Arabic speaker, and then translated to English by the author. Thus, all quotes appearing in this chapter were originally in Arabic.

SNR covered three major topics in the period under analysis: the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and its implementation, the Darfur Conflict, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Although the ICC topic could be classified as part of the Darfur conflict theme, I chose to have it as a separate theme because stories about the ICC were framed differently. Although this research deals with the North-South conflict only, I chose to include The Darfur conflict in the analysis of SNR messages. I based this decision on two reasons: first, the Darfur conflict dominated the news in the period under study; second, and most important, was that the Darfur conflict was often discussed in relation to its influence on the peace process and the CPA implementation – something that was at the core of this research. Out of the 57 stories about peace/conflict, there were 29 about Darfur, followed by 12 stories about the CPA and seven stories about the ICC. The remainder of the stories were general with either no specific focus or a different focus altogether, such as the Eastern-Sudan Peace Agreement. Analysis revealed that SNR applied three major frames to issues of peace and conflict: development projects as a peace dividend frame, internal unity and solidarity frame, and external conflict and conspiracy frame. Analysis also revealed that audience members’ interactions with the media frames resulted in an array of different audience frames. Audience members adopted oppositional readings for the internal unity and solidarity frame as well as the
development projects as a peace dividend frame. Audience members acknowledged the outstanding issues and conflicts between the CPA signatories, thus challenging the internal unity frame. They rejected the development as a peace dividend frame, adopting a structural justice and holistic development frame when it came to their expectations from the CPA. However, when it came to the external conflict and conspiracy frame, audience members adopted the media frame as their own. I argue that lack of direct experience with the issues at stake and SNR utilization of cultural myths and narratives were the reasons behind the hegemonic reading of the external conflict and conspiracy frame by the participants. Nonetheless, where they had information from other sources, or their experiences were at variance with media messages, audience members negotiated the media messages and did not resign to a position of passive consumption of the frames presented to them.

About the Context

Hertog and McLeod (2001) stressed the importance of understanding the context in which frames are produced to capture fully the process of framing and frame development. For the case of SNR, it is imperative that we understand the context and related factors that had a bearing on the way the frames were developed and applied.

SNR is governed by the state-owned Sudan’s Radio and Television Corporation (SRTC), which was the only broadcaster with transmission facilities inside Sudan as of 2010 (IMS, 2003, 2007). In Sudan, radio possesses a special significance in relation to politics and advancement of a political agenda. Due to its wide outreach and the long
tradition of state radio being a mouthpiece of the government of the day, every military junta in Sudan has strived to gain immediate control of the building complex housing the Sudan Radio and Television Corporation. Sudanese are familiar with the military marches followed by *bayan raqm wahid* (announcement number one) over the radio as a well-known sign of military coups. I still remember vividly the morning of Friday June 30, 1989 when we woke up to the military marches on the radio and programming that was not normal. As we listened to the radio, the atmosphere was tense. The air was filled with anticipation. Everybody recognized the all-familiar sign of a military coup from the marches in the radio. Citizens gathered around radios in their homes, neighborhoods, or in the streets awaiting the “announcement number one” to determine the new people in charge. It was not long before, then Brigadier, Al-Bashir’s voice came through the radio announcing a new era in Sudanese history as he read the “announcement number one” that ushered into power the National Salvation Revolution. Like all military regimes that ruled Sudan before, the new regime suspended the constitution immediately, dissolved all political institutions and closed all newspapers. This new development too was communicated over the radio. These happenings were a repeat of what had happened in November 1958, May 1969, and April 1985, when also there were regime changes via a military takeover of government. Different regimes, democratic and military, have used mass media to advance their political agenda. Thus, it is of great importance to understand the political landscape in which SNR frames were developed.
As explained in Chapter Two, *History of a Polarized Society*, when the current Islamists came to power in 1989, they had the revival of the Islamic *Umma* (Nation) as their major goal and the motivation behind the military coup (Al-Mubarak, 2001; Al-Turabi, 1994). As mentioned earlier, the Islamist movement launched a campaign in the media, educational and religious institutions to promote the new Sudanese Islamic identity. Burr and Collins (2010) depicted the situation in Sudan after 1989, in which the media was usurped by the new government to advance its agenda and seek popular legitimacy:

In public discourse, the press and television the cultural identity of the Sudanese was defined as the struggle between the sacred and profane, religious and secular and Islamic-Arabs and Western Christians. The Sudanese were called upon to gather with the faithful, the *umma* [Islamic nation], to confront the neo-crusaders from the West. (p. 10)

SNR was one of the media instruments chiefly used by the NCP to carry out its propaganda of public indoctrination and brainwashing. Before the CPA, radio and television programs aimed at mobilizing the masses for the *jihad* against the infidel enemies, as the civil war was depicted in the official media at the time. Emotive images and the poetry of war were constant features in the state-owned radio and television. War and direct violence were associated with heroism with episodes borrowed from Islamic history, which was portrayed as a history of wars against *kufar* (infidels), a term that refers to all non-Muslims.
The signing of the CPA in January 2005 and the adoption of the new interim constitution in July 2005, however, necessitated a change in the media landscape. Article 39-1 of the interim constitution stated that, “the State shall guarantee the freedom of the press and other media as shall be regulated by law in a democratic society” (Sudan Constitution, 2005). Consequently, there have been some changes in media practices demonstrating the shift in the broadcasting sector. However, the changes that followed the CPA signing did not bring about genuine change in the larger government policy or structure, especially in the electronic media sector. The NCP, which by 2005 had already been in power for 16 years, remained the stronger and more powerful partner in the newly formed Government of National Unity. Over the last five years, since the signing of the CPA, SPLM/A had voiced numerous complaints that the NCP deliberately delayed implementation of key CPA provisions and ignored involving the SPLM/A in decision making with respect to key issues of the government (Dagne, 2010). In 2007, the SPLM/A, in protest of its marginalization in GONU by the NCP and the unilateral governance of the latter, suspended its participation in government for a short period. Maitre (2009) described the situation by stating that “the present regime is effectively contained within a single ruling body, the National Congress Party (NCP); . . . to the extent that government exists outside the [GONU], it resides within the Inqaz, the ‘military government of ‘salvation’” (p.61). Consequently, any reference made to the “government” in public discourse and the media actually represents the NCP rather than the Government of the National Unity.
This overview explains the larger context in which SNR was operating. In particular, political instability, uncertainty, and general tumult marked the period covered by the research (October 2008–February 2009). A short while earlier, on July 14, 2008, the ICC prosecutor sought the indictment of Sudanese President Al-Bashir with counts of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Rumors about an arrest warrant that was to be issued against al-Bashir and possible international intervention were filling the air as I embarked on fieldwork in Sudan. On March 4, 2009, immediately after I finished field research, the rumor and speculation ended. That which made some Sudanese cringe in anxiety happened: the ICC eventually issued an arrest warrant against President Omar el-Bashir. This period also witnessed the disputed fifth national housing and population census, a step towards the 2010 elections and 2011 referendum. Although the census was conducted on April 2008, it was not until May 2009 that the results were announced, leaving 13 months between the actual count and the announcement of the results to be filled with rumors and trading blame between the two governing partners. Escalation of conflict in Darfur and the eruption of violence in Abyei were major events that contributed to the political instability in 2008. In July 2008, al-Bashir and Salva Kiir, president of GOSS and SPLM/A leader, agreed to seek international arbitration to resolve the dispute over Abyei and the North-South borders. It was against this background that the SNR, in its broadcasts, adopted the aforementioned three major frames: (i) development as a peace dividend frame, (ii) internal unity and solidarity frame, and (iii) external conflict and conspiracy frame.
Peace is not about Development Projects Only

The signing of the peace agreement in 2005 was a remarkable event in Sudanese history. For the research participants, the meaning of peace was multifaceted and was expressed in different aspects including security, return to life normalcy, freedom of movement, prosperity, and, indeed, stopping of blood shedding and loss of lives. Most of the participants in this research, especially those from the transitional areas, Blue Nile and South Kordofan States, had direct and personal experience with the war. Therefore, audience members’ framing of the meaning of peace, the peace agreement and conflict transformation drew heavily from their personal experiences. For many of them, the CPA was more than a legal agreement, but a matter that touched their lives in a more personal way. Najeeb, who was from the Eastern part of South Kordofan State, a region that witnessed many deadly conflicts during the years of civil war, perceived peace as “everyone's wish.” The importance of peace for Najeeb was that it secured the region’s future: “It stopped the bloodshed. Now there is development, stability and a better future for our children. War means destroying the future” (Najeeb, personal communication, January 13, 2009). Such was the CPA for Najeeb. He saw it as already having an effect and accruing benefits in the present. In the CPA, he also expected a more promising future for his progeny and posterity. For Moiz, who was from the Nuba Mountains, the most significant aspect of peace was the security aspect and freedom of movement as well as stabilized livelihoods. Moiz shared the following with me, explaining that during the war years:
We really suffered a lot. After eight in the evening, no one can leave his home. Yes, we suffered! One time we were staying at the foot of the mountain. We heard shooting, and the military camp was adjacent to our home. The rebels came and attacked the camp at four in the morning, and we were forced to hide under beds. In Kadugli, you find many homes [during the war years] with just a door. No windows. If there was a window, it would be just a small opening and it was closed by bricks. From three in the afternoon, you have to get in your home and close your door. (Moiz, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

For others, like Saydah from Blue Nile, whose village lost many in the war years, peace meant, “We don’t hear about youthful lives being taken away everyday anymore” (Saydah, personal communication, February 20, 2009). Omar, who was a farmer from Blue Nile as well, stated,

After the peace agreement, we feel there is freedom. Now you can move safely in the Blue Nile state if you want to go to Kurmuk\textsuperscript{23} and return. Before you could not go beyond Demazin; you feared landmines. But now it is over. (Omar, personal communication, January 20, 2009)

Because war interrupted the daily livelihoods of people in the war-affected zones, including agricultural activities, audience members from both the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states perceived peace as restoring normality to their daily lives. For instance,

\textsuperscript{23} A town on Sudan Ethiopia borders which was for long time being controlled by SPLM/A.
Mohamed Abdallah, from Blue Nile State, noticed, “After the peace agreement, things are cheaper. Before the agreement, everything was expensive, sorghum and everything. People were suffering, but now everything is improving, Alhamdullah [we thank God]” (Mohamed Abdallah, personal communication, February 26, 2009). Khalid and Moiz from the Nuba Mountains restated the same observations: after the peace agreement, daily living had become more relaxed and prices had gone down (Khalid, personal communication, January 15, 2009; Moiz, personal communication, January 15, 2009).

Khalid attributed these changes to the following:

One of the war effects was a lack or shortage of goods, because farmers could not go to their farms and cultivate . . . [However,] this year all agricultural projects are very good, Mashaallah. You can go from here, Kadugli, to Kouda and nobody would obstruct you. You can go everywhere and cultivate no one would stand in your way. (Khalid, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

The fact that the peace agreement brought stability and no longer was agriculture interrupted had significant meaning to many audience members who had direct experience with war. However, to others who did not have direct experience with war, and that included most participants from Khartoum state, peace was less personal, although, in Ali’s words, the signing of the peace agreement made them “comfortable and happy” (Ali, personal communication, January 9, 2009). To them, peace remained rather

24 an Arabic phrase indicating appreciation or praising God for a previously mentioned individual or statement
remote and distant. In the end, personal experience, which was largely defined by place of domicile during the war years, had a profound influence on research participants’ interpretation of the peace agreement and their expectations thereof.

The SNR, for its part, did not capture very well the complexity and diversity of the meaning of peace. The major frame adopted by SNR when it came to peace was structural justice, albeit only in part. This frame could be described as falling with the development projects as a peace dividend frame. This frame linked issues of peace to development projects and characterized development and structural justice as guarantees to achieve sustainable peace in Sudan. Indeed, development can be manifested in many aspects of people’s lives. However, SNR’s emphasis was on projects, rather than on communicating a holistic concept of development.

The development projects as a peace dividend frame was used frequently when reporting about the CPA implementation. Progress was always characterized by and linked to development projects and the proportion of national budget allocated to development projects in war-affected regions. For instance, in a story that was aired on October 15, 2009, a leader in the opposition party, the Democratic Unionist Party was reported as stating that “his party’s vision was uniting the national front, realizing the peace agreement . . . and implementing sustainable development projects” (SNR, October 15, 2008). On October 16, 2008, the Sudanese president, Al-Bashir, in a speech
to the Sudan’s People’s Forum initiative25 declared, “in spite of economic and security situations, we are able to implement development projects” (SNR, October 16, 2008). Al-Bashir went on to announce the federal funds for development projects allocated for education, health, roads, and reconstruction in the areas affected by the war. Such statements in a conference about peace-building, although particular to Darfur, illustrated the link the government, especially the NCP camp, was bent on making between development and peace. Peace-building was thought of in terms of structural changes, and development projects were meant to be a peace dividend. Another example was a story covering the joint meeting between the states council and South Sudan legislative council on October 22, 2008. In this story, SNR reported that the “final meeting joint statement asserted the necessity of joint efforts to make the peace that was realized by the CPA sustainable peace, by creating the necessary environment to implement comprehensive development” (SNR, October 22, 2008). Again, in this story, realizing sustainable peace was linked to issues of development. On the same day, October 22, 2008, another story reported on the creation of a technical committee to assess the possibilities of Darfurian contribution and recruitment in national civil service. The story went on to report that “Professor Musa Machar [head of civil service commission] revealed arrangements for a celebration . . . on the occasion of the beginning of training of South Sudanese who will be employed in civil service [who will constitute] 20% [of

25 A government sponsored initiative aimed at bringing different Sudanese political actors, including Darfuri armed groups to discuss ceasefire and peace efforts in Darfur region
civil servants] according to the CPA stipulations” (SNR, October 22, 2008). The recruitment of South Sudanese in civil service was considered a peace dividend and part of structural justice arrangements to strengthen the peace process. In the same story, the possibilities of employing Darfurians could be understood as a motivation to Darfuran armed groups to join the peace process in order to reap the peace benefits. On another note, SNR reported that Amna Dirar, a presidential advisor and leader in the East Front, once an anti-government armed group, had met with the Egyptian ambassador “to discuss peace support mechanisms in Eastern Sudan through investment and service in vital areas in Eastern Sudan” (SNR, October 22, 2008). On November 24, 2008, while covering the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) meeting on the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the CPA in Addis Ababa, SNR reported that “the meeting will discuss reports from Government of National Unity, Government of South Sudan, Intergovernmental Authority on development and the African Union chairperson which will include their views on the Naivasha Agreement [CPA] . . . and encouraging international aid donors to support development and reconstruction projects” (SNR, November 24, 2008). In covering the AUPSC meeting, the SNR story once more linked development and reconstruction projects to the CPA implementation. Requesting donors to fulfill their commitments towards reconstruction and development was considered a crucial step in “pushing forward the peace process in Sudan” (SNR, November 24, 2008).

In terms of language choice, there was frequent occurrence of phrases such as “peace and development” (SNR, October 10, 2008; October 15, 2008; November 10, 239
The linguistic link between peace, security, and stability on one side and development and reconstruction on the other side reinforces the structural justice frame. By repeatedly reiterating the aforementioned phrases, a causal connection was formed between peace and development. Peace-building was framed in terms of achieving structural justice through implementation of development projects.

While SNR characterized development projects as the singular dividend of peace, most audience members held development as an important outcome of the peace-building process but not the only expected outcome. Audience members, reflecting the diverse backgrounds from which they came, expressed issues of structural justice in different ways. These differences were mainly related to differences in personal experiences when it came to issues of injustices as catalyst to conflict in Sudan.

For participants from the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, as well as those residing in Khartoum state but originating from marginalized areas, development was an important aspect of the peace process. These participants perceived peace in terms of reversing patterns of marginalization that characterized the relationship between the center in Khartoum and their peripheries. Many participants cited structural injustices and marginalization in terms of development as the main reasons for conflict. Mustafa, a Blue Nile resident, stated that:
We feel that we are marginalized; we did not have development. I mean from 1956 until now, we do not have development. It is the same situation: We do not have roads, we do not have schools . . . We do not have electricity. You see Rosaries Dam\textsuperscript{26} is just here, but even Demazin does not have electricity. Isn’t it marginalization from the government? Nobody would accept to be marginalized. Therefore, the Blue Nile armed groups were formed, and this all because of marginalization . . . If there is development there is no war; because one of the main reasons of war in Sudan was the lack of development . . . If there is development there is sustainable peace. (Mustafa, personal communication, February 28, 2009)

Although Mustafa stated that he has seen some changes in patterns of marginalization, he was not fully convinced that what was taking place was enough for sustainable peace:

In my personal opinion, the CPA is not 100%. In the [peace] agreement there were certain stipulations stating the agreement should be inclusive for all Sudan. Now it is not implemented, especially in Blue Nile State. Here we do not have development, it is the same thing as before, the same thing, nothing new.

(Mustafa, personal communication, February 28, 2009)

\textsuperscript{26} Rosaries/Demazin Dam is the major sources of hydroelectric power in Sudan. The dam was built in the period 1961-1965. On completion of the project, power lines were directed straight to Khartoum hundreds of kilometers away. However, it was not until the late 1970s that Rosaries and Demazin, towns neighboring the dam area, were connected to the national power grid.
Despite the repeated reporting in SNR about development projects, especially in war-affected areas such as Blue Nile, participants like Mustafa contended that SNR was not capturing their realities of marginalization. Although “the radio is covering the CPA” stated Mustafa, its coverage “is not in a satisfactory manner . . . there is no full coverage . . . I can say it is a zero, the CPA coverage is a zero” (Mustafa, personal communication, February 28, 2009).

Omar, who was from Blue Nile as well, thought that, while securing peace was an important achievement, “When it comes to development, we wanted the agreement to be reflected on our daily bread, our children’s notebooks and health, and this is did not happen. We are still waiting for it” (Omar, personal communication, February 20, 2009). Many, like Omar and Mustafa, felt that although the peace agreement brought about stability, it did not meet their expectations, especially in terms of structural justice and better living standards. Again for Omar, SNR, as a state-controlled radio station, failed to be in touch with their situation of structural injustice. For Omar SNR coverage did not represent what peace meant for him:

Omdurman radio is not covering peace, honestly speaking. Omdurman radio is an NCP radio; it is not open for all people. If it is open for all people, it would have been better. But in my own opinion, Omdurman radio is a controlled radio, controlled medium that serves the NCP. It is nothing more than that. (Personal communication, February 20, 2009)
Asha, who was from Khartoum State but traced her origins to the Blue Nile State, shared her joy when the peace agreement was signed. She perceived peace as more than a set of provisions fashioned in legal terms and characterized by a ceasefire. She thought in terms of equality and equal opportunities for all Sudanese citizens regardless of their origins:

We want peace, but peace means that everyone should have one’s right. We mainly want education. Look now even if you finish education you cannot find a job. Few people and certain people can get jobs. Even good universities, not everybody can have an opportunity . . . Now you see, in Blue Nile we are so poor. You cannot advance if you do not have education, and you only get education if you have money. (Asha, personal communication, December 23, 2008).

Asha finished her high school in Blue Nile State but could not go to college because of poor performance in the national exam. It has been a pattern in Sudan that students from marginalized areas are unable compete with those from Khartoum and the center because of lack of infrastructure, underfunded schools, and lack of teachers27. Asha moved to Khartoum and had to take a low-paying job because of her lack of education. For someone like Asha, who felt that her limited education curtailed her opportunities in the capital compared to those others (often from Central Sudan) who enjoyed better

27 According to a UNDP report about the status of MDGs in Sudan in 2008, the gross primary enrolment ratio in Northern Sudan was 62% while the percentage of cohort completing primary school was 21%. In the South the gross primary enrollment ratio was 20% but the percentage of cohort completing primary school was only 2%. (UNDP, 2008)
educational opportunities, peace that did not reverse patterns of marginalization was neither a sustainable peace nor an attractive one. Asha felt disadvantaged and subjected to unfair competition in the job market in Khartoum and Sudan because of her lower education level, a factor that was directly linked to her growing up in a marginalized periphery. These views were shared by Fony and Wany, who both lived in Khartoum but traced their origins to South Sudan (Fony, personal communication, December 22, 2008).

Besides development projects and reconstruction, the CPA implementation was assessed in terms of progress that had been made in implementing specific protocols such as Joint Units’ integration and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). According to the security arrangements in the CPA and as part of the ceasefire plan, the GOS and SPLM/A agreed to integrate the two military forces into one structure. The Joint Integrated Units (JIU) consists of equal numbers from the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) during the Interim Period. On February 6, 2009, SNR reported that the CPA implementation assessment and evaluation commission in Blue Nile State “called for speeding up the Joint Units integration and rehabilitation so as to do its duties in supporting peace and stability in the region” (SNR, February 6, 2009). The issue of the Joint Integrated Units (JIU) was reported as part of the agenda of the discussion about the CPA implementation between Slava Kiir and the defense minister on January 17, 2009 (SNR, January 17, 2009). Once more, SNR reported a story on December 11, 2008 about the CPA implementation in which the “passing of laws to conform to the interim constitutions as well as laws of remaining
“commissions” was presented as necessary steps to “complete the remaining aspects of the CPA implementation” (SNR, December 11, 2008). The CPA implementation was presented in forms of legal and policy related steps that need to be taken to achieve sustainable peace.

Despite SNR reporting about the development projects and the progress that had been made in terms of the CPA implementation, for audience members the reality on the ground was different. Rather than following the framing of issues presented by the media, participants employed their own experiences as the main reference in constructing their frames. Audience members’ interpretations of the CPA implementation went beyond terms of post-conflict reconstruction and development projects and implementation of certain CPA provisions, as framed by SNR. For instance, many participants from South Kordofan State were disappointed because of the lack of security after the CPA signing in 2005, despite SNR reports about the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process. South Kordofan, unlike Blue Nile, had been a site for violent conflicts between different ethnic groups even after the CPA. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, a lack of security and the eruption of violent clashes in the region hindered my visit to the Eastern part of the state and Abyei region. As such, participants from South Kordofan State and the Nuba Mountains region expressed their disappointment that, although the CPA stopped the bloodshed, it failed to restore complete stability to the region. Najeeb, for example, expressed his disappointment that “now, when the CPA was signed, it was
implemented, but in this state (South Kordofan) unfortunately it was not realized” (Najeeb, personal communication, January 13, 2009).

Similarly, Ismail articulated these disappointments stating, “We did not see the agreement realized. Nothing changed. Until now illegal arms are widespread among different ethnic groups, conflicts still exist, and armed robberies are still there. It is so difficult, my dear sister” (Ismail, personal communication, January 13, 2009). These participants took the CPA from the overarching document signed by principals, to the level of ordinary foot soldiers of the principals – the people they represent. And to the ordinary people of South Kordofan, sporadic violent clashes between ethnic groups was a stain in the CPA implementation. Mohamed Hassan shared Ismail’s testimonies about the lack of security in the region:

You see, peace needs time. They [the government] says [it is] insurgencies, but we have many cases, we have many complaints, we have two people who were kidnapped the other day; we do not know what happened to them. The government needs to tell us what is going on and where they are. . . . We have many cases and issues like this. Peace needs time, a long time. (Mohamed Hassan, January 14, 2009)

Development projects were also considered by SNR as incentives to make unity attractive and encourage South Sudanese to vote for unity in the referendum scheduled for 2011. To this end, a Unity Support Fund was established. SNR reported on January 17, 2009 that Salva Kiir and Ali O.M. Taha, first and second vice presidents respectively,
issued directives to go ahead and execute the unity support fund projects “which will strengthen and promote unity between the nationals of one country” (SNR, January 17, 2009). It is worth noting the choice of words and, in particular, inclusion and exclusion by SNR. In this respect, “unity” and “one country” were given prominence making their occurrence in the same sentence is almost tautological. Yet the emphasis was purposeful and deliberate. Moreover, the projects, according to SNR, included $382.4 million investments in development schemes in the bordering states between North and South Sudan.

But for someone like Fony, who lived in Khartoum but was originally from South Sudan, issues of racism and cultural violence were deeply embedded in the societal fabrics and could not be resolved by setting up funds for unity or signing agreements. According to Fony, “Racism and marginalization are deeply rooted in the Sudanese society; and just by signing an agreement you would not wipe it out with the stroke of a pen” (Fony, personal communication, December 22, 2008). The prescriptive presentation and interpretation of the CPA in SNR development as a peace dividend frame fell short of dealing with factors underpinning structural injustices in Sudan – the hegemony the dominant minority and consequent injustices.

While development was an integral part in the peace-building in Sudan, as well as the legal aspects of the CPA, framing analysis revealed absence of any mention of cultural violence/justice which is core to the strife that has dogged Sudan over the decades. One SNR official further confirmed this observation by sharing with me that
SNR had an unspoken policy not to touch on issues of a religious or ethnic nature – the two elements that stand at the core of conflict in Sudan (Amar, personal communication, January 18, 2009). It was apparent that SNR was shying away from talking about cultural issues and eventually masked the peace process in terms of ceasefire and power sharing among the elite across the political divide as well as the sharing of goodies. On the contrary, for most participants issues of cultural justice and representation were equally important as structural justice when it came to the peace-building. Yassir, an artist from Nuba Mountains, stated how marginalization in terms of language and representation in the national mass media affected the peace-building process:

As someone from Kadugli or South Kordofan, I think the radio and mass media are not satisfying me, because they do not reflect my culture in a satisfactory manner. If we calculate our share, as South Kordofan region, in the national [emphasis] mass media we find it negligible. I am talking here from a human rights perspective. For instance we have many languages, we have local languages we can say rutana [local language], we only learn Arabic in schools, this is a fact because our mothers don't speak Arabic . . . Mass media is not giving space to this region’s cultures, very marginal space for the region to showcase its culture. (Yassir, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

Yassir went on to explain how these issues were important to peace-building in the region:
This region [Nuba Mountains] has special status, because this region is in the CPA\textsuperscript{28}. There is someone who bore arms here because he felt he was oppressed and there were injustices. OK! So now we signed a peace agreement. What is peace? What is real peace? Real peace is that you give everybody an opportunity to express one’s self and express one’s culture and so forth. Now these things, unfortunately, are not there nationally or regionally. Even if it is there, it is very marginal. That is how I see things . . . that also goes to the news. (Yassir, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

Batul, a journalist from Nuba Mountains, shared Yassir’s views that cultural injustice can be an impediment to sustainable peace in the region:

I tell you a simple thing: we do not see ourselves, we do not hear our language in national mass media, and this is exclusion of the ethnic groups in this region [Nuba Mountains.] Exclusion breads discontent. When discontent is developed, consequences are not good normally, OK? For peace-building in South Kordofan, let me give you an example from West Kordofan: nowadays there are armed groups that are established. Why are they established? Because there is exclusion, exclusion in terms of development, or excluding their culture, what is important is that they felt excluded . . . where is peace? There is no peace. (Batul, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

---

\textsuperscript{28} He was referring to the Nuba Mountains special protocol in the CPA.
Batul went on to explain the role of mass media, as she perceived it:

I think mass media have a big challenge. Mass media should have a big role. For example, if someone from Nuba tribes talks about coexistence and about peace [in the media/radio], how did they live before the war? How did the war affect them? Now how would peace and coexistence affect them if they return to live the way they did before the war? Then someone form Baggara tribe speaks in his own language: the Baggara and Nuba are brothers; Nuba and Kinana are brothers and so forth. However, what is going on now [in the radio] is “this minister did this, this minster did that, the president came, and the president went.” Therefore, peace was reduced to a political process, but not really trickled down to the communities. (Batul, January 15, 2009).

In addition to lack of representation, the issue of language was one factor many participants felt that SNR was not addressing. SNR broadcast its news in Arabic only – a native language of Northern Sudanese. Many participants felt that this did not reflect the linguistic diversity of Sudan. In the end, they felt excluded. Yassir explained how not including other languages only perpetuated patterns of exclusion and cultural injustices:

You see in this state there are people who do not speak Arabic; does that mean they do not have a right to know what is going on in the state, in Sudan or in the world? Isn't it one's right to know? OK! If it is one's right, how can you communicate with him/her? In his/her own language of course. (Yassir, personal communication, January 15, 2009)
Omar shared Yassir’s views that using different languages in broadcasting news and other programs would consolidate peace and would help the peace-building process in Sudan in general and the transitional areas in particular:

When the prophet Mohamed wanted to send a messenger to Ghifar, he selected the messenger, but what was important about that messenger is that he was talking their [Ghifar] tongue . . . The most important thing is the communication media. I mean the mass communication people, the radio people, if they use medium through which they can reach connect people and speak people’s language. When you speak to people their language, they would listen to you. (Omar, personal communication, January 20, 2009)

While SNR framed the peace-building process in terms of development, audience members took the peace-building project beyond post conflict reconstruction and development projects. For audience members, issues of security, disarmament, and cultural justice were equally important. SNR’s ignoring cultural injustice and marginalization when covering peace issues did not remove these issues from the audience members’ radar, especially those who come from historically marginalized areas. Audience members’ interpretation of peace varied relative to their situation and environment, but remained multidimensional and more comprehensive than just development projects. Whenever members were living in volatile environments given to sporadic violence, they perceived the peace as absent. When they were in environments of deep poverty, they still wanted more of the promise of peace in terms of improved
quality of life. In safer environments like Khartoum, where they were unable to compete in the labor market because of exclusion from social networks and limited educational opportunities, audience members demanded and read more in their interpretation of peace – equal access to opportunities. Audience members constructed a holistic understanding of the meaning of peace, including structural and cultural justice, rather than the simplistic developmental meaning offered by SNR.

Internal Unity and Solidarity Frame

SNR’s tendency to shy away from issues of cultural injustices can also be understood in the context of a broader frame, the unity and solidarity frame that also characterized SNR’s coverage of peace and conflict issues. In an effort to promote the unity and solidarity frame, SNR ignored mentioning any issues that it perceived as divisive, such as ethnicity and religion, or reporting on any disagreements between the NCP and SPLM/A.

The unity and solidarity frame manifested itself in presenting the political sphere of Sudan as united. SNR stressed the unity frame by reporting on different political groups taking similar stances on national and international issues of interest to Sudan. Despite the outstanding issues that surrounded the CPA implementation and that were often reported in other news outlets, SNR denied or downplayed any disagreements and conflicts. Although the unity and solidarity frame was most common when reporting on the Darfur conflict or the International Criminal Court (ICC), it was applied to other issues pertaining to peace-building and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement as well.
When the unity and solidarity frame was applied, issues of harmony, unity, and oneness were stressed. A case in point was a story aired on October 14, 2008 in which SNR reported that Salva Kiir, first vice president, would address the opening meeting of the States Council and the common meeting between the States Council and South Sudan Legislative Council. The story went on to state that “the States Council meeting in Juba [South Sudan] has political implications and dimensions as it fits within the presidential guidelines of strengthening unity between Sudanese nationals” (SNR, October 14, 2008). The State Council (a national entity) meeting in Juba with the South Sudan Legislative Council was portrayed as a sign of the unity between the North and the South. Another example was when SNR broadcast a story on a meeting between Salva Kiir and the national defense minister to discuss the political situation. The story concluded by stating that “the defense minister explained that the vice president articulated certain guidelines in the direction of strengthening mutual cooperation and unity and preserving the nation’s stability and security” (SNR, January 17, 2009). The next story in the same newscast was about directives from Salva Kiir and Ali Osman Taha, first and second vice president respectively, “to go ahead in implementing unity support fund projects, as a way to strengthen and support unity possibilities between nationals of the one country” (SNR, January 17, 2009). The implication of these stories was to reinforce the notion of unity and harmony between the North and South, represented by their politicians. These stories denied possibilities of conflict between the two governing partners that surfaced in other news outlets (SRS, for example, as discussed in detail in the next chapter).
However, the stories of the strained relationship between the two partners filled other Sudanese and international media. Participants tapped into their own experiences as well as information from other media sources to challenge the SNR unity and solidarity frame and its denial of conflict. Participants frequently mentioned the conflict between the SPLM and the NCP as an obstacle to peace in counter framing to the SNR’s unity and solidarity frame. For instance, Ismail, from South Kordofan, explained how the disagreements and the conflicts between the two partners delayed the implementation of the CPA and especially the stipulations about the disarmament which affected the security situation in South Kordofan:

You see! The problem is that the two agreement partners, the two concerned parties, are not in agreement. So how can my situation, I am the citizen, and how can my situation be. There is no agreement between them, it is just talk till now, no common ground . . . it is just ink on papers, it is not executed. Up to now we have not seen the article of this agreement that talk on disarmament. Until today illegal arms and an arms race is going on. Is this real peace? (Ismail, personal communication, January 13, 2009)

For Ismail, it did not matter what rosy picture SNR painted about a united internal front. His reality on the ground contradicted what he heard over the radio. Peace meant security for Ismail, and as long as no agreement was reached between the two partners on how to implement the CPA provisions, the unity and solidarity frame did not resonate with him.
For someone like Ahmed, a resident of Blue Nile, the fact that the SPLM was still using its own flag, and not Sudan’s national flag, at the time of the interview was a sign of deep conflict and an indication that peace, in spite of the peace agreement, was not fully realized:

What is peace? I want everybody to know what peace is and what it means and what is needed [for peace to be reality]. But the movement’s [SPLM] people think that peace is not here yet. Now in the celebration there was an SPLM flag and the nation (Sudan) flag. They still think they need to have their own flag, the party flag. There should not be any flag other than Sudan's flag, because it [Sudan's flag] represents Sudan's pride. Do they think peace is that you get drunk and walk around fighting with everybody? I think intellectuals in the SPLM should explain to their people what peace means. Because their people don't know what it means.

(Ahmed, personal communication, February 20, 2009)

Ahmed’s anecdote about the SPLM flag revealed that the mistrust between Northerners and Southerners due to years of violent conflict and marginalization is deeply rooted in Sudanese society. Ahmed, who is ethnically an Arabized Northerner, felt offended by the SPLM flag and associated that with the alleged hate and mistrust between Southerners and Northerners as he went on to immediately state, “If they [SPLM supporters/ South Sudanese] see any red [Northerner] person speaking in the radio, they think he is their enemy. But if the speaker is from them, that can break the barriers or animosity” (Ahmed, personal communication, February 20, 2009). Ahmed, however, did not think this
animosity was permanent but believed that if patterns of marginalization and exclusion that bred the conflict in the first place were reversed and, “If the radio could reflect and broadcast their culture, their language, that would be better” (Ahmed, personal communication, February 20, 2009). Similarly, Omar, asserted:

In our protocol [Blue Nile protocol] some people think it is only for black people. But this agreement is not only for black people. It is for the goodness of the whole Blue Nile. This agreement, this protocol was not for a certain group, it was for everyone. (Omar, personal communication, February 20, 2009)

Omar was referring to a conflict between the SPLM supporters and other Northern-dominated political parties supporters. Blue Nile State was one of the states that supported the SPLM during the years of civil war. After the CPA, and according to the power sharing protocol, executive positions were divided between the SPLM and the NCP. During my field work period in Blue Nile, I came across several comments, like Omar’s above, that the SPLM supporters, who normally belonged to certain ethnic groups, had all the powerful positions in the government. Many felt that they were left out, which created a kind of conflict in the region. Musa thought that the Power Sharing Protocol and the way positions were divided between the SPLM and NCP members created a conflict in the region:

Before we did not know this tribe or that tribe, we were all one, we all know that we are all people of Rosaries; we don’t know who speaks Arabic, who speaks local language (yartun). Now we hear this is Falata, this is Hawara, this Barta. All
these people the government brought, when they are in power, he brings his relatives and his tribe. All they wanted is to show: “We are powerful and we have authority.” (Musa, personal communication, February 28, 2009)

He went on to add that: “Now Falata do not like Hamar, and Hamar do not like Falata. Why? Because of politics” (Musa, personal communication, February 28, 2009).

Conflict between the SPLM and NCP was cited as an obstacle to implementation of CPA stipulations such as conducting the National Population Census of 2008, an issue SNR totally ignored. Mohamed Hassan from South Kordofan shared with me a number of anecdotes about how the conflict between the two partners affected the peace process in general and the census in particular:

I am just going to give you bits and pieces. Peace was not implemented the way it was supposed to be. Let me give you examples: the census that was in March, I have three administrative units in which the census did not take place. And this is a fundamental step for the upcoming arrangements [elections, referendum]. The three units are Umm Dorain, Buram and Heiban, the census did not take place in them . . . because of the SPLM people and some disturbances. Of course they have issues against all that is taking place. Sometimes they say the elections cannot take place because they [SPLM] obstructed the census and now they are protesting that the elections cannot take place because the census did not take place. (Mohamed Hassan, personal communication, January 14, 2009)
Asha, from Khartoum State, although she acknowledged that she heard a lot about peace and the CPA on the radio, thought that what she heard was not true: “Personally, I don’t think what they are saying is making any difference. I still see conflict and fighting. They did not implement anything in the peace agreement until now” (Asha, personal communication, December 23, 2008). Fony and Mohamed Adam shared Asha’s viewpoint that SNR was not reflecting the reality of what was going on in Sudan when it came to coverage about peace and unity. Mohamed Adam explained that he did not believe the rosy picture that SNR was reflecting about the NCP, SPLM and GONU because what SNR broadcast about “peace and development is just a radio talk (kalam radi),” meaning it is not real (Mohamed Adam, personal communication, February 24, 2009). Musa as well shared Mohamed Adam’s views that what was broadcasted in SNR “was just radio talk” (Musa, personal communication, February 28, 2009).

Another manifestation of the unity and solidarity frame in SNR was reporting on leaders from different political groups stressing issues of unity and agreement. For example, in a newscast broadcast on October 15, 2008, SNR reported that “Ali al-Sayed, a leader in DUP, stated in an interview with SNR, that his party always called for unity and national solidarity to protect the country against external dangers and conspiracies” (SNR, October, 15, 2008). Ali al-Sayed, a leader in Democratic Unionist Party (an opposition political party), was interviewed during the Sudan’s people Forum initiative meetings. To report on an opposition party leader emphasizing unity and calling for national solidarity was promotion of the idea that even oppositional parties were in
harmony with the ruling parties, an ultimate manifestation of the unity frame. Another case in point was a story that SNR aired on October 29, 2008, in which al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of Umma Party (an opposition political party) was quoted praising and commending the Sudanese People Forum initiative meetings. Two days later, on October 31, 2008, M. Osman al-Margheni, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party was quoted calling the Sudanese political parties to participate in the same initiative. Again SNR was utilizing the call from oppositional party leaders for national unity to reinforce the harmony and unity frame.

On January 17, 2009, SNR reported that “the political parties and organizations commission would hold a brainstorming meeting to discuss . . . the political, social and security current situation in the land” (SNR, January 17, 2009). News stories like this one that featured meetings by coalitions – such as Political Parties and Organizations Commission, and the Government of the National Unity Political Parties Coalition – were frequently reported to support a unity frame. The implication of these stories was that the political sphere in Sudan was united.

The unity frame was used even when a lack of unity was apparent. For instance, reporting that some Darfurian armed groups did not participate in the initiative meetings would challenge the unity frame, but SNR added a note to the story stating that “though Darfurians armed groups did not participate in the meetings, their viewpoints were fully considered by the meeting participants” (SNR, October 29, 2008). The unity and solidarity frame was also reinforced through frequent reporting on popular meetings
especially between people from areas that had been in conflict such as eastern Sudan, where SNR broadcast a story about a meeting between Eastern Sudanese people and the president “to strengthen unity and participating in development in Eastern Sudan” (SNR, February 28, 2009).

While SNR strived to frame the Sudanese political sphere as united, reporting on different political groups pursuing internal unity and expressing solidarity (often against an external enemy), audience members engaged in a process of negotiation of these stories to construct their own frames. It seemed that whenever SNR encoded a message to be read as “Sudanese are united,” the audience members decoded it as “politicians are united.” For many participants, the radio coverage of peace issues and portrayal of unity was concerned with political parties and politicians only, but ordinary citizens were ignored. Thus, the unity and solidarity frame neither mattered to them nor resonated. Mohamed Hassan, from Kadugli, expressed these feelings when he stated that “the radio is available for people who belonged to NCP or SPLM only; those of us in the middle are marginalized” (Mohamed Hassan, personal communication, January, 14, 2009). Ismail, as well, explained that while the NCP and SPLM/A were fighting over political gains, the ordinary citizen’s basic needs, such as security, were ignored:

Until now in this region it is not the way it is supposed to be or the way we wanted it to be because we as citizens, we are not part of the NCP or the SPLM. We as citizens, we consider security is the major factor in development, security
is the future, security is our well being, security is to live peacefully as we used to be. (Ismail, personal communication, January 13, 2009)

Similarly, Yassir expressed how SNR coverage was only about politicians and ignored the issues that citizens were facing. Yassir related this to the fact that SNR is a government radio and that fact influenced the way it reported news:

I find all the news boring and repetitive. All news cares about is the president: the president came, the president went, and the president did such and such. I mean it is all about government. There is nothing about the people and what is going in the community and what we need. But when it is all about the government, it is just boring and meaningless. (Yassir, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

Omar shared Yassir’s views that because SNR is a government owned and controlled radio, SNR reflected the government (read the NCP) view point (Omar, personal communication, February 20, 2009). The statements that SNR only covered politicians was reiterated by Batul and Mustafa as well (Batul, personal communication, January 15, 2009; Mustafa, personal communication, February 28, 2009).

The participants’ views on the influence of SNR ownership on its frame building was confirmed by the frame sponsorship analysis I conducted for SNR coverage. Most sources used were either government officials or someone who confirmed the government views. According to Ayman and Naji, SNR officials, the main news source for SNR was the Republic Palace (the president’s office). Ayman justified that
dependency on official sources by stating that SNR “is a government radio after all” (Ayman, personal communication, January 8, 2009).

Moreover, adopting a unity and solidarity frame was not just an outcome of frame sponsorship, but was a deliberate decision by SNR staff and was consistent with the SNR editorial policy in covering issues of peace and conflict in Sudan. Naji, an SNR senior official, stated:

Our editorial policy towards covering issues of peace and conflict is consistent with the policy that is adopted by the government towards issues of peace and conflict. The government policy is to support peace-building and so we do in our editorial and news policy and our coverage. (Naji, personal communication, January 6, 2009)

He went on to elaborate on the SNR editorial policy when covering issues of peace and conflict:

We are very much concerned and interested in everything positive when it comes to issues of peace in the South, in Darfur and in Eastern Sudan. Every positive aspect that was taken towards implementing any aspect of the CPA, we give it priority [in coverage]. Any governmental, popular, or international effort that was taken to push the peace process forward, we highlight it. (Naji, personal communication, January 6, 2009)

When I asked him, “What about something that is perceived as negative?” he answered:
We don’t highlight negative aspects. For instance, anything that would encumber peace we would not broadcast. For example the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor’s request to indict the president of Sudan, we consider this the biggest impediment to the peace process, you see! Therefore, we ignore broadcasting such news and we ignore anything about the ICC . . . and any other news that we feel that it would obstruct [peace] or discourage those who could push peace forward. We consider this negative news and not positive. (Naji, personal communication, January 6, 2009)

It was apparent that the unity and solidarity frame was a government sponsored frame. Two SNR employees Ayman and Rajab later confirmed this. When I asked Ayman how they determine which news to include and which to not include he told me, “We have all our news from the Republic Palace, it is our main source, as I said before, and it is a governmental radio after all” (Ayman, personal communication, January 8, 2009). Rajab also stated that “the government policy determines all news frameworks and accordingly all news stories.” He went on to elaborate on the SNR policy:

All the news should be constructive; I have been working here for 15 years. We don’t broadcast a news story that would discourage people. We always keen to broadcast news that would unite people, news that would support unity and peace, news that would support coexistence, harmony, religious tolerance, cooperation; I mean all noble values in society. Such news we repeat once, twice and thrice.

(Rajab, personal communication, January 20, 2009)
SNR’s unity frame was manifested by quoting politicians from different political parties, which affirmed audience members’ assertion that peace, unity, and solidarity was framed in a way that made the politicians the most important actors in the frame building. For the audience members, the unity and solidarity frame that was repeatedly offered by SNR was unconvincing, because in their daily lives national unity lacked meaning. Audience members also demonstrated the ability to scrutinize different news sources to produce their own frames, and sometimes counter frames.

International Criminal Court, the Darfur Conflict:
Conflict, Conspiracy and Sovereignty Frames

I was conducting an interview in SNR when a call came in from the Republic Palace, informing SNR staff about a meeting between al-Bashir and the National Unity Government political parties and asking for reporters to cover the meeting. An SNR senior official directed reporters to record the whole meeting and keep it so that SNR would use it later when there is an arrest warrant issued by the ICC against al-Bashir. The plan, as expressed by that senior official, was to support the idea that the whole political sphere and all leaders in Sudan were united in supporting al-Bashir, a clear example of the unity and solidarity frame building strategy. To reinforce the unity and solidarity frame, friends of Sudan from Arabic, Muslim and African countries were portrayed to stand in solidarity with targeted Sudan. Yet, the unity and solidarity frame did not work in isolation but in concordance with another frame, that is the conflict and conspiracy
frame. As such, the unity and solidarity frame was a frame that portrayed Sudanese people as united against an external enemy.

The conflict frame was used by SNR more often when discussing the Darfur conflict and the ICC indictment of the Sudanese president. As mentioned earlier, although this research concerned the North-South conflict and the CPA coverage, it was not possible to isolate the peace process in South Sudan from the Darfur conflict in SNR coverage. The Darfur conflict and the ICC were often portrayed as obstacles to peace in South Sudan. For example, when covering the Sudan’s People’s Forum initiative, SNR quoted Ali al-Sayed, a UDP leader, stating that “his party always called for unity and national solidarity as to protect the country against external dangers and conspiracies” (SNR, October, 15, 2008). Ali al-Sayed went on, according to SNR, to explain that this call was in accordance with the “party’s vision [which] was uniting the national front [in order to attain] the peace agreement” (SNR, October 15, 2008). In the story, multiple frames were at play simultaneously. One was a unity frame that called for uniting the national front against a perceived enemy as well as the threat of danger which brought in the conflict frame. This unity against the enemy was portrayed as the means to attain the realization of the peace agreement. The implication here was that an outside conspiracy endangered the peace process in Sudan. Along the same lines, SNR reported on November 8, 2008:

Mr. Ali O. M. Taha, vice president, restated Sudan’s government position of rejecting the ICC prosecutor allegations against the republic [of Sudan] president.
. . . He also touched on Sudan’s position on a number of regional and international issues, in addition to the CPA implementation. (SNR, November 8, 2008)

Once more, SNR associated the ICC, the conflict between the Sudanese government, and the ICC prosecutor with the peace agreement implementation, implying that the ICC decision would encumber the CPA’s full implementation. It was interesting to note that outstanding issues that were directly related to the CPA’s implementation—such as the North-South borders and the contested census—were never covered or mentioned as encumbrances to the agreement implementation.

The external conflict and conspiracy frame was often played with the sovereignty frame. The ICC conflict with al-Bashir was framed as a conflict with Sudan as a nation, and consequently, the indictment was considered a conspiracy against Sudan’s sovereignty. The technique most often used by SNR to activate the frame was to equate Sudan as a nation with the Sudanese government or the Sudanese president. This frame was very blatant, specifically when discussing the ICC issue or international intervention in Sudan. This frame was used to counter the justice frame that is normally used by political opposition or supporters of ICC intervention. Even so, according to Naji, an SNR senior official, there was an explicit policy that the ICC issue should not be given much attention in the news (personal communication, January 6, 2009).

Under the conflict and conspiracy frame there were sub-frames: conflict between Sudan and ICC, conflict between Sudan and the West (United States and Western
Europe), and conflict between the West/Arab and African countries. The language choice for this frame included phrases such as “Sudan is targeted,” “conspiracies against Sudan,” and “Western domination.” These phrases were normally used to contrast positions of the Arabic and African countries with Western countries to stress the dichotomy and the conflict between the two sides. When reporting about Arabs and African countries, the media’s language choice always reflected support and a sense of brotherhood. Phrases such as “brothers” and “support in the face of West/ICC/ Western domination” were used. For instance, in the Arab Justice Ministers’ meeting in October 2008, SNR quoted the Sudanese Justice Minister, Abdel-Basit Sabdarat, who voiced his appreciation to the Arab justice ministers and their support for Sudan, especially in facing the West, and expressed Sudan’s “confidence in its Arab brothers” (SNR, October 13, 2009). Along the same lines of affirming Arab countries solidarity, SNR reported that Mustafa O. Ismail, Sudanese foreign affairs minister, expressed his affirmation for “the effectiveness of the Arabic countries’ role in Sudan in general and the Darfur conflict in particular, expressing his hope that this role would be utilized in reconstruction in Darfur” (SNR, October 10, 2008). In a second story in the same newscast Salva Kiir, first vice president, was reported as stating “his appreciation for the Arabic countries effort in helping Sudan in general and Darfurians in particular” (SNR, October 10, 2008). Having two such stories in the same newscast, featuring top officials, revealed how much emphasis SNR put on highlighting the solidarity frame.
To further support the solidarity frame, SNR quoted Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak on November 24, 2008, stating Egypt’s support and affirming that “Egypt pays special attention to Sudan security, stability, and unity.” The statement was part of a story covering the Egyptian people’s council and advisory council shared meeting. The story itself affirmed SNR emphasis of Sudan’s bonding with Arab and African countries, as rarely a national radio station would cover the parliamentary meetings of another nation.

On February 5, 2009, SNR aired a story about a meeting between al-Bashir and the Syrian Ba’ath party deputy secretary general, al-Ahmer. SNR reported al-Ahmer: confirming that Syrian people, leadership, and ruling party stand by Sudan in the face of aggression targeting its sovereignty, unity, and independence. He [al-Ahmer] explained that the ICC allegations against the republic president [al-Bashir] aimed to destabilize Sudan and destroy its unity. (SNR, February 5, 2009)

Interestingly, the story started by acknowledging and praising the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the Syrian leader’s statement was woven into the story to make the connection between the Arab/Israeli conflict and the alleged Sudan/ICC conflict. The newscast carried two other stories about the Israeli Palestinian conflict in Gaza.

Hertog and McLeod (2001) noted that “some of the most powerful [tools of framing] are myth, narratives and metaphors that resonate within the culture” (p.141). Cultural narratives and metaphors which, when utilized in the framing process, have the potential to provoke certain feelings and reactions that help in the construction of the intended meaning. One of these cultural metaphors that SNR utilized frequently was the
Islamic *Umma* (nation) against the West’s colonialism and imperialism. For instance, as in the above mentioned story, the support of Syria represented by the Syrian Ba’ath party deputy secretary general, the piece started by acknowledging and praising the steadfastness of the Palestinian people against Israel, which was regarded in the story as an extension of the West (SNR, February 5, 2009). By bringing in the story of the long-standing conflict between Israel and the Palestine, SNR framed the ICC/ al-Bashir conflict as an event in the chain of targeting Islam and the Arabs. Apparently, this is importation of a relatively remote issue, but since the ICC is based in Western Europe and has strong support of the U.S., even though it has not ratified the Rome Treaty, the link sells easily in the Muslim Arabized North Sudan.

SNR strived to reinforce the conflict frame by enlarging the scope of the conflict to a West/Non-West dichotomy, building on the cultural myth of Western imperialism and colonialism. On February 5, 2009, an SNR newscast carried a story about the African Union’s Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) in Addis Ababa. SNR reported that Al-Bashir stated:

> [The AU PCS] addressed the ICC requesting the latter to discontinue its allegations against president al-Bashir, and he added that . . . the meeting extended invitations to the 30 African States that have acknowledged the Criminal Court to withdraw its recognition. (SNR, February 5, 2009)

Similarly, in a story covering the Tanzanian president’s visit to Sudan on October 9, 2008, SNR reported that the “chair of the national assembly, Ahmed I. al-Tahir,
discussed with the Tanzanian president the mutual relations between the two countries . . .
. in addition to prospects of coordination on the African level regarding the ICC prosecutor allegations against Sudan” (SNR, October, 9, 2008). The same newscast carried another story about the Tanzanian president visit stating that:

    Marshal Al-Bashir highly valued the role that African countries in general and Tanzania in particular play in supporting Sudan in regional and international arenas . . . From his side, president Jakaya [the Tanzanian president] affirmed his country’s efforts, in collaboration with other African countries and the United Nations, to reach a resolution the conflict in Darfur. (SNR, October 9, 2008)

Such stories extended the conflict frame from a conflict between Sudan and the ICC to a conflict between African countries and the ICC. Adding the African countries, the conflict was characterized along the lines of the West/non-West, and enlarged the circle of support for the frame to include non-Arabized Sudanese, with whom the concept of Islamic Arabic Umma might not resonate.

    As mentioned earlier, SNR played the external conflict frame, especially in covering the Darfur conflict and the ICC, in relation to the CPA implementation. SNR framed the ICC as a perpetuation of the conflict in Darfur, which was, in turn, a hindrance to the CPA’s full implementation. Interestingly, most audience members did not make the connection between the Darfur conflict and the CPA. For instance, Mohamed Abdallah thought that conflict in Darfur would not affect the peace process because it is a different area and different issues were at stake:
Peace in the South was achieved. But of course Darfur is a different area; it is a different story. As the South got its share, Darfur will get its share. As Darfur[ians] works on a peace agreement 29 then it will get its share and its development. (Mohamed Abdallah, February 26, 2009)

However, most audience members identified with the cultural narrative that Sudan was targeted by the West because of its stand on Arabic-Islamic values. The symbolic power of cultural myth and narratives is derived from the fact that they are often communally shared and widespread (Hertog & McLeod, 2001). In the case of the SNR framing process, by provoking the myth of Israeli and Western conspiracy against Sudan, SNR appealed to its audience members’ Islamic/Arab solidarity feelings against an alleged Western imperialism and colonialism scheme. This strategy seemed successful as most participants, despite their oppositional reading to other SNR frames, adopted the conflict and conspiracy frame.

Mustafa thought that Darfur did not even need a separate peace agreement. Mustafa, who was an SPLM member, believed that if the CPA was fully implemented and the SPLM’s New Sudan vision was realized, then all marginalized regions, including Darfur, would get their rights: “I swear there will peace, but only if the CPA is fully implemented; if the Naivasha agreement is implemented” (Mustafa, personal communication, February 28, 2009). Interestingly, although Mustafa acknowledged

29 The interview was conducted during a round of peace talks between the Sudanese government and Darfur anti-government group in Doha, Qatar.
marginalization as a catalyst of the conflict, he adopted the conspiracy frame when it
came to The Darfur conflict:

Regarding the armed groups in Darfur, regarding Darfur, and this is my personal
opinion, Darfur was very safe and was very good. I think this [conflict] is foreign
conspiracy, I mean it is not from us. I mean it is from inside our homeland, inside
Sudan. Because of this I think there is nothing makes the situation to reach this
point. Regarding Darfur, there is escalation that cannot be justified. (Mustafa,
personal communication, February 28, 2009)

Ahmed expressed the same views that the Darfur conflict was incited by external
agencies such as Israel, a claim that fit the conspiracy frame:

Peace is not complete, and the reason is Abdel Wahid30. I knew that yesterday he
signed the good will agreement and then he went to Israel, so they can give him
weapons and he wanted to separate Darfur so that it becomes an independent
state. He is causing this internal conflict. We don't want Sudan to be divided.
Before we used to go to Nimoli in a car in a train, we could go to Halfa, Nemoli,
Shandi and Kurmuk31 and return back. But now one side is Garang, the other side
is Abdel Wahid. It is a fishy business. (Ahmed, personal communication,
February 20, 2009)

30 A Darfurian armed group leader
31 Towns in the south, far north, central, and eastern Sudan respectively. The statement was an indication of
united Sudan.
Omar also shared Ahmed’s claims that Israel was the reason behind not reaching peace in Darfur, but, as was true of Mustafa, thought that the Darfur conflict would not affect the peace process achieved by the CPA:

After the Doha peace talks, peace seems near. But after Khalil\textsuperscript{32} signed, Abdel Wahid went to Israel because he wanted weapons, so what can we do now? A little while ago I was listening to the radio, and someone said that peace will not be realized this way because everybody in Darfur needs separate peace talks. You see Darfur is not like the South. The South had one leader . . . . I think the power and wealth sharing was dealt with during Garang peace talks. Then you will be given your right and you don’t need peace talks. We cannot really understand where this whole issue started and where it will end. (Omar, personal communication, January 20, 2009)

Moiz also adopted the conspiracy frame and believed that Israel had a role in all conflicts in Sudan. Talking about recent clashes in the Abyei area Moiz stated:

Even if there is peace and negotiators helped to stop the violence, the two sides will start fighting again because some entities benefit from war. Let me give you an example. Israel gave weapons [to some groups], so now instead of using the money in economic development, helping children and building schools, now we get weapons. What is the reason that United States is giving funds for weapons to

\textsuperscript{32} A Darfurian armed group leader
Sudan? Instead of supporting development, building roads, electric power and education, the funds go to weapons. (Moiz, personal communication, January 15, 2009)

Moiz saw that the best solution is for Sudanese actors, government and anti-government groups to sit together and reach an agreement without including external agencies. For Moiz and other participants, the conflict in Darfur was escalated due to intervention of external agencies. For the most part, participants thought one of these external agencies was Israel due to the longstanding animosity between Israel and Middle East. But on other occasions United States was also cited as having a hand in the conspiracy against Sudan.

As discussed earlier, the conflict and conspiracy frame often provoked a sovereignty sub-frame. The Sudanese president, al-Bashir, was portrayed as a symbol of national sovereignty and pride. As such alleged attacks against him were framed as attacks against Sudan the nation. National pride was a powerful metaphor in Sudanese culture and provoking it to activate the sovereignty frame resonated well with Sudanese culture. Audience members adopted different frames when it came to the ICC issue and its impact on Sudan’s sovereignty. But most frames ranged from uncertainty about what side to take or what frame to adopt for full adoption of the SNR frame. The only participant who adopted a different frame was Asha who expressed her position thus:

We want Ocampo [ICC prosecutor] or the ICC if they that want to charge Al-Bashir to do so, so that they [the government/ NCP] can know something. How
long should we stay like this? Certain minority has education, certain minorities have power, we the marginalized people, Blue Nile and West people, and we need our rights. (Asha, personal communication, December 23, 2008)

Most other participants were not sure which position to take, especially since most interviews were conducted before March 4, 2009, the day the ICC indictment decision was announced. Those who had made up their minds cited the country’s sovereignty as the major reason for opposing any ICC action. Mohamed Abdallah stated:

Ocampo has an issue with the republic president. People can't let him try a president; we cannot let that happen because this is our president. Ocampo cannot try the president unless he has strong reasons. We Sudanese, we will not accept that our president be tried outside. (Mohamed Abdallah, personal communication, February 26, 2009)

For Mohamed Abdallah, the issue was not that the president was innocent or not, but that he cannot be tried outside the country, because such an event is undermining the country’s sovereignty. Musa as well, agreed with Mohamed Abdallah:

The issue is not that the president was innocent or guilty, but we cannot allow external agencies to intervene in Sudan internal issues. We are able to handle our problems. Nobody will accept that his/her president be taken to court outside his/her country. It is just not acceptable. (Musa, personal communication, February 28, 2009)
Regardless of their stance on other issues, participants felt that the whole issue around ICC and Darfur was a conspiracy from the West. They felt that their egos, especially those from Central and North Sudan, were injured as they imagined one of their own being tried outside their territory. As they perceived it, the nation’s reputation was on trial. I argue that this adoption of SNR conspiracy and sovereignty frames was facilitated by two factors. In addition to the utilization of cultural myth in developing the conflict and conspiracy frame, the lack of personal experience and connection with the matter influenced the way audience members interacted with the text.

Scholars argue that one of the factors that influences audience interaction with media texts is the distance of the recipient from the issue covered in the news story. For instance, Sotirovic (2000) argued that “when direct experiences with the particular domain of reality are missing,” audience members are more likely to rely on media frames to construct meaning from the media text (p. 281). All participants in this research had no personal connection or direct experience with the ongoing conflict in Darfur; therefore they were more prone to rely on SNR for meaning construction and interpretation of the issue. This is unlike using development projects as a peace dividend frame, where audience members had a direct experience with the way peace ought to affect their lives. Yet SNR, for them, in this issue did not capture their realities.

Additionally, lack of counter frames from other sources contributed to audience members’ susceptibility to SNR frames. Conflict in Darfur, as well as the ICC issue were considered matters of national security importance. Therefore, the NCP-controlled
government placed a high degree of censorship on print media and other media outlets when covering these two issues; leaving audience members with limited sources of information. In the case of the internal unity frame, the SPLM/A was able to reach out to audience members through other mass communication channels. Therefore, the internal unity frame was challenged.

Frames that are based on cultural myths or narratives carry the power of “excess meaning. By mentioning one or more of these powerful concepts, the array of related ideas, social history, policy choices, heroes and villains may be activated” (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p.141). SNR officials did not need to put too much effort to evoke feelings of being targeted or threatened by the West. The mention of a Western conspiracy against Islam or Muslims is a frame that activates a set of narratives of the Israel/Arab conflict and the alleged continuous support of the United States and Western Europe for Israel against the Arabs/Muslims. These narratives already existed in the collective memory of the Muslim North Sudan. For instance, Mohamed Adam stated that “there should be no conflict in Darfur. Darfur is the land of the Quran. But it is all about external secret hands” (personal communication, February, 24, 2009). For Mohamed Adam, Darfur, as the land of the Quran with a 99% Muslim population, would not be in conflict with the “Muslim” central government if it were not for an external conspiracy to divide the “Muslims.” For someone like Mustafa (personal communication, February 28, 2009), who was an SPLM/A member, and an advocate for inclusion and cultural and structural justice, to think that there was no justification for the conflict in Darfur and it
was all about Western conspiracy, reveals how the power of cultural narratives influence the way issues are framed or which frames are adopted.

Conclusion

SNR covered three major topics in the period under analysis: the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and its implementation, the Darfur conflict, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). SNR applied three major frames to cover these issues: a development projects as a peace dividend frame, an internal unity and solidarity frame, and a conflict, conspiracy and sovereignty frame. Audience members adopted oppositional reading to the first two frames and engaged in a process of negotiations and counter-framing. Participants considered peace to be more than development projects. Participants’ interpretations of peace were multifaceted and involved many aspects of their daily lives and experiences, something that many of them felt SNR failed to capture. Audience members were not falling easy prey to the framing by government, and by extension, state funded media. Yet, as a whole, they viewed the CPA as having not achieved the spirit behind its signing and their expectations of it, unless and until there is genuine respect of cultural, linguistic, economic, and other human rights in addition to the much-touted reconstruction and development projects.

Audience members relied on their personal experiences as well as other sources of news when it came to the internal unity frame. The ignorance of the conflicts and disagreements between the governing partners did not deceive the participants who
experienced firsthand in their respective communities how these conflicts obstructed the CPA implementation.

SNR capitalized on the historical animosity between Israel and the Arabs to frame the ICC indictment of al-Bashir as a conspiracy against Sudan in a larger context of conflict between Sudan as a representative of Arab/Islamic nations sometimes, and non-Western colonized nations other times, and the imperial colonial West. Lack of personal and direct experience as well as invocation of cultural myth and narrative that characterized SNR’s framing of the conflict, conspiracy and sovereignty led to near whole adoption of the media frames by the audience with little if any negotiation.
CHAPTER 6: SUDAN RADIO SERVICE: FRAGILE PEACE AND UNTRUSTWORTHY GOVERNING PARTNER

This chapter presents a comparative framing analysis of Sudan Radio Service (SRS) frames and audience frames regarding peace and conflict in Sudan. This chapter presents a framing analysis of messages collected from SRS during the March-July, 2009, period. The chapter also presents audience members frames that were identified by analyzing 33 interviews conducted with Sudanese listeners in Kakuma Refugee Camp in July, 2009.

During this period, SRS broadcast 233 stories, 175 of which were about peace or conflict issues. Table 4 below shows the breakdown of the number of stories by month:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total number of stories</th>
<th>Peace/conflict stories</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis revealed six major topics that dominated SRS’s coverage for the period studied. These topics were (1) the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the CPA, and implications surrounding its implementation, (2) Abyei and the North-South borders, (3) the census and election, (4) violence and violent clashes in South Sudan, (5) the
referendum and its implications, and (6) the Darfur conflict and the International Criminal Court, the ICC, and its implications. However, since this dissertation focuses on the North-South conflict, the Darfur conflict and ICC are not discussed here. Unlike, SNR, SRS treated the Darfur conflict as a separate issue from the peace process in South Sudan and the CPA implementation. Generally, the topics were overlapping. In other words, a story that talks about election and census would also discuss the CPA and referendum because these issues were interrelated. For instance, the census and elections were two outcomes of the CPA. The census results would determine the electoral constituencies and significantly impact the wealth and power sharing and hence impact the referendum. Abyei and the North-South borders could not be discussed without discussing the implications of the referendum and so forth. Two major overarching frames were identified in SRS coverage. These frames were the conflict frame and the blame frame. However, these overarching frames were manifested in sub-frames that were particular to the different topics covered by SRS.

Audience members shared the conflict and blame frames with SRS. However, a distrust frame emerged as an additional frame in the audience framing analysis. As in SRS framing, the three overarching frames, conflict, blame and distrust, were manifested in particular sub-frames that were pertaining to each topic of the five topics covered by SRS. As mentioned earlier, issues pertaining to the ICC and Darfur were excluded. The following sections discuss in detail these topics and media and audience framing processes.
About the context

Again, to fully understand the framing process in SRS, it is important that the concept in which frames are developed to be explained. SRS is a United States Agency of International Development (USAID)-funded project of Education Development Center (EDC). EDC is a US-based nonprofit organization that works on areas of education, health, and economic development.

SRS started broadcasting on 30 July, 2003, two years before the signing of the CPA. Unlike SNR, which broadcast mainly in Arabic with few English programs, SRS started broadcasting in Arabic, English, Simple Arabic (Juba Arabic), Dinka, Zande, Moru, Nuer, Bari and Shilluk. As of 2010, SRS added Toposa to its broadcasting languages. SRS policy was to focus exclusively on issues and events in Sudan (EDC, 2010), although international news relevant to Sudan was sometimes included. According to EDC, SRS was established “as part of an effort to increase the participation of southern Sudanese in the peace process” (Education Development Center, 2010). However, SRS, according to Richard (2009), witnessed an emphasis shift in 2009 from focusing exclusively on issues pertaining to South Sudan, to cover issues of national interest. SRS started expanding its offices in Northern Sudan and added a special service to Darfur (Richard, personal communication, June 24, 2009; Krista, personal communication, April 22, 2009). As of 2010, SRS was based out of its studios in Nairobi, Kenya, with news bureaus in Sudan. A new building had been constructed in Juba, South Sudan, to host SRS facilities as it planned relocating there. Initial SRS broadcast was one hour
long, but as of 2009, SRS was on air for up to 6 hours a day. As of 2010, SRS broadcast its programs on shortwave frequencies, but a switch to FM was planned once the radio moved to Sudan. SRS’s staff developed daily programs and newscasts at its Nairobi studios and then were built into audio files and sent to shortwave transmitters on Ascension Island for broadcast to Sudan (Educational Development Center 2010; Lemar, personal communication, June 3, 2009).

The majority of SRS Sudanese staff in Nairobi are South Sudanese, which is a logical outcome of the initial target population of SRS. SRS staff is multinational, and comprises individuals from United States, Kenya, Ireland, among others. The composition of the SRS staff is important in the context of framing and frame sponsorship, as the following sections in this chapter, and the next chapter reveals.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA):

Slow Pace of Implementation or Lack of Commitment?

For the period of March-July, 2009, SRS broadcast nine stories that directly dealt with the CPA’s implementation. Nevertheless, since the CPA represents a backbone of all stories and news about peace and conflict in Sudan (except Darfur and ICC), issues about the CPA were diffused and intertwined in many stories and the delineation between these issues was not clear. The conflict and blame frames were the dominant frames in the CPA coverage. SRS stories mostly involved trading blame between the agreement signatories, the National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan’s People Liberation Movement/ Army (SPLM/A). Particular to the CPA coverage, the conflict frame
As noted earlier in Chapter Two, the CPA laid out specific measures to be taken during the six-year transitional period (2005-2011) to ensure a smooth transition to peace by 2011, the date the referendum is scheduled to occur. However, four years after the CPA was signed in 2005, the implementation of these stipulations had faced many difficulties. There have been numerous complaints from the signatories as well as the regional mediators and international facilitators about the slow pace of implementation as well as the contentious issues between the two governing partners, the NCP and SPLM/A. These complaints were well reflected in the SRS’s coverage of the CPA. The contentious/outstanding issues were always mentioned as major obstacles in the implementation of the CPA.
implementation of the CPA. Sir Derek Plumbly, chairman of the CPA implementation Assessment and Evaluation Commission, was quoted on April 29, 2009 expressing his concern over security measures and other outstanding issues and how these issues might negatively affect the CPA implementation:

The outstanding issues which I think need to be addressed quickly include the demarcation of the border between the North and South. Because without clarity about where the border is, a lot of other things, including the elections, the referendum, future wealth-sharing, and redeployment becomes impossible to complete, so it leaves things in suspense and may indeed seriously affect the election process in particular. I was concerned about the condition of the joint integrated unit which is supposed to be the basis for a future united army but in fact they are poorly equipped and supplied. And I was concerned too that the referendum bill, which needs to be passed without further delay, if the preparation of the referendum are to be made in good time, needs to be forwarded, in parallel with discussion about arrangements after the referendum either in the event of unity or in the event of secession in the South. It can’t be delayed if that very important stage of the CPA implementation is to be properly prepared. (SRS, April 29, 2009)

The contentious and outstanding issues were coupled with the differences and conflict between the two partners. The conflict and disagreement between the SPLM/A and NCP were frequently mentioned as hindrances to full implementation of the peace
agreement, and consequently, hampered efforts to resolve these outstanding issues. A case in point was a story that was aired on April 29, 2009, in which Sir Derek Plumbly was quoted asserting that for the CPA to be fully implemented, it required a “reaffirmation of vital partnerships which exist between the SPLM and the NCP in the North and the South.” The story went on to state that “Sir Derek added that there is a need for the Government of National Unity to act quickly in order to solve the outstanding CPA issues” (SRS, April 29, 2009). These differences between the NCP and SPLM/A remained a concern for many Sudanese as well as international observers. On June 2, 2009, SRS reported that “the Norwegian government is urging the partners of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to rise above their differences to salvage the peace agreement” (SRS, June 2, 2009). Stories like this demonstrated the level of conflict between the two partners to the extent that SRS used the word “salvage,” which conveys a sense of desperation. The story went on to quote the Norwegian foreign affairs minister, warning that:

We are worried that everything which needs to be done according to this plan is lagging behind. When you look at the timetable, a lot is at stake, it needs to be said that both the North and the South and those who hold political responsibilities must live up to their expectations of this peace agreement, they must make every effort to overcome their differences because if that doesn’t happen soon, time is running out and it may cause great challenges to the integrity of Sudan. (SRS, June 2, 2009)
These differences were moreover confirmed by one of the CPA partners, the deputy secretary general of SPLM/A Northern sector, Yassir Arman, when he was talking about the Washington conference: “The conference is coming at a time when there are serious differences between the NCP and the SPLM on many issues” (SRS, June 17, 2009). Labeling these differences as “serious” reflects how substantial the influence these outstanding issues had on the CPA.

These differences between the two partners were not left as neutral; rather, the NCP was the one to blame. On May 9, 2009, SRS reported that Salva Kiir, GOSS president and the first vice president “accused some parties of working to destroy the peace in Sudan” (SRS, May 9, 2009). Although SRS in this story did not name these parties, other stories explicitly pointed to the NCP as the party to blame. In another story, Yassir Arman was quoted as distancing the SPLM/A from decision making in the Government of National Unity (GONU) by stating that “It is worth mentioning that the NCP is pursuing a one-party system in Sudan, the NCP is taking decisions at all levels alone, and there is no consensus, either in the presidency, or the legislature, or the executive” (SRS, June 17, 2009). This claim was further supported by political analyst Gill Lusk, who was quoted expressing how pessimistic she was regarding the conference in Washington because:

The Sudan government will promise the earth as it has done many times, particularly in 1995 when the pressure started mounting on it. It promised the earth. It never fulfills its promises. The Sudan government is very good at using
up time. Much time passes like this. Years have passed since the Darfur peace
agreement for example and yet there is no peace in Darfur. (SRS, June 2, 2009)

Another example of blaming the NCP appeared on July 9, 2009 when SRS aired a
story about the NCP buying “an unknown number of WS-2 multi-launch rocket launchers
from China.” SRS continued the story, quoting Dr. Taysir Mohammed Ahmed, Sudanese
politician and the director of the Peace-building Center for the Horn of Africa, stating
that:

There are worries in the region about the political will of the National Congress
Party [NCP] to implement the CPA and to follow through with other peace
agreements. I think many observers are worried about, not just the fragile
conditions of the peace agreement throughout Sudan, but also a concern about the
political will to implement them. (SRS, July 9, 2009)

These statements reinforced members of the audience’s view that the NCP was not
honest about its commitment to the CPA implementation and that it was the party to
blame for these delays in implementing and solving contentious issues.

The conflict and blame frames were prevalent in SRS stories about the CPA
implementation. The frames were manifested in stories about delays in CPA
implementation and the persistence of unresolved outstanding issues between the two
governing partners. The NCP was blamed for the conflict and for the disagreements
regarding the outstanding issues. Audience members shared the conflict and blame
frames with SRS. However, they did not passively adopt the media frames. Audience
members added a distrust frame to the conflict and blame frames. For audience members, the conflict frame was prevalent, the NCP was blamed, but it was not just blame that came across in interviews; the NCP was distrusted as well and was accused of ulterior motives regarding the whole peace process in Sudan.

Participants held the view that the NCP was never sincere about the peace process and the gains it brought to South Sudan. Majunk viewed the conflicts between the two partners as a force that impeded the full implementation of the CPA. However, Majunk moved from describing the conflict to analyzing it. Majunk distrusted the NCP and thought the NCP was never sincere about peace in Sudan. Majunk argued that the NCP was under pressure from the international community to sign the agreement. For Majunk, such a form of peace was not sustainable; and therefore, too many issues were outstanding and not implemented:

Maybe, nobody knows, maybe war can come anytime. Yeah! war can resume anytime. Not because of the SPLA but the government. And even I listened to radio one day in Nairobi, in July 2007, Omar was speaking, frankly speaking that “what was done in Naivasha was not our will but we were forced and this is why we stepped down and give the first vice president[seat to a Southerner].” So there was no, it is not their will. So because they just feared the world community and they stepped down they gave the vice president [seat to a Southerner]. So, but I can say on the side of SPLA they were sincere, they were ready for peace but the government in Khartoum, they were not ready because the thing [war] became
Majunk acknowledged that he came to this conclusion based on what he heard in SNR (Radio Omdurman) from Al-Bashir:

But even when you listen to radio Omdurman, they just [stammers,] they use coverage programs that people are now in peace and we [NCP] are not ready for peace. Even Omar said that “I am not ready for peace, I am ready for war”…

Even one day I was in Juba in 2007 on one July independence,[33] he showed everything that shows he wants to threaten the South and the West [Darfur], that “I am now ready for war,” he brought our [us] just heavy weapons to show people that is a threat to those who just want to [pause] who do not obey the government. It is a threat to them but that one showed that they are not ready for peace.

(Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Deng shared Majunk’s assumptions that disagreements were hindering the peace process, and that the NCP was not serious about bringing peace to Sudan. Talking about the peace agreement, Deng said “it was good, but particularly when I see more and more the peace is in the mouth, it is not in the heart because there are some things which are still hanging.” When I probed him more, he added “the government of Northern part is

---

[33] Probably he meant January 1st, Independence Day. On January 1, 2009 the Independence Day celebration featured new Sudan-made fighter planes and missiles parade. Many political analysts concluded that the parade was a show of strength as the ICC was ready to announce its decision on accusation against al-Bashir on war crimes and crimes against humanity
not serious; they are not serious because they don’t follow up [on] what people have agreed upon, not followed up [on] what has been signed.” The reasons for delays in the CPA implementation, according to Deng, were:

Because they [the NCP] don’t want Southerners to be given their rights. Because when the Southerners will be given their rights, the place is filled with wealth. When they are given rights, they will go and sit on them then they [the NCP] cannot get the room again to take it. (Personal communication, July 7, 2009)

Peter M. was hesitant in the beginning about whom to blame for the delays in the CPA, but he became more inclined that the NCP and Khartoum government was the one to blame. From what he heard on the SRS there were “some agreements that people [did] not follow, maybe [the] Khartoum government, then there are some areas that are [pause] some people, the Southerners, complained these people were not following this agreement” (personal communication, July 11, 2009). On the other hand, Rebecca N was strong-minded and firm about who was the cause of the delays:

Yeah, the problem is between the North and South as long as Omar Bashir is concerned. Because, so far, peace, it was not implemented. What was signed five years ago, those things, they are not yet respected, which means we are still having doubts [that] nothing will succeed (pause). I am saying Omar Bashir uses bolder words. He is not making peace, like Sadiq al-Mahdi. Al-Mahdi was using administration [reconciliatory/cooperation] means to solve problems, but this guy
is using military, that’s why people are doubting [he] will not deliver peace peacefully. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Along the same lines, Andrew stated that Al-Bashir was never sincere about peace and he was pressured by the late John Garang and that Garang’s death was the reason the peace process failed. Andrew also thought that the war in Darfur undermined the peace process because if any part of the country is at war, one cannot talk about comprehensive peace:

Omar Bashir is not agreeing [with] what the late Garang stated, when people, they are talking on behalf of peace, so [al-Bashir] just be pressured for that. Garang is dead! So let us start our nini [whatever], our own regulation or the rule which we can, looking for our country [stammer]. So exactly when there is, there is fighting in Darfur, so the Sudan will not be at peace, while others, there is still fighting in Sudan there is no peace. So the peace means whole country it should be sitting in . . . peace. But while others are fighting there is no peace. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Audience members constructed their frames by tapping into the media frames and enriched the media frames with their personal experiences. For many participants, the CPA was more than a political agreement; it was a life-changing event. For all the participants, the war meant destruction, displacement, and losing relatives and loved ones. For those who were former soldiers during the civil war, the CPA was a fulfillment of a dream they risked their lives to see realized. In Madeng’s (a former SPLA soldier)
words “the CPA was why we fought, and we gave ourselves to get [self] determination” (personal communication, July 10, 2009). In every interview, I heard heartbreaking stories of days of walking to escape the horror of bombing (Grace N, personal communication, July 4, 2009; Magdalena, personal communication, July 9, 2009; Rebecca D, personal communication, July 7, 2009; Rebecca N, personal communication, July 11, 2009; Antasia, personal communication, July 3, 2009). Elizabeth, who lost two children, said one died from thirst in her arms during their journey to the refugee camp and another died while fighting as a child soldier (personal communication, July 6, 2009). Many, such as Madeng, Atem and Peter N shared with me how they were shot many times and had many near death experiences during the war (Madeng, personal communication, July 10, 2009; Atem, personal communication, July 9, 2009; Peter N, personal communication, July 11, 2009). For someone like Rebecca D, who lost her entire family during the war, the “United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) became [her] mother and father” (Rebecca D, personal communication, July 7, 2009). For all of these participants, the signing of the CPA was very personal and filled them with hope and anticipation of a better life.

When the CPA was signed in Nairobi in January 2005, many interviewees longed to end the life of displacement and go back home. For many, the CPA signified settlement and starting a new life. Magdalena, who had lived in exile since 1997, thought that “it is not good for a person to move [to] the bush [. . . and] grow very old in the bush.” She was so happy about the CPA because she was “wishing to go back to Sudan
again” (personal communication, July 9, 2009). Martin shared this view. For him, peace meant an end to a time of displacement: “[when] the peace agreement was signed, so we were all supposed to go back to Sudan, we were supposed to go back for good, some were supposed to go for good, for life” (personal communication, July 4, 2009).

Similarly, Peter N saw the signing the peace agreement as a new beginning and that finally war related death, which was a daily experience in South Sudan, would stop:

So when the peace was signed I felt [long pause], you know! [pause] I was very happy because it is peace that was done [so] people should not die again . . . because Sudan has been in war almost 22 years or 21 years. And then I was very happy because when war was there, people uuh! You see, people died everyday; even when I came here I heard people died. When I was there people died every day. There is no day that passed they cannot [did not] die. Yeah! So when it was signed I was very happy and then people they have agreed. It is [they are] those Sudanese [pause]. I was very happy for somebody to have signed the peace [agreement]. (Personal communication, July 8, 2009)

Yet, these narratives about happiness and jubilation at the time of the CPA signing in 2005 were always followed by uncertainty about the future of the agreement and peace in Sudan four years after the signing of CPA. In Acqualino’s words:

To be honest, when you hear, it is always like they are not hopeful, you just hear about Sudan [pause] they are saying the vice president is doing this; people [pause] there are still raids. You see! These attacks on each other [pause] but it’s
just like [pause] it is like, they are just trying to make everything, the needs to meet the ends. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Many participants shared the same sense of disappointment and uncertainty about the future of the CPA with Acqualino. For instance, Atem, although happy about the CPA when it was signed, was not sure if the peace process would last in Sudan:

According to the peace agreement actually the peace has been done, that’s why there is no exchange of bullets in Southern Sudan. But a cool [cold] war is there. The politicians did not fulfill what was signed. We do get some information through the media, through televisions, in which they [the politicians] cannot satisfy us. So we are here in the camp [Kakuma Refugee Camp] but we get all that information through the newspapers, through media, so we hope that may be, Sudan we don’t know whether it will be really normal [pause] I don’t know whether this peace will really exist or it will break because when the things which were being signed are not implemented. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Many participants had great expectations when the CPA was signed, but these were not fulfilled. As Atem indicated, news of conflicts between the two agreement signatories, slow implementation of the agreement stipulations, and violent clashes surfaced in most of the stories about the CPA in SRS (and other news outlets as well).

As illustrated earlier, many were ready to go back to Sudan, and thus when the repatriation process started many did go home. However, many of the interviewees, or someone they know, had to come back to the refugee camp because of a lack of security,
jobs, and basic infrastructure. Magdalena, whose words of jubilation were noted earlier, went to Sudan and then returned to the refugee camp:

I have gone to Sudan and when I tried to see the place, things were hard so I decided to return back to Kakuma . . . [The CPA] is not fully completely implemented, it is not. It has been left to governor[pause] why can’t you [governor] go through to see the reasons of killing innocent people, taking children, taking some people’s cattle, you see! (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Majak, who was one of the unaccompanied minors34 who lost his entire family in the war, shared with me how happy he was when the CPA was signed. However, at the time of our meeting, he was skeptical because:

For example, most of the people who were here, most of them went and also they reported that there is also agreement that has been made and what has happened, those things have never been implemented the way they [should be]. Also, and we also heard there is also peace at the same time and also on the other hand there is also war. Like the last month we heard there was war. We also heard there are still crimes that are still happening, others have to rise so that to fight with the others, cities, communities. Those are still there. That shows that things have not

34 Unaccompanied minors, also known as the “lost boys and girls,” were minors who arrived in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya without accompanying adults, due to the death or loss of their guardians. I used the term unaccompanied minors because that is the term by which many of them preferred to be called.
been put in a way that they are supposed to be. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Martin had relatives who went back to Sudan but had to return to Kakuma camp. The situation became complicated when they realized that they had lost their refugee status once they went to Sudan. Martin and his family had to share their rationed food with the returnees since UNHCR was not providing for them. For Martin, a government that could not provide for the basic needs of its citizens was not sincere about building peace:

Most of them went back during repatriation to Sudan. Unfortunately they didn’t settle there. So many problems just arose. They didn’t have houses. The new government which is ruling, Omar Bashir, didn’t even look after them. So, when you go there, you expect to be given a house; you expect to be given something to eat; you expect your children to go back to school, to have good medical care, but all those are not there. So, some ran back to the camp, so, some are still here now. They are still running to the UNHCR to get [ration] cards so that they can get services. It’s difficult. They have to seek for their relatives. You sit [stay] with them, then you only eat food with them, but you don’t have a [ration] card. Most people hate the current situation. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Some, like Panchole, not only heard from relatives, but experienced it: “I went back there. I found different kind . . . as for us Southern Sudanese, the war was there; peace was not yet” (personal communication, July 9, 2009). When sharing these kinds of
stories from those who returned from Sudan after were repatriated, a sense of
disappointment and despair ensued in many participants. For many participants, the
peace agreement was not reflected in tangible incentives. Other than “no exchange of
bullets,” no structural changes had taken place (Atem, personal communication, July 9,
2009). In Elizabeth’s words, “the goodness of this [peace] we hear in our ears, [but] we
don’t see in our eyes, even our bodies, we don’t even see it” (personal communication,
July 6, 2009).

Abyei and the North-South Borders: What Really Mattered, the People or the Oil?

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Abyei is one of the three transitional areas which
have been given a special status in the CPA. Abyei, like the other two transitional areas,
Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains, is located on the North-South border area and is
inhabited by Dinka Ngoks, who share the grazing land with the Misseriya of South
Kordofan (see Figure 27. Abyei Area Map)
Before signing the CPA, the Government of the Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) first signed a special protocol for the transitional areas in 2004. Unlike other transitional areas, Abyei is the only area that has the right to vote on joining South Sudan at the end of the interim period. Although the Abyei protocol outlined administrative matters, it did not identify the exact area that was to be encompassed in Abyei. Consequently, the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) was created to define the area to be included in the administration of Abyei and, eventually, the North-South borderline. However, when the ABC presented its reports to the GONU in July 2005, the two governing partners presented conflicting positions: “the
government [NCP] delegation to the ABC announced that the report contained ‘recommendations’ which would be ‘studied’, while the leader of the SPLM/A delegation pointed out that the decision in the report was ‘final and binding’” (Jonson, 2008, p.14). As a result of lack of agreement between the NCP and SPLM/A, the matter was referred to an international court. On July 11, 2008, the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A deposited an Arbitration Agreement with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). The PCA announced its ruling on July 22, 2009.

Ten of the 27 stories concerning Abyei broadcast by SRS were on the day the PCA announced its verdict. I recall that I went to the SRS offices on that day around 10 a.m. Once I entered the office, I sensed a strange silence and everybody seemed to be glued to a computer and wearing headsets. Their faces looked anxious. I was even afraid to walk in lest my steps broke the silence and interrupted the near sacred quietness. Quietly, I went to Emily’s desk (Emily was in charge of helping me get the audio CDs from the archives) and asked her what was going on. She whispered back to me that a decision would be made about Abyei’s borders today, and everyone was waiting. It was apparent that everyone was expecting violence or some kind of bad news. Most of the reporters were South Sudanese and the possibility of violence erupting as a consequence of the decision made it impossible for them to separate their personal from their professional lives and from their role as journalists. I will never forget the sighs of relief among SRS staff as news came in from the NCP and SPLM/A sides that they were going to abide by the court decision. Gradually, the heaviness borne out of an expectation of
violence faded and people began to fill the workplace with conversations as they returned to their daily routines. It was one of these rare moments when I was able to sense the ways news impacted SRS Sudanese staff personal lives. It was apparent to me that their personal lives were inseparable from the news they were reporting.

The conflict and blame frames were applied to the coverage about Abyei as well. Particular to Abyei, the two dominant frames were manifested in two broad sub-frames: (1) expecting violence, but emphasizing cooperation and reconciliation, and (2) emphasizing the people of Abyei, but hinting at oil as the major point of interest. The Abyei region witnessed a deadly conflict in 2008 between Dinka and Misseriya; thus, warnings about the possibility of violence erupting again after the announcement of the court’s decision were evident in the relevant stories. For example, warnings about the possibility of a violent eruption came from the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in Sudan, Ashraf Qazi, who stated in a story that aired on June 30, 2009 that United Nations Advanced Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS) “will assist the National Congress Party and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement to contain any acts of violence that may erupt after the announcement of the verdict by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the status of Abyei” (SRS, June 30, 2009). Responding to these fears and affirming their commitment to contain violence, “the National Congress Party and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement have agreed to take precautionary measures in order to contain any act of violence that may occur after the announcement of the ruling by the Abyei arbitration court in The Hague in July” (SRS, June 30, 2009). The same
commitment was restated by The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deng Alor Kual, who responded to concerns about security arrangements with the statement: “To avoid any violence on the ground that may erupt due to anger caused by the verdict, security apparatus responsible for these kind of arrangements are on standby for anything that may occur” (SRS, July 15, 2009). Moreover, a story regarding GOS (read NCP) buying WS-2 multi-launch rocket launchers from China was interpreted by Dr. Taysir Mohammed Ahmed, a Sudanese politician and the director of the Peace-building Center for the Horn of Africa, as “preparation for an unacceptable ruling on Abyei which we expect towards the end of this month . . . [or] in preparation for an unfavorable decision regarding the future referendum of 2011, or . . . out of concern for an escalation in Darfur and beyond with Chad” (SRS, July 15, 2009). Just two days before the PCA verdict announcement, news had been circulating that the UN representative, Ashraf Qazi, had accused the SPLM/A of moving troops to Abyei (SRS, July 20, 2009). The SPLM/A was quick to deny these accusations. According to SRS:

While the UN accuses the SPLA of moving troops into the Abyei area, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army has accused the Sudan Armed Forces of massing its troops in Abyei. The SPLA spokesman Kuol Deim Kuol told Sudan Radio Service from Juba on Monday, that SPLA has got information that SAF is moving one of its brigades to Abyei town. (SRS, July 20, 2009)

On July 20, 2009, SRS reported three stories of the accusations and counter accusations between the UN and SPLM/A. All of these stories raised concerns about the
possibility of violent reactions to the court’s verdict and that the ruling partners, as well as the international community, should be prepared for a new deadly cycle of violence in Abyei.

On the other hand, both NCP and SPLM/A declared that they planned to abide by whatever the PCA decided. Stories from the governing partners were characterized by a reconciliatory and cooperative tone. The SRS quoted the chairman of the NCP parliamentary group in the National Assembly, Dr. Ghazi Saladin, addressing a press conference in Khartoum on June 30, 2009, as stating that the NCP and SPLM/A “reached an agreement; on Abyei, for instance we agreed that both parties will accept the decision of the Permanent Arbitration Court.” Reportedly, he continued to explain that they “agreed that they would contain any violence on the ground [and] that they need to explain to the people on the ground the meaning and the implication of the decision in order to calm them down, in order to prevent any violence from erupting in the region” (SRS, June 30, 2009). On July 10, SRS reported that the first vice president, Silva Kiir, addressing a mass rally in Abyei, “urged the Dinka Ngok and the Arab Misseriya to live peacefully in the area and maintain their unity” (SRS, July 10, 2009). As the day of the court decision announcement approached, the commitment of both Dinka Ngok and Misseriyah to abide by the court’s decision was restated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deng Alor Kual (SRS, July 15, 2009). What seemed to be two contradictory messages by SRS were reconciled in this position: both parties, while saying they would abide by the court’s ruling, at the same time were preparing for violent reactions. This
statement was explicitly stated in the first story on July 22, 2009, the day the court announced its ruling. After stating the court’s decision, SRS concluded: “both the SPLM/A and the NCP have pledged to abide by the decision of the court but have recently accused each other of moving troops into the area” (SRS, July 22, 2009). This statement revealed the lack of trust between the two partners, which appeared on many occasions in news stories about other issues.

Abyei as a region has a special significance in the history of modern Sudan. Its significance comes from two factors: the people and the oil. As mentioned earlier, the area is a home to Dinka Ngoks, but it is also a grazing land for the seasonal nomadic Messiriya. Both the NCP and SPLM/A hold a special interest in the area. As explained by Johnson (2008):

On the government side there was a desire to retain the loyalty of the Misseriya, a constituency the NCP was wooing away from the Umma Party. There was also a determination not to lose control over Western Kordofan’s large oil deposits, most of which are found within or around the area claimed by the Ngok Dinka . . .

On the SPLM’s side, there was the importance of the Ngok Dinka as one of their own constituencies, and the conviction that the failure to resolve the Abyei dispute through the mechanism of the Addis Ababa Agreement was one of the grievances that led to the outbreak of war in 1983. (p. 8)

From the above, it is clear that both NCP and SPLM/A wanted to appeal to the local inhabitants (Misseriya in the case on NCP and Dinka in the case of SPLM/A) and to
make sure that they would not lose control of oil rich areas. These two aspects, people and oil, appeared frequently and were featured in the news about Abyei. The Abyei issue was framed as if people, and not the land/oil, was the concern. However, when the court verdict was announced, the oil issue surfaced and dominated the discourse about Abyei. UN representative Ashraf Qazi asserted that one of the most important outcomes of the U.S- sponsored conference on the CPA was that “peace will be maintained [in Abyei] and that the concerns of the local people [would] be addressed in a manner that tensions [did] not rise to the extent that the peace [would] be threatened.” He continued to ensure that UNMIS “[would] be maximizing [its] efforts and coordinating [its] efforts with the authorities there in order to ensure that the concerns of all the local people [were] addressed no matter what the verdict” (SRS, June 30, 2009).

When the court announced its verdict, the SRS quoted Abdelbagi Gailani, an NCP State Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, stating that:

This area will be the focus and it will be where the unity of Sudan starts from this area if we focus on development. There is no distinct line between Dinka and Messiriya in this area. People are intermingling, they are consolidated and they reflect the actual unity of Sudan. (SRS, July 22, 2009)

Edward Lino, former chief administrator of Abyei, repeated the point, confirming that “the main problem was where the people in the area live -not the location of the oil-producing areas” (SRS, July 22, 2009). Dr. Zachariah Deng Majuk, a Dinka Ngok community leader, asserted that both communities should work together to implement the
decision, but more importantly, they should recognize that “we are both from Abyei and we belong to the same community, so you cannot say that this issue has been politicized, but we do know that the SPLM/A was concerned about the rights of the people here” (SRS, July 22, 2009). While most SPLM/A leaders were keen to move toward a reconciliatory position and express concern about the people and affirm that there are no winners or losers in the situation, when the court announcement came out, NCP was quick to declare that it was oil that mattered. The NCP head of delegation to the Permanent Court of Arbitration, Muhammad al-Diri-Diri, declared the NCP “victory” and described the court ruling as favoring the NCP because “the Heglig oil field is not in the Abyei area.” Muhammad al-Diri-Diri, using divisive language, stated that:

   We observed the following: First, all the oil-fields of Heglig were removed from Abyei. We consider this to be a great achievement. These fields were included unfairly in the Abyei area, and now it is returning to the North without a conflict. Secondly, removing the area extending along the Darfur and Kordofan boundaries from the Abyei areas, we consider this an important achievement, because this place was outside the conflict areas for a long period. Thirdly, the return of an area that ranges from between ten to eleven thousand square kilometers out of a total of sixteen thousand square kilometers which was disputed between us and SPLM is a great achievement. (SRS, July 22, 2009).

Al-Diri-Diri’s statement summed up the position of the NCP and while SRS, by using SPLM/A statements, tried to frame the issue that people and not the oil was the concern
in Abyei and used uniting reconciliatory language, the NCP head of delegation reframed the issue in as a we/them and the conflict frame was ubiquitous. His statement was a clear example of war journalism frame: sport (winners/losers). SPLM/A was sticking with its “the people not the oil what mattered” frame, even after the NCP statement.

Edward Lino, in response to al-Diri-Diri, stated:

> Whatever people like al-Diri-Diri are saying about a success – that it’s a very big success for the National Congress Party because of the oil-producing area, our problem is the human beings. Where they live and where they belong… we have really succeeded because peace in that area is peace for everybody. It is peace for the Misseriyah, the Dinka, in Aweil, in Twic and for the Nuer and for the other people there. So what we need is peace so that our people can go back and settle and do the things people are doing everywhere else in the world. (SRS, July 22, 2009).

According to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deng Alor Kual:

> The common people have no problem, the problem is the politicians. We have no problem with the Misseriya. The Misseriya, as stipulated in the agreement that they will pass through Abyei and will continue to travel with their cows. Nobody will prevent them but they must know that there is a border. There was a rumor that the area of Deng Alor had fallen under the jurisdiction of the North and some newspapers reported that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was now a Northern Sudanese and I told them there is no problem, all this time I have been a
Northerner [laughter] and up to now Northern Sudan and Southern Sudan are one country until the time comes for the referendum. (SRS, July 28, 2009)

While the SRS frame bounced between whether it was the oil or the people that mattered, the audience members’ frame was clear: distrusting the NCP and declaring that for the NCP, it was all about oil. The participants, who as mentioned above voiced distrust in the NCP and its motives towards the people of South Sudan and the CPA, expressed that when it comes to North South borders, the NCP will not let the oil fields go. The Abyei problem, according to Maria:

Is because the government does not leave them to settle peacefully, so because oil riches in the area. That is the one that leads the government to have problems, now they are not to sit idle because the area has oil riches so the people now are wrangling on top of them, so they don’t want to be aside but they say they are a community, they are our people they are from the [pause]. Why should they go to the North? And why are the Northerners complaining on our people? These are the problems and this is because of oil. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Maria, among others, did not buy into the rhetoric of “the people not the land/oil is what mattered” expressed by both the SPLM/A and the NCP. Deng shared Maria’s views that Abyei has “got [a] very very good type of oil. When they will split, the Southern land, when the people are for Southerners, but due to the oil that is why they [the North] would want to take that part” (personal communication, July 11, 2009). Similar views were expressed by James who contended that “the problem is because Abyei is oil rich
[laughter] [and] people from the North they don’t want oil to belong to the South . . . that is the problem” (personal communication, July 11, 2009).

While SRS coverage shied away from presenting the oil as the major source of conflict in Abyei, audience members brought that forward. Audience members expressed their distrust in the NCP motives and acknowledged the oil, not the people of Abyei as the main concern in Abyei case.

Census and Elections: Fraud and Treachery.

Between April 22 and May 6, 2008, Sudan’s fifth population and housing census was conducted in both North and South Sudan. Because the census results would form the basis for drawing electoral constituencies for the 2010 elections and the crucial 2011 referendum, the census results have been highly contested. In addition, the census will have a significant impact on future power and wealth sharing in Sudan. As indicated in Chapter Two, according to the CPA stipulations, NCP would hold 52 percent and the SPLM/A 28 percent of the seats in the national parliament until the fifth census was completed. The census was supposed to provide the basis for readjustment of these quotas and the South’s representation in the national government. During the campaign to encourage participation in the census, the SRS often linked the census to power and wealth sharing as well as to development initiatives. As a result, when the census results were released, many of the participants were concerned about the consequences of the census results on the future of South Sudan’s position in power and wealth sharing.
Another issue that has been debated was the inclusion of ethnicity and religion in the census questionnaire. SPLM/A accused the NCP of omitting ethnicity and religion in order to claim the dominance of Arabic-Islamic identity of Sudan, and to suppress anything to the contrary. The SPLM/A secretary General, Pagan Amum, was reported as saying that “the two questions of ethnicity and religion should be included in the census questionnaire form in order to identify different communities in Sudan.” Moreover, Amum “accused NCP as deliberately omitting the two questions as part of promoting Islamization in Sudan” (SRS, April 22, 2008). Official statistics claim that Sudan’s Muslim population forms 70% of the country’s total population. These statistics were based on the 1993 census. Often sharia law proponents and those who claim an Arabic Islamic identity for Sudan use these statistics to support their claims. Many oppositional and secular activists claimed that if religion and ethnicity were included, these statistics would change in favor of the non-Muslim, non-Arabized population.

Before the announcement of the census results, the National Election Committee (NEC) announced on April 2, 2009 that the elections, which were scheduled for July 2009, would be postponed until February 2010. The NEC justified the postponement based on the delay of the announcement of the census results. The first response documented on SRS came from the SPLM/A’s spokesman, Yien Mathew, who stated

35 The elections, which were postponed again, finally took place on April 11-15, 2010. Omar al-Bashir was elected president of Sudan and Salva Kiir president of South Sudan. The SPLM/A and major oppositional parties boycotted the elections either partially or fully. SPLM/A partially boycotted the elections in the North but participated in the South. Umma Party SCP boycotted the elections fully. UDP and PCP participated for the first day but withdrew due to alleged fraud by the NCP.
that there were ulterior motives behind the postponement and that the postponement was “part of a tactic by the National Congress Party.” Mathew went on to explain, “first of all, it [NCP] delayed the results of the census and then it delayed the demarcation of the borders between South and North, which resulted in the delay of the elections” (SRS, April 3, 2009). Finally, amid all these issues of power and wealth sharing, identity and structural justice, skepticism, and speculations about a possible fraud, the census results were announced in May 2009.

The announcement provoked a heated debate across the political spectrum in Sudan, but most significantly between the two governing partners. SRS stories reflected that controversy. The fraud frame was the main frame that was adopted by SRS in the coverage of the census debate, and consequently, the elections. Once the census committee announced the results in May 2009, SRS reported that “the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement says that the first vice-president and the president of the Government of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, did not approve of the census results which were endorsed by the presidency last week.” Not only did SPLM/A not endorse the results but, according to SRS, the SPLM/A “totally rejected the results of the census” (SRS, May 14, 2009). Word choices significantly influence the way an issue is framed. The use of a strong word such as “totally” denoted a non-conciliatory tone. Since the census issue was very controversial and trading of blame between the two governing partners characterized the whole debate, SRS was keen to present the two sides’ views. However, it was always the SPLM/A officials who were quoted in story leadings, giving
their point of view an advantage in the framing of the debate. A case in point was the first
story that appeared on May 14, 2009. The opening section of the story declared that the
first vice-president and the president of the GOSS, Salva Kiir Mayardit, did not approve
of the census results. The story continued to quote Pagan Amum, the SPLM/A secretary
general, in a press conference as stating:

> This is a lie from the NCP; they lied that the SPLM chairman and the first vice-
> president agreed on the census result, and that is incorrect. The NCP lied because
> the vice-president presented the same comments we raised in our press
> conference in a written document to the presidency. (SRS, May 14, 2009)

After stating that the NCP lied, Ghazi Salah el-Din, a prominent NCP official, stated the
NCP’s position:

> Regarding the census population issue, the stance we know comes from the stance
> of the presidency after they endorsed the result in the presence of the first Vice-
> President and President of Southern Sudan government who agreed on that during
> the presidency meeting. (SRS, May 14, 2009).

It did not matter what Ghazi Salah el-Din claimed because Pagan Amum’s statement
about the NCP’s deceitful nature had more salience.

The fraud frame was further reinforced in SRS by different stories which
reiterated that the census results were altered by the NCP to secure a fraudulent victory in
the forthcoming elections. Quoting different entities to reinforce the SPLM/A’s rejection
of the census results was one technique used by SRS to legitimize SPLM/A’s claims.
SRS reported different entities rejection of the census results, namely, the Justice and Equality Movement, a Darfurian anti-government group (SRS, May 25, 2009), the Council of Elders of the Fur tribe in Darfur (SRS, June 23, 2009), The Transitional Darfur Regional Authority or TDRA (SRS, June 30, 2009), and the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SRS, July 3, 2009).

Salience is a significant feature of framing. When the members of SSLA rejected the results of the census, SRS interviewed the chairman of the Southern Sudan Census Commission, Isaiah Chol, who countered the SSLA’s claims by affirming that the census results were accurate. However, since the opening section read “Members of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly have strongly rejected the census results.” (SRS, July 3, 2009), rejection framed the story.

The SRS fraud frame surfaced in the interviews when the majority of the participants expressed their distrust of the authenticity of the census results. Philip confirmed that the census “was not fair” and was fraudulent, and he went on to explain: I heard about the census, but myself, I heard it was not fair because according to the results, they came up with the results that I am not very sure they are the results… because I am seeing [in] the northern part [of the country] the results were high higher than the southern side. To look at it, the southerners are the majority, but how come? (Personal communication, July 4, 2009)

Majunk also stated that the census results were a lie: “population census first what they said the total census of Sudan is 38 million of Southerners. Lastly they said 8
million, which is a total lie again because Southern Sudan, the way I know, is more than 15 million” (personal communication, July 9, 2009). Acquilino reiterated the same and confirmed that NCP was the one that cooked the result: “They conducted it but there were some frauds I think it [NCP] could not be trusted” (personal communication, July 3, 2009).

As explained previously, the census results will form the basis for electoral constituencies’ demarcation as well as the future power and wealth sharing formula between the North and the South. In that regard, Pagan Amum, the SPLM/A secretary general, stated “maybe the results of the census would be used for other purposes but these results cannot be used as basis for peaceful power-sharing and for wealth-sharing in the country, and even for development purposes we still doubt these results” (SRS, May 9, 2009). SRS reported that:

The census results will help define constituency boundaries and will determine the distribution of wealth and power sharing. The results, which were announced last week, are being contested by the South. The Government of Southern Sudan is concerned that the census is weighted in favor of the North. (SRS, May 9, 2009).

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that, historically, North Sudan has always had a higher population than South Sudan. SPLM/A and others who contested the census results never questioned this fact. However, the assertion in the story that “the Government of Southern Sudan is concerned that the census is weighted in favor of the
North” contributed to many participants’ impressions that the census results were intentionally skewed to make the North Sudan population seem larger than the South’s population. Rebecca N was concerned that “it was found that the population of South and North were competitive [competing]. [The] Northern [population] had become more than the South, so it is not good [the fact that the North has higher population]. That result is fake” (personal communication, July 11, 2009). Simon raised a similar concern about the census and the results that “in the side of Northern, they say that the population of Northern is higher than Southern, it is not good [that the North has higher population]” (personal communication, July 4, 2009). James rejected the results: “because we, the Southerners, are very many, and we are stuck ourselves 39 million, and they say we are 8 million. This one is not true. We don’t like that.” He continued by saying “That number should not be called [the] total . . . . We will never consider 8 million. No!” (personal communication, July 11, 2009).

The fraud frame can be thought of as an extension of the overarching conflict and blame frames. In other words, the census, as well as the elections, was one of the many factors that contributed to the conflict between the NCP and SPLM/A. The fraud frame was specifically applied to news pertaining to the elections and census and not other news topics. From the perspective of the participants, the fraud frame was ubiquitous. However, as they did when discussing other issues, many participants went beyond the fraud frame to contend that the alleged false reporting of the census was a maneuver by the Northerners to take away benefits South Sudan gained from the CPA, such as power
and wealth sharing, and most importantly the upcoming referendum about self-determination. Again, it was the distrust frame that audience members applied as an interpretive frame. For the participants, the issue was not just altered census results as media implied. Instead, they had deeper concerns about the implications of the NCP not fulfilling the CPA stipulations. These perceptions of the consequences of the census results were prevalent in the interviews. For James, the census results were not acceptable:

Because when the Southerners and Northerners want to agree on something for the issue of division of wealth and whatever, it will affect Southerners because the Northerners will say, “these people are very few they are only 8 million” and that one it is not good for the Southerners. Yes it will affect us. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Deng confirmed that the census results would affect the power sharing formula in the country. Thus, the underestimation of the South’s population meant marginalization in terms of power:

You see these people are joking [laughter] because, according to the outcome of the results, people are not happy about it because they say it is 8 [million] point something, [this is the] information of South Sudan. Something painful because they want to get that [number] and get [the] opportunity to use it as a tool to defend themselves when people, when people are going to vote later on, they will say your number is not right to be giving you the country [power and wealth] so
you are very few in number while that is not the number. (Personal communication, July 7, 2009)

Majunk explained the ways he thought that the census results will affect the peace agreement implementation:

That is what I know and that is eeh! Another hitch to CPA so because we are going to pick or indicate constituencies according to this population, meaning that others there will be no constituencies in other places because this number is not enough. [In] Aweil alone I can say 5 million yeah, [in] Aweil alone I can say 5 million. But that one is political lying because they want to destroy peace. (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Rebecca T. also expressed concern about how the census results will affect the elections and the referendum:

I don’t know what they are thinking. If they use those results, it is bad for the elections. Those who will vote for unity or separation, they say, because if they say “if people will vote for unity, the North and the South [will] have to join,” and if the people from the South are thirty thousand, thirty million and that is [the North] reaching fifty million, then they have taken it. Yes. That’s what they are thinking about, that’s why they say “its thirty million all.” (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Rebecca T’s and Majunk’s statements echoed a concern that was shared by other participants, that the underestimation of the Southerners’ population meant not only the
marginalization of the South in national agendas, but also in determining the outcome of the referendum in particular. Rebecca T’s statement also raised an important observation: that many participants were confused about the difference between the elections and the referendum. Many did not know that the right to vote in the referendum was exclusive to Southerners. Rebecca T’s fear that the Northerners would outnumber the Southerners in the referendum and thus dictate the referendum outcome had no basis in reality.

However, Rebecca T was not alone in raising such fears. Deng shared the same concerns that the North will not follow what is stipulated in the CPA regarding self determination:

They [the elections] cannot be fair! Because your elder brother is more experienced than you because he came out before you and [is] experienced in all the things. When people are not serious, the elections will not be fair because Arabs, that one, they don’t want to leave Southerners to be independent. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

The inaccuracy of the census had been cited in SRS as a reason for speculations that the results “might refuel the current conflict in Darfur” as quoted in a statement by the Council of Elders of the Fur tribe in Darfur (SRS, June 23, 2009). Rebecca N held the same views and thought that the census results could be another catalyst of war: I heard census was not right. If this election is coming, election of the president up, there will be [long pause] worse war will come because those who have remained now in
Sudan, they are few not like before and if the war breaks again, they will be destroyed now, so what comes to my mind is separation (personal communication, July 11, 2009). Elizabeth thought that the North cannot be trusted and agreed with Rebecca N’s view that separation was the way to go: “I normally heard it [the census results] from these radio but we don’t care about – even [if] we [Southern Sudanese] are one or we can go for separation” (Elizabeth, personal communication, July 6, 2009).

The participants referred to their daily life experiences to construct meaning from media messages. Most of the participants restated that the census was fraudulent, but incorporated information they heard from friends or other community members. For instance, although SRS did not mention any technical problems with the census exercise and the way it was conducted that could be used as a basis for delegitimizing the results, the participants came up with a number of anecdotal stories about the falsification of the census data. For instance, Deng, although he admitted that he was not in Sudan during the census, stated that, in places that are hard to reach, census workers made up the results:

Like in South Sudan, places that are very far and [have] no transport so . . . so . . . if people will be going late then maybe people will not be going to the area where people are there who can take that number so many challenges are there and they don’t follow up (Deng, personal communication, July 7, 2009)

Similarly, Martin heard that census workers randomly filled in responses whenever they were tired and could not reach people:
They did the census but I heard also [working for] the census is not comfortable. They should count again because people didn’t go to other areas [and] the others… some people also got tired on the way, they only estimated the figures they didn’t give the real figures because people were arguing on that one so this is what I found out on the census. (Martin, personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Magdalena alleged the unauthenticated census results were due to many technical problems in the census exercise, from forms that were printed in Arabic and presented to non-Arabic speakers for the duration of the census:

[The] census it is supposed to be made in a day or one day to two days in the country but that one of Sudan last time it took a lot of time. Yes, so everything seems not to be okay. A lot of rebels [were] there during the [census]. Second, number two, about what I heard again last time about the papers, they were printed in the Arabic language. Those things are supposed to be printed in, even those themselves they don’t know Arabic, they know only English to that side and were not being trained . . . so last time even it was very hard for them to go and convey the message while the questionnaire inside was Arabic and people don’t know Arabic which means we are just moving with the paper through what you have crammed from somebody but not what you are seeing with your eyes.

(Magdalena, personal communication, July 9, 2009)

In conclusion, SRS adopted a fraud frame in reporting the census results. The participants adopted the same frame, and added to it a distrust frame. The participants
moved beyond adopting the frame as something factual and interpreted the consequences of the fraud in the larger context of the CPA. Construction of the meaning of the fraud frame falls under the larger frame of distrust of the NCP to carry out the CPA and consequently the CPA failure. Again, with the census and elections, the audience members enriched the framing process with information from their daily life experiences and by making connections with other anecdotal stories to explain the results.

Violent Clashes in South Sudan: Ethnic Clashes or an NCP Conspiracy?

The March-July 2009 period witnessed an extended period of violent conflict between the Murle and Lou-Nuer communities of Jongeli state. The conflict, which erupted in March 2009, was often attributed to a vicious cycle of cattle raiding and revenge between the two communities (Young, 2010). According to a Human Rights Watch report, the Murle and Lou-Nuer’s conflict claimed more than 1,200 civilian lives between March and August 2009 (Human Rights Watch, 2009). In addition, this period also witnessed other scattered clashes between different communities in South Sudan, as well as multiple demonstrations and protests by civil servants, veterans and soldiers. In total, SRS reported 22 stories that dealt with the conflict specifically. Peace efforts were reported seven times in the period of March-July 2009. Of the 22 stories about conflict, SRS broadcast eight stories specifically about the Murle and Lou-Nuer clashes, four stories about other clashes, and six stories about different demonstrations and protests. SRS also reported four stories that were general in nature, but dealt with conflict in South Sudan.
One of the major features of these stories was the framing of these clashes as ethnic conflicts. Interestingly, during interviews with SRS editors and news writers, many participants stated that SRS policy required reporters to not use ethnic identifications when reporting on communal conflict. Reporters were advised to identify only the counties or regions of the disputants (George, personal communication, June 10, 2009; Kate, personal communication, June 16, 2009). This policy, according to SRS staff, was adopted in order to avoid framing violent clashes in South Sudan as ethnic or tribal conflicts. However, it seemed that this policy was not strictly observed.

Consequently, in most of the stories about violent clashes, SRS identified the disputants’ ethnic groups explicitly. For example, in one story about clashes in Mayiendit County in Unity state, SRS reported that “two people killed and 11 others injured when fighting broke between Gatbang and Chiengbagrial clans in Mayiendit county” (SRS, May 09, 2009). In another story concerning clashes in the Rumbek and Wulu counties of Lakes state, SRS reported that “about 25 people have been killed and several injured in intertribal clashes between the Dinka agar of Rumbek County and the Jurbeli of Wulu County because of cattle raiding” (SRS, June 12, 2009).

At other times, stories started with a non-ethnic tone such as “two people killed and a six year old boy was abducted by unidentified gunmen in Akwey Atempey . . .” but soon the story brought a leading ethnic identification by stating that “residents of Bur believe the caperers are from Bipor County. . . .” The story continued, “the attack came two days after a heavy fighting between Murle and Dinka-Nuer in Bipor County,”
suggesting that the incident was a consequence of the clashes between the Murle and Dinka-Nuer and thus it was an ethnic conflict (SRS, March 13, 2009). Another case in point was a story that SRS aired on April 8, 2009 in which the story’s opening identified only the number of victims and the regional affiliation of the victims and attackers without identifying their ethnic affiliation: “Ten people were killed and five others were wounded in Akobo County in Jonglei state after gunmen suspected of being from Pibor County attacked the area.” Although no ethnic identification was mentioned in the opening commentary, in closing remarks, the reporter said: “Over 600 people were killed when Lou-Nuer attacked Pibor County last month in revenge for an attack which was allegedly carried out by men from Pibor. Thirty Lou-Nuer were killed in a January attack” (SRS, April 8, 2009). The closing remarks implied that what started as a clash between two counties was ultimately an ethnic conflict. On April 29, 2009, SRS reported an eruption of violence in Jabel Lado area and again the fight was described as a fight between the Bari and Mundari: “The Bari and Mundari communities, who have lived peacefully over the years, clashed last week over cattle raiding in Jebel Lado area, north of Juba” (SRS, April 29, 2009). May 4th, 2009 reports of investigations by UNAMIS of rape cases in Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal states, concluded with the following commentary: “About 27 Bongo women were raped by Gok clan youth from Cueibet County in Lakes state” (SRS, May 4, 2009). According to SRS reporting, it was again ethnic lines that defined the conflict in Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal states.
In spite of the ethnic tone in SRS reporting, SRS provided an explanation for violent conflicts in South Sudan and did not only portray them as irrational ethnic hatred. Cattle raiding and revenge missions were the most commonly cited reasons for these clashes. On March 26, 2009 SRS quoted the deputy chairman of the Lou-Nuer Youth Association (LNYA), Charles Chul, explaining that “the root cause for the attack from the Lou-Nuer is to take revenge from the Murle community who had attacked Lou-Nuer killing 46 people” (SRS, March 26, 2009). When a ceasefire conference took place in May 2009 to stop the conflict between the Lou-Nuer and Murle, SRS quoted a member of the ceasefire committee clearly stating the genesis of the vicious cycle of this conflict: During the meeting in Pibor, the Likuangole group in Pibor said the people who attacked Lou-Nuer in February were not from Likuangole but from Gumruk Payam in Pibor. Then Lou-Nuer who went after their cattle revenged on the wrong group in Likuangole. The same thing, the Likuangole group went and attacked Burmeth villages in Akobo while they were supposed to go to Waat or Uror and Akobo west. The solution is to bring the two communities together to talk and solve all these problems, because these killings are a disturbing situation. (SRS, May 4, 2009)

On May 14, reporting about an attack on Torkech village, SRS quoted the program director of the Nasir Community Development Agency, David Nyang, explaining that the attack “was motivated by a desire for revenge after past raids by Jikany Nuer” (SRS, May 14, 2009). The same reason of cattle raiding was given for the
clashes between the Bari and Mundari (SRS, April 29, 2009), and between Dinka Agar of Rumbek County and the Jurbeli of Wulu County (SRS, June 12, 2009).

Another frame that characterized stories about violent clashes was the blame frame. In SRS stories, GOSS and SPLM/A were blamed for their failure to stop the clashes. On March 26, 2009, the Lou-Nuer Youth Association “accused the GOSS, who visited the area earlier, of not keeping their pledges to restore peace between the two communities” (SRS, March 26, 2009). On May 4, 2009 SRS reported that “The Lou-Nuer and Murle blamed the government of southern Sudan for its failure to stop the recent bloodshed in Jonglei state” (SRS, May 4, 2009). A member of the ceasefire committee and SPLM/A youth chairman in Jonglei state, Paul Kuakuak, was quoted by SRS explaining that “the reason why they are accusing the politicians [SPLM/A and GOSS] is because the soldiers [of SPLA], who were supposed to protect the civilians in areas that they were deployed in, they were just watching innocent people being killed” (SRS, May 4, 2009). Civilians also called upon SPLM/A and GOSS to stop the cattle raiding in south Sudan (SRS, April 3, 2009). However, neither GOSS nor SPLM/A were accused of causing the conflict or siding with any disputant in any way. It was the NCP that was accused of destabilizing the region by smuggling arms and arming militia. These accusations came explicitly from top SPLM/A officials. The SPLM/A secretary-general, Pagan Amum, blamed the NCP for the clashes by “smuggling weapons to Southern Sudan to destabilize the security situation” (SRS, May 14, 2009). Although the SPLM/A accusation came as a reply to earlier NCP accusations that SPLM/A was responsible for
the instability in South Sudan, it was the SPLM/A statement that was highlighted in the opening statements of the story. One month later, SRS quoted the SPLM/A secretary general for the Northern sector, Yassir Arman, reiterating the same accusation. Arman was quoted as stating:

We [the SPLM/A] established it many times and we have evidence that the NCP is sending arms to Southern Sudan and to the different militia factions in Southern Sudan . . . the NCP has an organic link with the militias in Southern Sudan. Why they are doing that? It is part of destabilizing the regime in the South. (SRS, June 17, 2009).

It is worth noting that these accusations from Amum and Arman came amidst a heated debate about the results of the fifth national population census. The SPLM/A rejected the census results and accused the NCP of manipulating the census results ahead of the elections which were to be held in April 2010. The census controversy sparked a wave of trading blames between the two ruling partners.

While framing violence in South Sudan as ethnic clashes was prevalent in SRS, for audience members, the ethnic/tribal frame was not ubiquitous at all. The participants, although recognizing the prevalence of violent clashes in South Sudan, understood the conflict in the context of a failure in the peace process rather than an ethnic frame. For Majak, peace did not only mean signing a peace agreement, but providing security for the ordinary people of South Sudan:
We also heard [that] there is also peace, at the same time and also on the other hand there is also war. Like the last month we heard there was war. We also heard there are still crimes that are still happening, others have to rise so [as] to fight with the other cities, [and] communities; those are still there. That shows that things have not been put in a way that they are supposed to be. (Majak, personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Majunk reached the same conclusions as Majak; peace means human security not just agreements:

So even now when you see the life in Sudan, that life is not good. You see war; in Abyei they are struggling for border, clashes in Malakal in 2006 that was [pause] that shows that peace was not sincere in both sides. (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Maria, when asked how she feels about the CPA, after a long pause, stated she doubted that the CPA has brought real peace to South Sudan:

I have doubts [in the CPA] . . . because there are some problems occurring in South Sudan, clashes among the tribes and clans, so this is what led me to have doubts. Secondly, there also problems in South Sudan like sometimes in the side of Dinkas called Abyei, there are also some clashes. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

Concurring, Andrew D also thought peace without human security is not real peace but only “something like peace”:
Because we heard that there is peace in Sudan but we cannot say that is peace. It’s an interim or something like a peace but you cannot command [consider] it as a peace. Why not? I say so, [because] there is some death happening in Sudan, killing each other while if there is peace in Sudan, support and everything for killing human beings will stop. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009)

Although SRS stories brought blame upon both GOSS and NCP for being responsible for these clashes to some degree, participants, on the other hand, only highlighted the NCP in the blame frame. The allegations that were brought by SRS reports against the NCP were perceived as a credible source by most participants, who restated the SRS reports as a matter of fact, while the allegations against the SPLM/A and its failure to keep the peace in the region were rarely mentioned. Some participants, such as Peter, recognized the conflict as cattle raids and conflict over resources:

You see these are, maybe this tribe and this tribe maybe have (pause) aahh conflict over the land. You see, these people can say this is our people, our place where our cows should go and graze you see! That’s where this conflict starts.

(Personal communication, July 8, 2009)

Simon also heard about the violent clashes on the radio and he recognized cattle rustling as a major cause of conflict: “I have heard [in] the Sudan [there is] raiding of the cows, the cattle, [that was what] I used to listen [to] on radio” (personal communication, July 4, 2009).
However, many others, like Madeng, dismissed the claims that these clashes were because of cattle raiding, and applied the NCP distrust frame. Madeng claimed that Al-Bashir and the NCP were arming militias to do the cattle raiding, and consequently inciting violence:

When I see these cattle raiders who are killing those people . . . it has some problems. Aah! They are not looking critically inside [into] what is happening in it [cattle raiding], who led the people to fight? Who led the people to fight for themselves? There is a problem! In the side, they look in their table eeh in Juba but they don’t turn our side. They said we now, we make a ceasefire, the gun has been put aside, and money also [pause] like why people say ‘money talk and kill.’

Now our brothers who are northerners people like Mr. Bashir is cooking his mind and is working on. People now they said okay we have peace with Bashir, nothing else is going on, let’s serve our nini [what do you call it], let’s serve our leaders, let us put ourselves in uniform. Bashir also is using his money. He will divide the people, “let’s have some people who have been getting the money in the host community not in town like Malakal, like Nasir, like Bor town, like Juba, in the bush and they get their salary in the bush because they are fighting with the people, go grabbing the cattle from somebody” [pause] Who said thank you when you grabbed those cattle and you kill the person of that one? He [al-Bashir] will let you to be commander and he is giving you money. (Personal communication, July 10, 2009)
Majunk also thought the government [read NCP] was arming militias to destabilize the South. For Majunk, the NCP’s goal was to create chaos in the South in order to eventually escape the full implementation of the CPA, including the right to self determination, which some expected to be an outcome of the 2011 referendum:

The government is now arming militias to destabilize the Southern government, so when referendum comes, the Southern Sudan will divide itself, others will just vote for [stammers] unity or others for separation. Someone who is tired you can just say no! It’s better to go [secede]. Others who just want to get interest [benefit] in the government side, they say that is unity, so such a thing. (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Deng accused the NCP of using a “divide and rule” policy to destabilize the South. As mentioned in Chapter Two, historically the SPLM/A has been perceived by many as dominated by Dinka. The 1991 split between the Garang group and Rieck Machar, Lam Akol, and Gordon Kong group was perceived by many as a Dinka-Neur historical struggle over power (Idriss, 2001; O’Ballance, 2000). Although the two groups reconciled later, the split had a negative influence on coexistence between the two communities. It was against this background that Deng (who is a Dinka and a community leader) came to the conclusion that the NCP was capitalizing on these ethnic differences by inciting other Southern groups against a perceived Dinka domination:

South Sudan security is just too too too bad! Too too too bad! People are dying! .
. . . Militia, [which were] armed by the “separate and divide to rule,” is taking
place, like Murle. They use people; they used to give them guns they say ah! This government is for Dinka and this is for Nuer . . . and you go . . . shoot them then you are good person. Personal communication, July 7, 2009)

Deng believed that NCP was mobilizing a certain group (the Murle in this case) because of their ignorance and lack of knowledge about the real motives of the NCP:

They are not educated. They don’t know it’s going to finish them. They were influenced by others: “do this! Do this! I will benefit [reward] you.” This is what is taking place in South Sudan, and this [is the] war in Southern Sudan as I see [it] in my vision. Well later on, when people separate, we will be like Israel and Palestine. (Personal communication, July 7, 2009)

Elizabeth also accused the NCP and al-Bashir of inciting violence in South Sudan. She asserted that al-Bashir, and the NCP, were not sincere when they signed the CPA, a conviction that was held by many other participants and is discussed in more detail in the CPA section of this chapter:

When we had peace in Sudan our president John Garang, and Omar al Bashir, Omar is the one who was acting as president; he put a signature for a sign, a sign for peace. But now there is another tribe in Sudan in our area, it is called Murle, he [al-Bashir] gave those people money and they used to come and kill us, if you stay with your children they come and take your children and they shoot you. So

---

36 The Israel-Palestine conflict is very prominent in Sudanese public discourse because of the strong connection with Middle East. For many Sudanese this conflict is an example of the ultimate animosity.
in Sudan . . . peace is said by mouth but it is not done physically. But Omar al Bashir is the one [inciting violence]. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009)

The alleged actions of the NCP and the North have led her to the belief that separation was the solution. In the end, according to Elizabeth, the Murle were Southerners and no matter what they were doing at the time:

When Sudan is separate, Omar [al-Bashir] will be in one side, and we are on our side. These Murle are our people, they will come to our side. And if they are not coming to us, they will go to Arabs, and if they go to the Arabs, join Omar Bashir . . . we will know that they are gone. And if the separation is done, they will join us because they are our people. The problem why [do] they fight with us, the secret [is] from Omar Bashir. (Personal communication, July 6, 2009).

In Elizabeth’s opinion, siding with the North would not earn the Murle the acceptance of the North because they would come back to their “brothers” in the South.

As discussed in the previous sections, the conflict frame characterized coverage of the peace process in Sudan. And, the blame frame appeared as an extension of the conflict frame, as the NCP was often blamed for causing conflict. For audience members, the distrust frame was used as an interpretative instrument to contextualize the different issues discussed above. The NCP was perceived as untrustworthy and not sincere when attempting to implement the peace agreement. Moreover, the outstanding issues were framed by SRS as impeding the full implementation of the CPA, but audience members perceived them as intentionally planned by the NCP to overturn the CPA and the benefits
it brought to South Sudan. These frames had great significance in the way audience members thought of the referendum and the future of Sudan after 2011. The following section elaborates on the way SRS framed the referendum and the future of Sudan after 2011 and the ways audience members interpreted the radio messages and constructed their own frames.

The 2011 Referendum and Sudan Thereafter

According to CPA stipulations, South Sudanese will vote for self-determination in the 2011 referendum. The referendum outcome will determine whether South Sudan will remain united with the North, as one country, or become a new, independent state. As discussed in Chapter Two, historically, the SPLM/A marketed itself as a struggle movement against injustice for all marginalized Sudanese, regardless of their ethnic or regional origin. John Garang, although he recognized the plight of South Sudan, made it clear that the movement is “for the liberation of the whole Sudanese people” (Garang, 1992, p. 22, italics mine). Early in its beginnings, SPLM/A distinguished itself from other separatist movements in Sudan by introducing what is known now in Sudanese political discourse as “New Sudan.” As discussed in Chapter Two, the New Sudan vision was a vision of justice for all Sudan, not only South Sudan. Even the naming of SPLM/A as the Sudan’s People Liberation Movement and not as South Sudan’s People Liberation Movement illustrates the national, and not regional, agenda of the founding leaders of SPLM/A. However, especially after the tragic death of John Garang, political analysts claimed that SPLM/A moved away from its national perspective of Sudan’s issues to a
more South Sudan position (e.g. Kameir, 2009). In addition to that, or maybe because of
that, many political analysts as well as international bodies began to treat South Sudan
secession as de-facto (including SRS for the period of 2005-2007). When I was in
Nairobi for my fieldwork, I started noticing that, as a result of the semi-autonomous
government of South Sudan's presence, the area was being treated as an independent
state. For instance, the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) could issue visas to Sudan
via SPLM/A’s office in Nairobi independently from the embassy of Sudan. One could
buy a flag of South Sudan (SPLM/A flag) that was different from Sudan’s flag.

Despite all the signs and claims that South Sudan was moving towards becoming
an independent state, SRS coverage portrayed a different picture whenever the issue of
the referendum was addressed. While the referendum was portrayed as what South
Sudanese fought for and finally achieved, SRS often quoted SPLM/A officials
advocating for unity. However, this unity was always represented as conditional and
contingent on the NCP sincerity and the North’s efforts in making the unity option
attractive for Southern voters. Attractive unity is an expression that had become popular
in Sudanese political discourse after the CPA and South Sudanese gained the right to self
determination. Attractive unity or making unity attractive means attracting South
Sudanese to vote for unity by fulfilling promises of structural and cultural justice. It
became the responsibility of the North to keep the Sudan united by making the unity
attractive. In many of the stories SRS aired, issues of structural and cultural justice were
linked to attracting South Sudanese to vote for unity. Development issues, such as
building roads, were considered “the corner stone of development and make unity attractive between the North and the South” (SRS, April 15, 2009).

To reaffirm the SPLM/A stand on Sudan’s unity, the GOSS president and Sudan’s first vice president, Salva Kiir, explicitly stated, when addressing Abyei residents on July 15, 2009:

We are ready for unity. When we founded the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement in 1983, we said we wanted to fight the government in Khartoum and chase them away so that we could establish a country called the New Sudan of Justice and Equality. Southern separatists, who were with us, escaped from us and attacked us and argued why should Southerners go to fight in order to liberate the whole of Sudan? Let us just liberate our Southern Sudan and leave it at that. We told them even in Northern Sudan there are our people — the Nuba and those of Malik Agar37 [Blue Nile State] who spoke here before, the people of Darfur and those in the far North, we would like to tell them that these are all our people. If we cut off Southern Sudan, we would have left many of our people out there.

(SRS, July 15, 2009)

Salva Kiir was articulating SPLM/A’s vision of New Sudan and distancing the SPLM/A from those whom he called Southern separatists. His acknowledgement of the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile people’s role in the fight for liberation was a message to those

37 Malik Agar is an SPLM/A leader. He is from Blue Nile and after the CPA he was appointed as Blue Nile governor.
who saw SPLM/A as a South Sudan only movement. A similar message was articulated by the SPLM/A secretary general, Pagan Amum who stated that “he is prepared to vote for unity in 2011 referendum provided that certain conditions are met” (SRS, April 15, 2009). Amum explained that “his choice is based on the SPLM/A agenda which is to build a new Sudan where all citizens are equal as partners in one nation” (SRS, April 15, 2009). Such stories asserted that SPLM/A stands for all the marginalized in Sudan, and thus, fights for a united Sudan. It is worth noting that unity was portrayed as SPLM/A’s favorite option, but other separatists’ voices were also represented. For instance, the position of the South Sudan Democratic Front Party, which favors a sovereign independent South Sudan state, was featured twice in a span of four weeks (SRS, April 15; May 4, 2009).

In SRS coverage, the SPLM/A stance, which favors Sudan’s unity, cannot be understood in isolation from other issues. As mentioned in the preceding sections, conflict and blame were dominant frames in SRS coverage of the CPA implementation, census and elections, and the violent clashes eruption in South Sudan. The NCP was blamed for delaying the CPA implementation, altering the census results and inciting violence in South Sudan. The NCP, according to the SPLM/A deputy secretary for the Northern sector, Yassir Arman:

Is pursuing a one-party system in Sudan, . . . is taking decisions at all levels alone, and there is no consensus, either in the presidency, or the legislature, or the
executive, they are running the government alone, they are not seeking consensus.

(SRS, June 17, 2009).

These alleged actions from the side of the NCP were often highlighted in SRS stories in contrast with the SPLM/A’s principal stance on unity, leading to the conclusion that SPLM/A was for conditional unity, but the NCP was not meeting these conditions, thus, pushing the Southerners to vote for separation or in the worst case scenario, return to war.

The warning voices from Southern and SPLM/A leaders about war were unsubtle. Southern leaders were often quoted stating that it was not in South Sudan’s interest to return to war, but if war would be imposed on them they are ready for it. When Salva Kiir was addressing Abyei residents on July 15, 2009, he declared that the SPLM/A is principally for unity, but this unity should be an outcome of peace:

If Southerners live in a united Sudan and the war does not stop, such unity would be useless. Unity will be useful when people live in peace. If the secession of Southern Sudan will bring peace in Sudan, it is better that we let them go to the referendum and we see what they will do. (SRS, July 15, 2009)

In the same speech, Kiir asserted that it is the Southern Sudanese’s desires that will ultimately be realized:

We want to build Sudan so that, even when people vote in the referendum, for me unity is the first and preferable choice. But if people decide on secession, this will not be my choice because it will be the Southern choice and it is also not under my control. (SRS, July 15, 2009).
The message that was repeatedly conveyed was that the referendum outcome would be decided by South Sudanese voters; and if they voted for separation, it would be because unity was not made attractive and because there was no peace in unity. There would be peace if all the reasons that provoked the civil war, such as marginalization and injustices were eliminated. It was the NCP’s responsibility to make unity attractive for South Sudan voters. But, the NCP at every turn was accused of not being serious when it came to implementing the CPA stipulations, and thus making the unity option attractive. For instance, according to Yassir Arman, SPLM/A deputy secretary general for Northern sector, when it came to oil revenues:

There is no transparency; we are not working according to the [peace] agreement. GOSS is not being represented in marketing the oil and knowing exactly what revenue the oil is bringing. The institution is dominated by NCP members, who are the ones who are deciding on the oil revenue. (SRS, June 17, 2009).

The development and the post conflict infrastructure were considered “the cornerstone of development and make unity attractive between the North and the South.” However, the chairman of the transport committee in the national parliament acknowledged that “there is no serious government commitment to construct the roads” (SRS, April 15, 2009). The preceding sections illustrate the frequent allegations against the NCP from a lack of honesty of implementing the CPA to smuggling arms into South Sudan. Reading these allegations with the stance on referendum and unity, one can reach a conclusion that the unity will only be made possible if the NCP is serious about making
it possible, but as issues stand, separation is the more likely option. But would separation be possible?

There were frequent pledges that SPLM/A would not return to war unless it is a case of self defense. These hints were subtle pointers to the opinion that NCP and the North might not accept the referendum outcome. On July 15, 2009, addressing oppositional leaders, Kiir reiterated the same statement, pledging to opposition parties leaders in Khartoum that “Sudan People’s Liberation Movement will not go back to war” (SRS, July 15, 2009). Again on June 17, 2009, speaking during the opening session of the 2009 SSLA in Juba, SRS quoted Kiir stating, “I will not be the one to take this country back to war, but if war was to be imposed on us, we can all feel assured that we are capable of defending ourselves” (SRS, June 17, 2009). Similarly, addressing Abyei residents, Kiir stated that “secession that brings peace is better than unity that returns the country to war” (SRS, July 15, 2009). These statements should not be read as SPLM/A’s desire to return to war, but as an indication that war is a possibility if the commitments made in the CPA were not met.

SRS coverage about the referendum framed unity as the preferable option for SPLM/A (and South Sudanese) if the North and NCP meet certain conditions. Yet, reading this frame with frames applied on other issues, specifically the CPA and census and elections, made unity an unlikely option. This was a conclusion that most of the participants reached. However, in spite of SRS’s efforts to promote unity, even conditional unity, participants’ stances on unity or separation were heavily influenced by
their experiences. Many participants cited years of oppression, violence, and marginalization as reasons for choosing to secede from Sudan. For instance, Magdalena strongly claimed that she “does not want this unity,” citing the history of slavery, prejudices and cultural violence, along with marginalization and structural violence as reasons for her choice:

Mine, it can be separation. Because, number one: we have been slaves for Arabs for so long, so if one of the people is going to handle others you see even fighting can [erupt]. Because as we are [the] people of [the] South, for example, now we don’t have anything good on our side. If you go to Sudan now, roads they are just like that, there is no construction of roads, this side of economy everything in [the] South is [pause] . . . It is because someone who has responsibility [power, in office] now he is [the] South, I mean in [the] North. So, what if he is the one who is going to hold all our responsibilities? Our lives will go back to where we were.

(Personal Communication, July 9, 2009)

Martin shared views similar to Magdalena. For Martin, an independent South Sudan means freedom from oppression and peace because staying with the North in one country would lead to war:

We want independence; we don’t want to live with those people, because if we mix [with] those people the same thing will happen again, unless we [are able] to be independent. We have to get a president, we have [to have] officials, so if we have problems we know the problem is our inner problem and we can solve it any
time. To me referendum, I just want Sudan, hmmm, I just want Southern Sudan to be independent. (Personal Communication, July 4, 2009)

Rebecca T strongly asserted that she would vote for separation because:
If we vote for unity, Arabs, Bashir, there will be no peace. Why we are fighting them because that unity, [when] we were together before and the way they treat people very bad. Like if you are in a school [a] long time ago, and you were not being called yourself Mohammed or you didn’t join Muslim[s], you will have no results. And if we still vote for unity, such a thing will still happen you will not have [the] freedom of going to school, you have to be called Mohammed or you have to be a Muslim. Religion is your own wish, if you want to be a Muslim it is your own wish, Christian your own wish, pagan or whatever. (Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

For Rebecca T, like many other Southern Sudanese who had to live in the North because of the war and displacement, adopting Northern Arabic Muslim names was a sign of oppression. Many South Sudanese had to go through Islamic education because it was part of public schools’ curriculum. For many, like Rebecca, secession was the only option to maintain their freedom of religion and conscience.

Alex contextualized the whole issue from a historical perspective. Alex said that, whenever there was unity between the South and the North, there was war. Supporting his claim, Alex referred to historical examples from the time of independence when South Sudan opted to join the North, and consequently, the 1955 civil war erupted; and
again after the Addis Ababa agreement in 1972, South Sudan gained a semi-autonomous status but not total independence, leading to the eruption of the second civil war in 1983. Accordingly, Alex thought that separation might bring peace to South Sudan. However, Alex warned that South Sudan has internal issues, such as tribalism, that have to be dealt with before opting for separation:

The problem (pause) since 1972 or 1956 when Sudan got the independence, by then the British were around, but when, when they talked to the citizens that, you see, we are now going back, we are now going back so we need you to be free, remove yourselves from the Arabs but the southerners refused and said “no,” we need to be one with the Arabs. So that is why the starting point of fighting came out because, because when the British returned back there was no freedom even to the Southerners, that is why Joseph Ladu signed the peace agreement of the 1972 and then began the fighting of SPLA [in 1983]. So now people feared that . . . If you vote for unity also another fighting will come . . . So we better chose the separation. But in the separation also you find that there is corruption people are fearing tribalism, they are saying if it is like that, let us be with Arabs. That is the problem. (Personal communication, July 4, 2009)

Tribalism and ethnic differences were a concern that was shared by Jumaa as well. Jumaa argued that:

Unless the Southern Sudanese themselves have to, the Southern Sudanese have to sort the differences. They have to sit, unite themselves, [and] then they have to
focus with [on] the Arabs alone, it will be successful. But if there are differences like these [are] Dinka, these are Nuer, these are Equatoria, then they will never see the day, they will never be successful. (Personal communication, July 3, 2009)

Atem, who also went back into history to explain the oppression South Sudanese went through, described separation as the only option that would bring peace and stability to South Sudan:

We have been there for so long, since before I was not born, with Arabs. I think maybe according to the history, Arabs migrated to Sudan they were not there already. They didn’t originate from the country; they migrated 16th century or 17th century. I think maybe according to the peace agreement with the late Garang they have become familiar with our history from 17th century so now they began to stay with us till the time, I have read it. But we were chased in Sudan, they took over the leadership. Since that time up to now, up to date they are still ruling. Also they try to force people into Islam which is not your choice, also they are trying to dictate everything if you are telling right, what they decide should work but what you are saying cannot [work] . . . so, when at that time we have [war] which has been struggled until we try to make peace in 1972 . . . they still killed that person. That peace has not existed until when people went again the town, people still tried to fight up to date it’s taken twenty something years fighting with them and the reason of fighting [is] religion, and then—if you are
killing others, Christians, Hindus or any other religion you want. (Personal communication July 9, 2009)

Likewise, Elizabeth believed that unity brought a lot of destruction and oppression to South Sudan and “people who are dying in [the] war, it is because of unity,” consequently “if they are separate, we will have different lives, not like now.” Elizabeth declared, “When I am voting, I need separation” (personal communication, July 6, 2009). For Grace N, “If there was war, that means there was something bad going on and that is still going on between the North and the South, so separation is better; so that fighting doesn’t erupt again” (personal communication, July 4, 2009, translation by the author). Madeng, who was a storyteller, told me this story to illustrate how the South has been marginalized by the North:

Somebody said, “They are together with his wife at home and his children,” like my wife [pointing to his wife and children who were playing around], and the wife has turned to cook the food when the food is ready to eat. He says “now we are beginning…you madam you can follow me and all the kids will be around my back, you my wife sit here and my kids just around following your mother and let me start.” And the food is in front of him. He starts to eat the food. When he swallows the food, he is asking the madam, “Did the food arrive to you?” Madam says “yes” because she is too afraid of her husband to say “no.” He starts the food, he starts chewing the food, you see! When the father of the children turns away, [the] boy picks the food. He [the father] says “why?” He [the child] said
“the food is for one mouth, and now you are inserting it in your mouth and your
back is not open for us to get food.” (Personal communication, July 10, 2009)

Madeng went on to explain the analogy he was making: “That is what Sudan is, eating
when you have no uniform and you are not a commander, nobody can consider you
anymore” (personal communication, July 10, 2009). For Madeng, a former SPLA soldier,
it was a form of marginalization, not being able “to eat” was what led him and other
Southerners to fight and “be in uniform.”

While the long history of injustices in Sudan has led many Southerners to see
separation as the only option that will bring peace to South Sudan, they were a few
participants who expressed that their desire was that Sudan remain united. However, as
Majunk said, many unionists were afraid that the actions of the NCP might push
Southerners to choose separation:

Yes, sister. You see, when SPLA was fighting, SLPM, our slogan was just only
uniting Sudan, because SPLA was not fighting only for south Sudan. It was
fighting for everyone who is suffering in Sudan, isn’t it? But that was not the
intention of the government of Khartoum, so they denied that one, and they said
that SPLA opened [the] eyes of those who were sleeping like East, like West, like
Nuer, like Ingassana. But these people are Sudanese if there is [a] united Sudan
everybody should be given his right. (Majunk, personal communication, July 9,
2009)
Majunk went on to explain the hegemony of Northern and Muslims and the marginalization of non-Muslims in Sudan:

This is why president and vice president they are Muslims and they are from the Central or Northern part. So this one I can say nothing can be said because there is no unity in the Arabs. They want everybody to be given right eeh, they want to force unity according to the law but not to give right to every Sudanese. So SPLA is for unity eeh. That is our slogan, but the way this unity comes in other side is not attractive. Yeah, it’s not attractive. (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

With all these concerns of injustices, the hegemony of the North and marginalization of others, Majunk thought that separation is not the best option:

No, separation I cannot say that one. We want to see eeh, we have two more years or one year, if these people are going to do something good, well and good. And we can unite, if they are not sincere for this unity, even we will open to the world. Aha! What shall we do? We can ask help from [the] African Union. “You are the people who brought peace to Sudan so these people they did this and this.” We can put them down and present it to the world community and the world community will decide for us. Because even we Southern Sudan to leave, we leave our brothers . . . We need everyone to be given rights. (Personal communication, July 9, 2009)

Philip shared similar views with Majunk. Philip’s choice was unity, but like Majunk, he thought that without justice, unity cannot be realized:
The referendum I do hear also from the radio, the students do debate about referendum. They debate on separation, is a struggle for separation. So in fact when I look at it, is unity, [it] is important, because you cannot separate with our brothers in the North. To be in unity is good if we get a good leader who can lead us in unity where we can feel ourselves equal. (Personal communication, July 4, 2009)

Similarly, Acqualino thought unity was a good option, yet he was still in a dilemma and had not made up his mind yet at the time of the interview:

I think this is a big issue now, you see! Where the Sudanese have to make their mind right, set your mind right, you see! The referendum whereby you don’t know if it’s the union government or the separation, all those things. You have to think [about] both sides, you think about this one and think about this one, not just saying because I am a Southern and I am a Black I have to confine myself, my life, my family in this situation. You have to see the benefits of uniting the whole Sudan or separation. (Personal communication, July 3, 2007)

When I asked him if he had chosen, what option he would have chosen, he answered:

It’s very hard, you know. Those people from the North are still our brothers; they were born there. Maybe their great great grandparents, they are the ones who immigrated to Sudan, but the ones who were born there are Sudanese, so you cannot leave them apart, you see! That’s what brings unity. And, on the other hand, you find that those people, you know, it’s like they cannot keep up with the
others, something like [pause] it’s like they are prejudice against us. That’s what brings the issue of separation. I think it is mixed feelings about it. (Personal communication, July 3, 2007)

Like Acqualino, when it came to choosing between unity and separation, Madeng also found it a tough decision. For Madeng, both options had advantages and disadvantages:

Unity! [Long pause] We will not get the chance again. We will miss our chance, we fought for nothing, and we will never get also the nini [whatever]. [pause] we will not get eeeh like referendum. The people have said, we will be under the government of [the] North . . . we signed the peace, and I have seen you discriminate [against me]. That is why I call you back again to come to unity? When I see it, aaah! When I see the separation, [pause] separation is quite a bit good but it’s very difficult. We’ve seen the example now what happens when the people have spent six years [that they] have been given to them. People, now they have said, we stayed for six years alone, to use your own way and now we’ve seen how corruption has been. Now on looking, people have corrupted themselves; killing each other … We’ve seen also when the separation comes what will happen to the people. We’ll look like Mogadishu! And now we have failed to decide even me I have failed to decide at all. (Personal communication, July 10, 2009)
It was interesting to see someone like Acqualino, who was 18 years old at the time of the interview and had never lived in Sudan because he came to Kakuma Refugee Camp when he was an infant, express a similar sentiment about “the Northern brothers” as Majunk, who lived in Northern Sudan and could identify with some Northerners. While I totally understood the views of people like Deng who told me that he could not sit with an Arab in one room, let alone share one country, I felt comforted that others, like Acqualino and Majunk, can still identify with Northern Sudanese. As someone who had been active in peace campaigns and advocated for attractive unity, I was hurt to hear all these voices declaring that it was too late and separation is the only solution.

However, even for those who opted for separation, many felt that they were forced to choose separation because of the historical baggage of cultural and structural injustices and because they were just tired of war. For instance, Andrew, although he is “for a united Sudan,” thought that “to be peace, if the national community need the rest of Sudan or people of Sudan to be stable, without dying without death, let’s separate. . . This is the solution of Sudan” (personal communication, July 6, 2009). Rebecca D also believed peace would result from separation:

Yes [separation will bring peace]. Because, we as the people of South, we will just come and defend on our side, and the people of the north, they will defend on themselves, so there will be no, something that will coordinate [unite, bring…together] people again. Each and every person will struggle on her own or his own way to build his country now. (Personal communication, July 7, 2009)
SRS coverage framed the referendum issue in terms of a conditional unity, but these conditions were portrayed as not yet met, which led to the conclusion that separation was the only viable option. On the other hand, participants’ views can be categorized into three types: (1) those who thought that historical domination and injustices of the North were strong reasons not to remain united; and thus, South Sudan should became an independent state; (2) those who were for separation, but were concerned that ethnic conflict, corruption and internal South Sudan problems might undermine the new-to-be state; and finally (3) those who preferred unity, but did not think the unity stood a chance because they did not see structural changes in the issues that led to war in the first place. However, along with what seemed like different positions, a concurrent frame appeared: it was cultural and structural violence that had led to separation. The difference between these positions was the degree of hope that these cultural and structural injustices could be undone. Some participants had lost hope and that was why they were strongly for separation while others still had hope that change might be possible.

Yet, the referendum cannot be understood as a separate issue. Many participants held the belief that the referendum was an achievement for which South Sudanese had fought for a long time and paid a high price. The CPA represented the ultimate attainment that should have brought peace, prosperity, and freedom to South Sudan. However, the obstacles hindering the full implementation of the CPA were viewed by many as a conspiracy by the NCP to turn around the right?? of the referendum. In spite of
the fact that SRS coverage of the referendum adopted the conditional unity frame, and SPLM/A stance was portrayed as favoring unity, audience members’ personal experience had a more significant impact than the media on constructing meaning and arriving at decisions about the referendum.

Conclusion

Analysis of messages aired on SRS, March – July 2009, revealed six recurrent topics regarding issues of peace and conflict. These topics were: (1) the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and implications surrounding its implementation, (2) Abyei and the North-South borders, (3) census and elections, (4) violence and violent clashes in South Sudan, (5) referendum and its implications, and (6) Darfur conflict and the International Criminal Court and its implications. These topics can be categorized into two groups: the first group consists of CPA and related issues, which include: Abyei and North-South borders, census and elections and the referendum. Violent clashes in South Sudan can be considered a separate category, as it was not a direct outcome of the CPA.

Regarding media frames, in the first category two dominant frames were identified: conflict and blame. Along with all of these issues, the conflict between the governing partners, the NCP and SPLM/A, was evident. As an extension of the conflict frame, the blame frame designated the NCP as the party to blame for the conflict and for not fulfilling agreements. However, these two frames manifested themselves in different sub-frames that were particular to each topic covered. Particular to the CPA coverage, the conflict frame manifested itself in the sub-frame of delays in resolving the continuous
and outstanding issues. The delays in resolving the outstanding issues between the two governing partners were a manifestation of the conflict frame. The blame frame was still applied, given that the NCP was the one which was blamed for these delays. Concerning the coverage of Abyei and the North-South borders topic, the conflict frame was evident in two broad sub-frames: (1) expecting violence, but emphasizing cooperation and reconciliation, (2) emphasizing the people of Abyei, but hinting at oil as the major point of interest. The fraud frame was the main frame that was adopted by SRS in the coverage of the census debate, and consequently, the elections. The fraud frame was particular to the coverage of census and elections, but it was a manifestation of the broader conflict frame. Regarding violent clashes in South Sudan, which was the only topic in which the conflict frame was not evident in SRS coverage, SRS framed the clashes as ethnic clashes. Conflict and blame frames were applied to the violent clashes in South Sudan, but framing the clashes as ethnic conflict was more dominant in SRS coverage.

For the audience members the conflict and blame frames were the dominant frames. However, the distrust frame emerged as another extension and interpretive frame. While audience members acknowledged the conflict between the NCP and the SPLM/A and attributed the blame for this conflict to the NCP, they always expressed distrust in the NCP motives towards the South in general and the implementation of the CPA in particular. Interestingly, for the audience members, these two frames were applied to the violent clashes in South Sudan as well.
Because the 2011 referendum cannot be understood as a separate issue, the frames which the audience members adopted to construct meaning from SRS coverage of issues surrounding the peace process had a great significance on the way they thought of the referendum and the future of Sudan after 2011. Many participants held the belief that the referendum was an achievement for which South Sudanese had fought for long time and for which they paid a high price. The CPA represented the ultimate attainment that should have brought peace, prosperity and freedom to South Sudan. However, while SRS framed the CPA and issues surrounding its implementation in terms of conflict and blame, audience members thought of the obstacles hindering the full implementation of the CPA as a conspiracy from the NCP to turn around the right of the referendum. The distrust frame was prevalent among the audience members. Accordingly, when it came to the referendum, audience members’ personal experiences had greater impact on frame construction than media frames. SRS coverage of the referendum adopted the conditional unity frame and portrayed the SPLM/A stance as favoring unity if certain conditions were met. On the other hand, many participants cited years of oppression, violence and marginalization as reasons for choosing to secede from Sudan.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research emerged in response to a pressing need to scholarly investigation of the contribution of mass media, especially radio as the most accessible medium, to conflict transformation and peace-building in non-Western context in general, and Sudan in particular. This research was guided by four research questions:

RQ1. How does Sudan National Radio (SNR) frame issues of peace and conflict?
RQ2. How do SNR’s messages inform audiences’ perceptions about peace and conflict?
RQ3. How does Sudan Radio Service (SRS) frame issues of peace and conflict?
RQ4. How do SRS’s messages inform audiences’ perceptions about peace and conflict?

Although this research focuses on one country, it reflects an emerging field of research: the study of mass media in relation to other social institutions and the intersection of mass communication, culture, and identity in the context of societies emerging from conflict. Employing qualitative framing analysis, this dissertation looks into the ways that SNR and SRS framed issues of peace and conflict and how audience members interacted with and interpreted the media frames to construct their own. The previous two chapters presented the findings from the fieldwork in Sudan and Kenya.

The findings revealed that audience members, rather than consuming what media presented to them “as is,” synthesized the information and frames presented through radio messages and developed their own frames. Audience members engaged in processes of negotiation, interpretation, and meaning construction that resulted in an array of frames. The resulting audience frames were sometimes aligned with the media
frames while, on other occasions, they were negotiated and even oppositional to media frames. The current chapter presents a synthesis of the findings from the two case studies to advance theoretical and practical implications of this work. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first provides a discussion of radio frames. The second section analyzes audience frames and discusses how media frames informed audience frames. The third section delves into the practical implications of media framing for conflict transformation and peace-building and concludes with recommendations to the radio sector in Sudan - and opportunities for future research. As qualitative research is inherently a reflective process, I conclude with personal reflections about the challenges I have faced and the lessons I have learned throughout this research journey.

Media Frames

*Sudan National Radio Frames*

As discussed in Chapter Five, the period during which the SNR messages were collected was marked by political instability and uncertainty. The ICC indictment of President al-Bashir on counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as well as the eventual issuance of an arrest warrant in March, 2009 remained the biggest elements of political uncertainty in the country. From the side of the CPA implementation, the disputed fifth national housing and population census, the contentious and outstanding issues, and the slow pace of implementation were characteristic of the political climate. Against these backdrops, the SNR built its three major frames: development projects as a peace dividend frame, internal unity and
solitude frame, and external conflict and conspiracy frame. Participants, on the other hand, did not adopt the development projects as a peace dividend or the internal unity and solidarity frames, but adopted and engaged in oppositional readings of these two. Audience members’ frames were mainly derived from and informed by their personal experiences. However, participants adopted the external conflict and conspiracy frame presented through SNR as an interpretive frame for issues pertaining to the conflict in Darfur and the ICC indictment of Al-Bashir in addition to its implication for the peace process. I argue that the three frames that SNR employed were interconnected and their juxtaposition was meant to advance the political and ideological agenda of the National Congress Party (NCP), the dominant partner in the Government of National Unity, and the one which controlled SNR.

The analysis of SNR messages on peace and conflict issues revealed two major trends: the dominance of Darfur conflict news and a lack of coverage of the CPA and its implementation in comparison with other issues. For the period under analysis, SNR broadcast only 57 stories out of 197 (23.9%) about peace and conflict. Of these 57 stories, 29, almost 50% of the total, were about Darfur, followed by 12 stories about the CPA (21.05%), and seven about the ICC. Considering the fact that the ICC was an outcome of the Darfur conflict, one concludes that coverage of the CPA and its implementation were at the bottom of SNR priorities. The implications of the SNR emphasis on Darfur and the ICC over coverage of peace and the peace process was manifested not only in the quantity and number of stories about the peace process but,
more importantly, in the nature of the frames applied to the CPA in particular and the conflict transformation and peace-building in general.

Although, on the surface, it appeared that the external conflict and conspiracy frame was the only one directly connected to the ICC controversy, applying framing analysis revealed that all three frames applied by SNR were combined to serve the NCP political agenda, whether regarding the ICC or the CPA implementation. For instance, applying the internal unity and solidarity frame, in conjunction with the external conflict and conspiracy frame, was a reaction to and outcome of the political context at the time the data was collected. The frames work together to position the Sudanese nationals and their allies, allegedly Arab and African nations, in confrontation with the West (Western Europe and United States), as alleged supporters of the ICC. SNR strived to portray the ICC as a step in a bigger conspiracy by the West to target Sudan for its stand against Western domination and cultural imperialism. Framing, as many scholars have noted, is a process of meaning construction and frames are “cultural structures with central ideas” (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 141). Frames are interpretative packages that aim to help audience members arrive at certain conclusions. As such, the juxtaposition of the external conflict and conspiracy frame with the internal unity and solidarity frame served the purpose of portraying Sudan as a targeted nation, and thus coalesced the Sudanese population through a spirit of national solidarity as well as enlisting the support of sympathetic African, Arab, and Muslim peoples against the challenge of the ICC indictment of al-Bashir.
As discussed in Chapter Five, adoption of the internal unity and solidarity frame was a deliberate decision promoted by a formal SNR policy to advance the idea of a united Sudanese against an external enemy, the ICC. In its framing process the SNR strived to promote the image of a united Sudanese internal front, not only through the inclusion of quotes, metaphors, and stories of unity, but also exclusion of any stories or elements of stories that might promote a conflict/division frame or in any way undermine or challenge the unity frame. In an effort to promote the unity frame, SNR avoided any mention of the outstanding issues surrounding CPA implementation such as the contested census, the conflict over the Abyei region and the North-South borders, and the SPLM/A complaints of exclusion that surfaced in other media outlets in Sudan and abroad. An SNR official, who preferred to remain anonymous, shared with me that SNR deliberately avoided quoting any SPLM/A official in its newscasts if such statements were perceived to bring about or appear to promote division.

The SNR policy of promoting an internal united front image had major implications for the peace agenda coverage and the radio role in conflict transformation and peace-building. Intractable conflicts such as Sudan’s normally revolve around a complex and multidimensional set of issues and tend to persist overtime (Colman, 2003; Miall, 2004). Most intractable conflicts manifest themselves in direct, structural, and cultural forms of violence (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990, 1996). As discussed in detail in previous chapters, while direct violence is the most tangible form of violence, structural and cultural violence tend to be latent and embedded in social institutions. Because of the
nature of structural and cultural violence, dealing with their manifestations is often harder and cannot be done overnight. In the case of Sudan, the signing of the CPA can be considered the ultimate step in putting an end to the direct violence in South Sudan, although isolated clashes still persisted after the CPA. However, structural and cultural violence that manifested themselves in marginalization and prejudices were deeply rooted in the economic, political, and sociocultural structures. Conflict transformation calls for transforming the relationships and social structures that support and contribute to all forms of violence and injustice. The question was how SNR dealt with the issues.

The promotion of the unity and solidarity frame, in conjunction with the external conflict frame, influenced the way SNR framed issues of peace-building. The major frame SNR adopted concerning peace-building was development projects as a peace dividend, a superficial notion of structural justice. Sudan’s conflict was rooted in years of unequal distribution of power and resources between the center and the peripheries. As discussed in Chapter Two, neglect and marginalization were often cited as drivers of armed resistance by different groups from the peripheries. However, SNR ignored issues of structural justice and the steps needed to reverse patterns of marginalization that characterized post-independence Sudan and which persisted to maintaining an unequal society. Structural justice goes beyond pompous development projects and necessitates major restructuring of state policy towards marginalized areas. Equating development projects with comprehensive development was simplistic and at variance with new modalities in the development arena where the emphasis has shifted more to development
results or positive change in people’s lives, as opposed to projects that in some instances have turned out to be white elephants.

Adoption of development projects as a peace dividend also reflected the priorities of the NCP, which controls the radio service. SNR treated the CPA as a conclusive matter; an end in itself. Once the agreement was signed, little attention was paid to issues of post-conflict reconciliation and conflict transformation. Rajab, an SNR news editor, stated that “peace in South Sudan is a conclusive deal, the CPA established foundations of sustainable peace” (Rajab, personal communication, January 20, 2009). Najm, Ayman and Kamil from SNR reiterated the same rationalization when I inquired about the lack of news coverage of the CPA and its implementation. The idea that the CPA established foundations of sustainable peace in Sudan, or South Sudan, highlighted how SNR officials conceptualized peace as a mere absence of direct violence. In other words SNR officials thought of peace in terms of negative peace not positive peace (Galtung, 1964). Negative peace only deals with manifestation of conflict, which is direct violence. Positive peace, on the other hand, deals with root causes of conflict, including structural and cultural aspects of the conflict. However, by considering the cease-fire and the signing of the peace agreement as “establishing the foundations of sustainable peace,” SNR ignored the structural and cultural violence dimensions of Sudan’s conflict and considered only direct violence as the true conflict. Research on conflict in Africa and elsewhere reveals that issues of structural and cultural injustice are often more cataclysmic (Lugalambi, 2006). The SNR coverage of peace and conflict issues ignored
the root causes of the Sudanese conflict and steered clear of any mention of injustice. While development projects, as outcomes of structural justice, were important aspects of peace-building efforts, neglect of the structural issues treated only the symptoms and manifestations of the conflict but not its real causes.

Framing theorists argued that not only is inclusion of certain stories or themes important in framing, but the absence and exclusion of others also matters (Entman, 1993, 2004). As mentioned in Chapter Five, SNR shied away from covering any aspect of cultural violence. It was SNR policy not to cover issues of religion and ethnicity, considering these too sensitive and inflammatory. I argue that one of the reasons for neglect of cultural injustices was promotion of the unity frame. Conflicts that are rooted in cultural injustices or identity cannot be resolved by signing peace agreements. Transforming intractable conflicts and building sustainable peace that brings about cultural justice requires “[understanding of] the particular episode of conflict, not in isolation, but in the greater pattern. Change is understood both at the level of immediate presenting issues and that of broader patterns and issues” (Lederach, 2003, p. 16). Therefore, conflict transformation needs to be achieved over time, and issues that underline cultural injustices need to be brought to light. However, in promoting a unity frame, SNR chose the easy way, ignoring divisions and the deep-seated and long-standing issues that have resulted in cultural injustice. If issues of cultural injustice were to be discussed, the portrayal of a united Sudanese internal front against an external enemy might be compromised. The promotion of a rosy picture about the CPA by
framing it in terms of development projects (and exclusion of the structural and cultural injustices as well as its faltering implementation) also helped in promoting the idea that the CPA is stable, and the evidence was the number of development projects reported on the news. This concept of a developed and prosperous Sudan was in line with the internal unity against an external enemy frame.

Ignoring the conflicts and delays surrounding the CPA implementation and issues of cultural justice, not only served the SNR’s promotion of the internal unity and solidarity frame, it also was used to serve the wider political agendas of the NCP. Lack of coverage of the outstanding issues and slow CPA implementation also served the purpose of distracting attention from these issues. As many political analysts, such as Prunier and Fick (2009), observed, “by creating multiple crises and challenges to distract and confuse both the SPLM—its “partner” in the CPA—and the international community, the NCP succeeds in stymieing efforts to fully implement the CPA without resorting to obvious signs of obstruction” (p. 6). However, in the public discourse through the mass media, the peace-building process was framed as complete and without faults. Framing peace in terms of development projects only, SNR, on behalf of the NCP, applied an evasive and escapist strategy by concentrating on celebratory portrayals of development projects, while concealing issues that begged for more attention and urgent action.

*Sudan Radio Service Frames*

The period during which SRS messages were analyzed was marked by violent clashes in South Sudan, the announcement of the disputed census results, and
announcement of the International Court of Arbitration verdict on the disputed North-South borders. The delays in CPA implementation and the disputes and disagreements between the NCP and SPLM were part of everyday public discourse of ordinary Sudanese as well as of political circles inside Sudan and abroad.

Although political instability and uncertainty coupled with outstanding issues surrounding the CPA implementation were common factors of the field research periods in SNR and SRS, the two radio stations adopted distinctively different frames in their coverage of peace and conflict issues. In the above section, I argued that SNR, as a state-owned and controlled radio, reflected the ideological stand of the NCP in its framing. For SRS, I argue that the difference in the framing process was a result of differences of frame sponsorship and strategic actors (sponsors, staff, news sources, and target audiences).

The analysis of SRS messages revealed that SRS covered five major topics: the CPA and its implementation, Abyei and the North-South borders, the 2008 census and elections, violent clashes in South Sudan, and the 2011 referendum. In presenting the above topics, two frames dominated SRS coverage: the conflict frame and the blame frame. In contrast to SNR, which promoted an internal unity frame as discussed above, the SRS major frame was conflict, namely between the two CPA signatories. The SNR frame of internal unity was developed by excluding stories of conflict. On the other hand, including these stories in SRS coverage yielded the conflict frame. The conflict and blame frames manifested themselves in different issue-specific sub-frames, as discussed
in detail in Chapter Six. However, these two frames remained the overarching frames in SRS coverage. The only topic that SRS did not apply to the conflict and blame frames was the violent clashes in South Sudan, which SRS framed as ethnic conflict.

SRS’s mission statement states that the radio station seeks “to equip . . . [the] listeners with the knowledge and tools to participate more fully in peace making, reconciliation and development processes of Sudan” (SRS, 2010). SRS branded itself as radio for peace and democracy. As its motto indicated, SRS’s main objective was to promote news about the CPA, conflict transformation, and the peace-building process. This mission statement manifested itself in the amount of coverage the CPA and related issues received. SRS devoted approximately 75% of its coverage to peace and conflict issues (175 stories out of 233), compared to 28.9% coverage from SNR (57 stories out of 197). The SRS focus on peace issues affected not only the amount of coverage, but the nature of coverage as well.

For SRS, the full implementation of the CPA was in the interest of its target audience, the South Sudanese, and at the heart of its mission. SRS did not deal with the CPA as final and conclusive, as SNR did, but a rather as a step in a long process of peace-building and reconciliation. The SRS mission was to provide coverage that contributes to conflict transformation, and to aid in transition from war to sustainable peace. SRS aimed to achieve this mission by building on the CPA that ushered in the peace and halted hostilities. As such, the SRS main objective was to cover the CPA and the progress of its implementation. A closer look at the five major topics covered by SRS
reveals that the CPA represented the backbone of all these topics. Issues about the CPA were diffused and intertwined in many stories, even if they were not related directly to the CPA implementation. The census and election, for example, were two outcomes of the peace agreement. Therefore, news about them, though not directly related to the CPA, would somehow touch on the CPA provisions regarding democratic transformation. The interconnectedness of all the issues covered by SRS to the CPA had led to a constant deliberation on the agreement implementation. This, in turn, had inevitably led to discussing delays surrounding its implementation. For instance, in reporting about the census, Abyei, or the North-South borders, there was no way of avoiding the controversy surrounding these issues. It was the nature and interest of SRS coverage that necessitated reporting on the controversies and disagreements surrounding the CPA which had led to the conflict frame.

Moreover, SRS, a USAID-funded and EDC-administered project, identified itself with Western journalism professional ideals as a watchdog and a fourth estate that strived to “develop and broadcast programs with no bias” (SRS, 2010). To avoid bias, SRS opened its airwaves to actors from the NCP and SPLM/A, and that brought news stories about conflict.

Framing scholarship often conceptualizes mass media as a contested social space where different actors compete over construction of social reality (Entman, 2007; Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992; Pan & Kosicki, 2001). These actors could include political elites, oppositional groups, social movements, and audience members.
However, mass media as social space are not equally accessible to all social actors. Strategic actors, actors with more access and power in the contestation of reality construction, possess more ability in defining media discourse and frames. The concept of strategic actors is useful in understanding the difference of the framing process and frames adopted by the SNR and SRS. While SNR was led by the ideological principles of the NCP, which profited from concealing controversial issues as discussed earlier, SRS’s “strategic actors”—its audience, professionals and staff, and sponsors—profited from revealing any hindrances to full CPA implementation. SRS’s focus, at least in the first few years after its launch, had been solely South Sudan, with news stories from South Sudan and written by South Sudanese. The CPA was a life-changing matter to most South Sudanese, including SRS staff. Delays in the CPA implementation and the persistence of outstanding issues threatened the full CPA implementation, and, consequently, meant going back to war, with its attendant trauma for many. Failure of the CPA was something personal to many SRS reporters. Many of them came from South Sudan, and some had families in Sudan that would be directly impacted by any renewed conflict. SRS professionals, as well as its target audience, had a strategic interest in revealing any issues that were perceived as impediments to the full CPA implementation.

On another level, SRS was established as a project of the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives, a program that “supports U.S. foreign policy objectives by helping local partners advance peace and democracy in priority countries in crisis” (USAID, 2010). The emerging interest in global terrorism after 9/11 attracted international
attention to issues of democracy, human rights, and rule of law, as well as to conflict resolution, especially in places like Sudan which are considered safe havens for terrorists. The United States placed Sudan on the list of states that sponsor terrorism in 1993 (Dagne, 2002). Issues of peace and democracy, especially in fragile states, had been recognized as a vital element in U.S. national security, in the sense that failed and fragile states as well as weakly governed regions breed internal instability and terrorism. The main goal of USAID in fragile states is to stabilize them so as to form a foundation for transformational development (U.S. Foreign Assistance Reference Guide, 2005). United States’s foreign policy in Sudan had been to push for peace and democracy and its focus had been “on ending the war and engage [sic] the government of Sudan in dialogue” (Dagne, 2002, p. 14). SRS represented one of the tools of promoting United States foreign policy objectives. The United States Department of State recognized the “implementation of the CPA . . ., [and ensuring] that Sudan does not provide a safe haven for international terrorists” as two of three strategic objectives in Sudan (U. S. Department of State, 2009). Accordingly, the core of U. S. strategic objectives was making sure that any outstanding issues that hindered full implementation of the CPA be addressed fully and revealed to the Sudanese public. USAID, SRS’s main financial sponsor, represented a major strategic actor in shaping SRS framing.

Entman (1993) stated that one of the frame functions is to “to promote a particular problem definition [and/ or] causal interpretation” (p. 52). The literature on framing, especially in conflict contexts, suggests that one strategy of causal interpretation is to
decide who/what is responsible for the problem under consideration (Benford & Snow, 2000; Gray, 2003; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994; Scheufele, 1999; Shmueli, Elliot, & Kaufman, 2006). In other words, blame attribution is one of the functions that framing performs. As discussed above, SRS’s major organizing idea or frame was the conflict frame. However, this was coupled with the blame frame to promote the interpretation that NCP was responsible for the disagreement and conflict between the two partners and consequently for the delays in the CPA implementation. I argue that the attribution of blame to the NCP was largely influenced by the frame sponsorship or “web of subsidies” (Pan & Kosicki, 2001) available to SRS professionals.

The concept of web of subsidies refers to ways in which “sources influence media content by raising or reducing the cost of (or ‘subsidizing’) news production, including news gathering and packaging” (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 46). News sources use different strategies to reduce, or subsidize, the costs of news production in exchange for potency of their sponsored frames. The subsidies could be through monetary sponsorship, subsidizing access to information, or “generating cultural resonance of . . . [the sponsored] frames with the news values held by journalist” (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 46). Subsidies do not always include only reducing costs of news production, but can also be in terms of raising the cost to prevent salience of unfavorable frames. However, it is important to note that news sources are not always constituted solely of officials, but also include “institutionally structured and strategically cultivated networks” (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 45). These networks represent a “news net” for journalists from whom they can
receive subsidies and consequently leading to sponsorship of certain frames. In the case of SRS one factor that influenced its framing process was its “news net.” SRS’s base in Nairobi, its proximity to South Sudan, and the predominantly South Sudanese composition of its staff of living in Nairobi, a long-time base of SPLM/A, influenced the web of subsidies that SRS journalists received. Most of SRS Sudanese staff had easier access to SPLM/A and GOSS officials than to NCP or other North Sudan-based political groups (Richard, personal communication, June 24, 2009). In 2008, 22.56% of SRS news coverage focused on issues of national interest, 24.32% on regional South Sudan interests, and only 0.88% on regional North Sudan interests (SRS, 2008). It is apparent that SRS frames were sponsored by South Sudanese actors, who as a result of their political position were more likely than not to blame the NCP for conflict.

Media Frames Building

When studying media in the context of peace and conflict, it is also important to understand that, as Carragee and Roefs (2004) emphasized, “journalistic framing of issues and events doesn’t develop in a political vacuum; it is shaped by the frames sponsored by multiple social actors, including politicians, organizations, and social movements” (p. 216). From the above discussion concerning media frames, three factors emerged as major contributors to frame building in the two radio stations: organizational culture, frames sponsorship, and the web of subsidies available to each station which influenced news production routines and placement of reporters.

369
Hatch and Schultz (1997) defined organizational culture as “a symbolic context within which interpretations of organizational identity are formed and intentions to influence organizational image are formulated” (p. 360). They further argued that the way the organization perceives its role and mission influences its activities as well as its members’ actions to reflect the image the organization uses for itself. The two radio stations had distinctive identities which influenced their organizational culture and eventually led to adopting different frames regarding issues of peace and conflict. SNR was a state-owned institution with its actions managed by the government of the day. Accordingly, the organizational identity of SNR was shaped as government radio, and its organizational image was formulated as a tool for the government to communicate its own agenda. This shaped the perceptions as well as the activities of its staff and professionals. The organizational culture of SNR led its professionals into holding the state ideology and nationalism as important elements. Professional journalism came secondary to the government’s position and preferences. However, it is important to note that this organizational culture and government control produced a blurring between the ruling government and the nation. The government was equated with the nation, and nationalism and patriotism were often associated with loyalty to the ruling regime. On the other hand, SRS as a self-proclaimed private and independent media outlet, valued as its organizational culture aspects of Western values of professional journalism exemplified by objectivity without bias which led to presenting opposing views on issues.
The other factor that influenced frame building in SNR and SRS was frame sponsorship. Lawrence (2006) noted that “news making is a social process of negotiation among reporters, editors, and various social groups vying for news access and control” (p. 225, italics in the original). Media become a contested social space where different groups and actors compete to translate their power into “framing power,” through which certain frames are sponsored to become not only more salient but more resonant with the target audiences (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 45). SNR as a state-owned and controlled radio station relied heavily on official sources not only for news stories, but for analysis as well, and consequently for frame building. Rajab, an SNR official, stated that “especially for war and conflict-related news, we only depend on the spokesperson of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF). He has the choice of highlighting whatever he wants to highlight and concealing whatever he wants to conceal” (personal communication, January 20, 2009). Issues pertaining to peace and conflict, even after the CPA, were considered national security issues that could not be touched without official approval. On the other hand, while SRS also relied mostly on official sources, as a self-described independent media outlet, it made an effort to bring different opinions and viewpoints unto its accounts. Unlike SNR, SRS, in its bid to remain independent, would not accept news stories or press releases from State agencies (Kate, personal communication, June 16, 2009). These differences in frame sponsorship were reflected, for instance, in the way the two radio stations framed issues pertaining to the CPA implementation. SNR adopted the unity frame because that was the government (read NCP) sponsored frame. On the other
hand, the conflict frame was obvious in SRS coverage because of its reliance on sources from both the NCP and SPLM. The conflict frame was produced by presenting views from different sponsors, each competing to discredit the other’s viewpoint.

The literature on framing proposes that news production routines, including placement of reporters, is an important factor in frame building (Kuypers & Cooper, 2005; Tuchman, cited in Carragee & Roefs, 2004). Moreover, Pan and Kosicki (2001) noted that the resources available to journalists or the web of subsidies as explained earlier, contribute to the framing process. It is apparent that reporters’ placement is a determinant factor for the information they can access. As mentioned earlier, SRS professionals and anchors at the time of my field research were mostly South Sudanese. SRS staff demographics were influenced by the SRS’s initial focus on South Sudan. A survey of SRS coverage reveals the dominance of South Sudan-focused stories. This tendency can be explained by the placement of SRS reporters, mostly in South Sudan. Another factor was the reliance of SRS on the Sudan Tribune and Gurtong websites for information and news, beyond that indicated by field reporters. Both websites were South Sudan-oriented. On the side of SNR, news production routines entailed placing a news reporter in the presidential palace and maintaining constant contact with the palace to remain informed about government events in order to cover them. These routines in effect gave SNR a public relations role for the executive branch of the government and made it hard for SNR to maintain independence (something for which SNR did not strive).
The previous section discussed the media frames, based on the structure and culture of the two radio stations, and provided analysis of the reasons behind adoption of these frames. In the following section, I answer the second research question: how have media frames informed audience members’ frames?

**Audience Frames**

*Sudan National Radio Audience Members*

SNR listeners adopted oppositional readings of two of SNR frames: development as a peace dividend, and internal unity and solidarity. However, most participants, despite their diversified backgrounds, adopted SNR’s external conflict and conspiracy frame.

It was apparent that audience members engaged in a process of negotiation with the text to develop their own frames. Pan and Kosick (2001) pointed out that audience members construct their own frames “by tapping into the symbolic resources that are available to them in their everyday lives, as conveyed through their experimental knowledge, popular wisdom, and media discourse” (p. 39). The audience members’ autonomy in developing their own frames in the two case studies presented in this research can, to a large extent, be explained by the influence of audience members’ symbolic resources such as their personal experiences and popular discourse.

Participants perceived peace as a multifaceted construct that could not be reduced to a mere number in the state budget or as an item in peace dividends. Participants tapped into their personal experiences to construct a multidimensional array of concepts to define peace, with participants from different areas attributing different meanings. For
instance, participants from the Nuba Mountains, until then a violence-prone area, were mostly concerned with security issues (for example, Ismail and Najeeb). For participants from the Blue Nile, for whom security was not as big a concern, education and daily needs were important outcomes expected from the peace process. Lack of representation of their regional concerns and culture in national media was a concern for most participants, except those from privileged groups in Khartoum State, such as Ali.

SNR listeners also challenged the internal unity and solidarity frame based on their personal experiences and public discourse. Simply put, the unity that SNR adopted was in contradiction to audience members’ experiences, collective wisdom, and tangible results on the ground. Moreover, peace-building and full implementation of the CPA was a matter of personal interest to most participants. Most participants felt they were caught in the middle between the two governing parties which, due to their disagreements, were compromising the full implementation of the CPA—the embodiment of holistic peace for participants. The SNR’s neglect of the indirect consequences of the conflict and the other parties beyond the political disputants led the participants to challenge SNR’s unity frame.

However, when it came to issues concerning the Darfur conflict and the ICC, audience members adopted SNR’s external conflict and conspiracy frame without challenge. Almost all participants were in some degree of agreement with the conspiracy frame. As mentioned earlier, SNR played the external conflict frame, in conjunction with the internal unity frame, to portray Sudan as targeted by Western “imperialists” and to
call for solidarity from all Sudanese, as well as sympathetic Arabs, Muslims and African friends, in the face of the external conspiracy.

While audience members tapped into their personal experiences and public discourse to negotiate media frames, a lack of direct experience and an absence of counter frames impeded the audience members’ power to challenge the external conflict and conspiracy frame. Although the lack of direct experience and counter frames were influential, equally important was the utilization of both cultural narratives and the Islamic umma Western world clash myth, as discussed in Chapter Five. Van Gorp (2007) argued that, “the potency of frames to influence the public lies in the fact that they are closely linked with familiar cultural frames” (p.73). Similarly, Entman (2004) noted that two aspects that distinguish frames from other elements in a news story are cultural resonance and magnitude. Cultural narratives, as mentioned earlier, are narratives that are widely shared by the targeted public. Utilizing the myth of Islamic umma and conflict with the West to frame the ICC issue and the Darfur conflict as a conspiracy, SNR relied on what Van Grop (2007) called cultural “stock.” Framing takes place in a social context, and for a certain frame to make sense and resonate with audience members, it should be compatible with the larger cultural context in which it is produced. Cultural narratives or cultural stock resonate easily with audience members because of their familiarity and their conditioning effect. The symbolic power of cultural myth and metaphors is derived from the fact that they are often communally shared and widespread (Hertog & McLeod, 2001). In the case of the SNR framing process, by provoking the myth of an
Israeli/Western conspiracy against Sudan, SNR appealed to its audience members’ Islamic/Arab solidarity feelings against an alleged Western imperialism and colonialism scheme.

A complimentary frame used by SNR in connection with the external conflict and conspiracy frame was the sovereignty frame. One of the framing process functions is to promote certain problem definitions. Because framing is a not a linear process, “symbol handlers routinely organize discourse” in order to promote certain definitions, interpretations or connections (Gitlin, 1980, p. 7). SNR engaged in a process of promoting conflict between the ICC and the Sudanese president as an attack against Sudan the nation. This connection/definition was done by equating Sudan, the nation, with its president: al-Bashir. Al-Bashir was often referred to as the symbol of national sovereignty (ramz al-siyadah alwataniyah). The sovereignty frame is one of the frames that Hertog and Mcleod (2001) described as an “ego-involving” frame. The major phrase that was used with this frame, ramz al-siyadah alwataniyah (the president, the symbol of national sovereignty,) resonated well with the Sudanese culture of pride and self-sufficiency. Almost all participants, regardless of their position on other issues, framed the ICC indictment of al-Bashir as a violation of the country’s sovereignty. Because the sovereignty frame was an “ego-involving frame,” participants felt personal responsibility to protect the president, “the symbol of the national sovereignty”. Many participants shared similar views by using the phrase “We Sudanese, we will not accept having our president tried outside,” with only slight variations (italics mine). They all felt that the
violation of the country’s sovereignty, as represented by al-Bashir, was a personal assault on their egos. Protecting the country’s sovereignty and pride was a provoking metaphor deeply embedded in Sudanese culture and was well-utilized in this context.

*Sudan Radio Service Audience Members*

As explained in Chapter Six, SRS’s major frames were conflict and blame. Similarly, audience members adopted these frames to make sense of issues pertaining to peace and conflict. However, audience members went a step further and added the distrust frame as an interpretive frame that supplements the conflict and blame frames. Audience members acknowledged the conflict between the NCP and the SPLM/A and attributed the blame for this conflict to the NCP, yet they explained the NCP actions as motivated by its lack of commitment to the CPA’s implementation. Participants expressed their distrust of the NCP, and often mentioned that the delays in the CPA’s implementation and resolving the outstanding issues were derived from the NCP’s ulterior motives on matters of South Sudan and South Sudanese right to self-determination.

Again, participants tapped into their symbolic resources to interpret the media messages presented to them. The influence of personal experiences and life histories was evident in the SRS audience members’ interaction with the media frames. The research participants, who were mostly South Sudanese and residents of Kakuma Refugee Camp, had witnessed years of state-sponsored violence, mostly in the name of Islam. For many of them, the years spent escaping the bombs and shelling by walking for days and not
knowing if they would survive till next morning or not, were unforgettable memories. As their words in Chapter Six testified, the signing of the CPA was life-changing. However, many noted that the slow pace of the agreement implementation and the outstanding issues were warning signs that the CPA might be set up for failure. Furthermore, participants expressed a deep-rooted fear that failure of the CPA would mean renewing the violent conflict. Many, like Atem, while acknowledging that the CPA stopped the direct violence, still had fears that the whole peace process was bound to fail due to serious conflicts between the agreement signatories:

According to the peace agreement, actually the peace has been done. That’s why there is no exchange of bullets in Southern Sudan. But a cool [cold] war is there. The politicians did not fulfill what was signed . . . . We don’t know whether it will be really normal [pause]. I don’t know whether this peace will really exist or it will break when the things which were being signed are not implemented.

(Personal communication, July 11, 2009)

I had witnessed the worries expressed in Atem’s words throughout the interviews. One question that really stood out to me during the field work in Kakuma was that almost every participant, after we came to the conclusion of the interview, asked me what I thought about the whole peace process. They were wholeheartedly eager to hear confirmation that the peace agreement would not fail, something, unfortunately, I was not able to confirm.
While most participants acknowledged the presence of conflict between the two CPA partners, and blamed the NCP for that conflict, most attributed lack of NCP seriousness in implementing the CPA provisions as the main factor behind these conflicts. Communication scholars acknowledged that audience frames are not produced in a vacuum; they are products of interactions between media texts, audience experiences, and social positions (Curran, 1996; Hall, 1980; Pan & Kosicki, 2001). Audience discourses are often influenced by the audience members’ social status, ethnicity and ideological position, as well as by other factors related to identity. For the research participants in Kakuma, SRS news often carried stories about conflict and blame trading between the two CPA signatories. These stories often were supported by international or independent political analysts calling for “the partners of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to rise above their differences to salvage the peace agreement” (SRS, June 2, 2009). Beyond the news stories, participants often brought a heavy baggage of historical mistrust between the North and the South to their interaction with the media text.

As explained in more detail in Chapter Two, *History of a Polarized Society*, the history between the two parts of country was full of broken promises. Starting before independence—during the independence negotiations—Southern Sudanese were promised by Northern politicians that the South’s demand for federalism would be given full consideration once Sudan gained its independence. To their disappointment, the Southerners’ demand was rejected by the Northern-dominated parliament, and the Southern members, only three among the forty-six national constitution committee
members, had to walk away from the committee in protest (Deng, 1995, O’Ballance, 1977). It became apparent to the Southerners that promises of federalism were only a political maneuver by Northern politicians, “to please them [South Sudanese],” as Mahjoub M. Salih, a Northern nationals leader, confessed later (Mahjoub, 1974, p.57). The result was that what started as mutiny in 1955 escalated to a full-scale civil war, ending in 1972.

The history of broken promises repeated itself during the short period of peace following the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement, when Numeiry, the then-president and one of the agreement signatories, breached the terms of the agreement by violating the South’s regional autonomy by dividing it into three regions. As did Northern nationalist leaders at independence, Numeiry engaged in rhetorical tactics claiming that he “did not violate the spirit of [the] Addis Ababa Agreement” (Lesch, 1998, p.51, italics mine). Again, with the collapse of the Addis Ababa Agreement, renewed violence ravaged the South, causing the loss of two million lives and displacement of thousands.

Historically, the South Sudanese experienced cycles of conflict - peace agreements - breaching of agreement - return to war. It happened in 1955 and again in 1983 and, unfortunately, as Sidahmed and Sidahmed (2005) contended, throughout contemporary Sudan history, “Northern politicians never missed a chance to confirm their [the Southerners] worries” (p. 39). As far the CPA implementation went, what participants heard from the media were delays, disputes and blame trading. Participants in this research were eyewitnesses to the collapse of the Addis Ababa Agreement and the
renewal of war in 1983. Their being in the Kakuma Refugee Camp was a direct result of that conflict. It was no surprise that news about conflict between the CPA signatories brought back memories of the vicious cycle of war-peace agreement-war, especially since the scenarios preceded the failure of the Addis Ababa Agreement seemed to repeat themselves in the case of the CPA.

Furthermore, the history of conflict in Sudan had been rooted in issues of hegemony and power. The discourse about conflict, especially after the introduction of the New Sudan vision, was often framed in terms domination of a center over marginalized peripheries. Issues of domination ranged from resources such as oil and land to such issues of cultural identity as languages and religion. As explained in previous chapters, Northern-dominated governments of independent Sudan often attempted to define the Sudanese identity in terms of Arabic Islamic cultural determinants; thereby denying non-Arabs and non-Muslims their political agency and cultural identity as Sudanese. Research participants, aware of these issues of hegemonic tendencies in Northern politicians, often expressed a lack of trust in the sincerity of the NCP to fully give them their rights to self-determination. For instance, talking about the reasons for delays in the CPA Implementation, Deng stated that:

Because they [the NCP] don’t want Southerners to be given their rights…. Because when the Southerners will be given their rights, the place is filled with wealth. When they are given rights, they will go and sit on them then they [the
NCP] cannot get the room again to take it. (Personal communication, July 7, 2009)

That was a shared conviction among audience members in Kakuma. Moreover, many attributed the signing of the peace agreement to international pressure, rather than to a real desire by the NCP to stop the war:

I listened to the radio one day in Nairobi, in July, 2007. Omar was speaking, frankly speaking that “what was done in Naivasha was not our will but we were forced and this is why we stepped down and gave the first vice president [seat to a Southerner].” So there was no [pause], it is not their will. So because they just feared the world community and they stepped down they gave the vice president [seat to a Southerner]. So, but I can say on the side of SPLA they were sincere, they were ready for peace but the government in Khartoum, they were not ready because the thing [war] became painful in their head [laughter] so they changed [it] to the shoulder. And they [NCP] will continue! (Majunk, personal communication, July 9, 2009)

These statements carried a load of a history of domination, exploitation, and broken promises. Statements like Majunk’s can explain the tone of distrust that appeared in addressing the census, elections, and violent clashes in South Sudan. It was lack of trust derived from the conviction that the dominating group would not let go of their privilege. It was years of mistrust between the North and the South, Southerners’ popular wisdom, and shared knowledge that informed the participants’ frame building.
In the case of the violent clashes in South Sudan, the participants’ personal experiences, positions, and collective discourse informed their frame. While SRS framed the clashes in terms of ethnicity, participants were quick to attribute the blame to the NCP, claiming that the clashes were a conspiracy by the NCP to destabilize the South. Gamson (1989) suggested that a news report can carry multiple, even competing frames. In the case of the violent clashes in South Sudan, while the dominant SRS frame was ethnicity, a few times SRS quoted SPLM/A officials blaming the NCP for inciting the violence. Because frames donot develop in a vacuum but “are frequently drawn from larger cultural narratives and myth,” (Gamson, 1989, p. 161) the NCP conspiracy frame resonated more with the participants, though it was not the dominant frame. What mattered in this case was not the salience of the frame, but its cultural resonance.

It is apparent that audience frames were products of their experience, culture, and negotiation of media texts. Personal experience defined audience members’ worldviews and informed their appropriation of media messages. In a country such as Sudan where memories of war, marginalization, discrimination and bloodshed are ubiquitous, some fundamental questions can be raised. Are audience members captive to their own history and their personal world view? What is the role of mass media institutions in infusing cultural peace in societies emerging from intractable conflict, like Sudan? While there might not be easy answers, the solutions are bound to be political.
Practical Implications for the Peace Process

Pan and Kosicki (1993) defined media frames as “a system of organized signifying elements that both indicate the advocacy of certain ideas and provide devices to encourage certain kinds of audience processing of the texts” (p. 55). In this sense, media texts are never a neutral endeavor; they always carry meaning or multiple meanings. In the context of peace and conflict, the question is: toward which meaning do the frames in the two case studies examined in this research advocate—conflict escalation or de-escalation and transformation?

Mass communication is a dynamic process rooted in a sociocultural and political context. Media are contested social spaces, a terrain of struggle over control of knowledge, to which social actors compete for access. Consequently, mass media can reflect the power relationships in a given society, as the dominant groups’ frames have more access to media38 (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Entman, 1993, 2007; Gitlin, 1980; Wolfsfeld, 2004). SNR was an apparent example of how control over means of communication reflects the struggle for control over knowledge. From the discussion above, it was apparent that SNR acted as an unequivocal mouthpiece of the NCP-controlled government.

As discussed in previous chapters, when the Islamist movement took over power, SNR, along with the state television, was at the forefront of the project of reviving the

---

38 However, this statement should not be over-generalized, as many scholars noted that social movements and opposition groups have the power to produce counter frames (for example, Benford & Snow (2000).
Islamic *umma*. During the years of the civil war, radio and television programs aimed at mobilizing the masses for the *jihad* against the “infidel” enemies, as the civil war was depicted in the official media at the time. Indeed, it was only the signing of the CPA that necessitated some changes in the media landscape. However, through the framing analysis of SNR messages, it was clear that these changes were tactical rather than fundamental. The guiding ideology of the NCP remained the same – constructing a new version of Sudanese identity based on Arabic and Islamic cultural determinants: the cultural/civilization project. The changes in the electronic media landscape can be understood in terms of a shift in strategy only, while leaving the objective behind it intact. During the years of the civil war, the enemy was South Sudan and the SPLM/A. The SPLM/A, as the leader of the struggle towards a more inclusive Sudan—a New Sudan—represented a threat to the Islamist movement and its establishment and ideology. With the signing of the CPA and the possibilities of South Sudan secession in 2011, the focus was no longer the Southern and non-Muslim Sudanese. Instead, the new enemy now was the West. This shift was necessitated by changes in the political landscape and the implications of the Darfur conflict on the political establishment, especially on the person of President Al-Bashir.

The external conflict and conspiracy frame as presented by SNR is first as much escapist as it is manipulative of the Arabized Northern Sudanese. However, this kind of framing has far-reaching implications for the country’s social cohesion. As discussed earlier, the SNR manipulated cultural narratives to evoke feelings of urgency as well as
of solidarity with al-Bashir in his confrontation with the ICC, and the international community. By adopting a frame that appeals to an Islamic Arabic-based cultural collective, SNR engaged, intentionally or otherwise, in a process of “Othering” (and probably stigmatizing) those Sudanese nationals who did not share the Arabic Islamic sentiments with SNR or those of its targeted audience. Othering is “a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or mainstream” (Johnson, 2004, p. 253). The Other “refers not only to different nationalities, but also to any group of people perceived as different—perhaps in terms of so-called ethnicity, religion, political alignment, class or caste, or gender” (Holliday, Martín & John, 2004, p. 23).

SNR promoted a certain and complex definition of issues facing Sudan at the time: Sudan, with its president, was positioned in conflict with the “infidel” West and Israel. This problem definition promoted an exclusionary view of Sudanese identity that considered whoever did not share the animosity sentiments against Israel, the West, and consequently the ICC, as less Sudanese and a traitor to the nation of Sudan (which is supposedly under attack according to SNR) and a threat to internal national unity.

The complexity of this frame came from the fact that the uniting factor in the “loyal Sudanese” camp was sentiments widely shared by Northern Sudanese, who, for cultural, religious, and historical reasons, largely identify with the Middle East in its longstanding conflict with Israel. In terms of conflict transformation and peace-building, the adoption of the external conflict and conspiracy frame only contributed to further dichotomize the Sudanese society into insiders, meaning Northern Arab Muslims, and
outsiders, which included whoever did not share the insiders’ views. Effectively, what this meant is that any Sudanese with a view different from the one that SNR sought to perpetuate was a sympathizer with Israel, the West, and the ICC.

However, the effect of this frame influenced not only the news coverage of the ICC and related issues, but of the whole reconciliation, conflict transformation, and peace-building process. This exclusionary version of Sudanese identity has implications for the possibility of obtaining social cohesion and harmony among different groups.

Deng (1995) made a crucial statement on the relationship between the official discourse of identity and conflict in Sudan. He stated that a crucial factor in determining the critical turning point in Sudan’s conflict had always been “the extent to which policies or actions of the central government have promoted or diminished a sense of belonging or identification with the country on more or less equitable footing with the North.” He further explained that official discourse, especially that promoted in mass media, often marked “the dividing line between peace and war, cooperation and conflict, unity and polarization” (p. 177).

Moreover, SNR, in its effort to entrench the NCP political agenda, chose to ignore the underlying issues of conflict. Instead of addressing the real issues of cultural and structural violence in order to contribute to constructive conflict transformation and reconciliation, SNR faithfully executed the NCP escapist strategy when it came to the CPA implementation. The NCP-controlled government, which engaged in continuous efforts to undermine full implementation of the CPA, opted for a superficial
representation of the peace process: development projects as a peace incentive. The NCP was reluctant to fully implement the CPA, because “an entirely implemented CPA would create a more democratic and transparent Sudan, something that would challenge the power-base that the NCP has at the moment” (Brosché, 2007, p. 238). Full CPA implementation meant true power and wealth sharing. The NCP was desperate to maintain the status quo of domination of the center elites over the marginalized majority. SNR, through reducing issues of conflict transformation, reconciliation, and peace-building to development projects, contributed to preserving the status quo, where Khartoum, the center, continued to be the principal actor that called the shots in the social, political, cultural and economic life of Sudan. As such, the tensions (and conflicts) experienced in the past are likely to carry on into the future of Sudan unless issues that really matter in Sudan’s conflict—cultural and structural justice—take the fore and are addressed intensively and extensively.

On the other hand, Nairobi based, USAID funded SRS, which branded itself as radio for peace and democracy, tried its best to keep issues of peace and conflict transformation at the forefront of its reporting. However, as the framing analysis showed, conflict and blame frames were dominant in SRS coverage. The frequent reporting of conflict and outstanding issues surrounding the peace process contributed to a sense of losing hope in the reconciliation and peace-building process. Although one can argue that SRS reporting was not the major driving force behind the audience members’ sense of
hopelessness, it was certainly one of the factors. This observation raises the question, what does the role of radio that brands itself as peace radio entail?

The SRS mission statement defined the radio station’s major role as providing its listeners “with the knowledge and tools to participate more fully in peace making, reconciliation and development processes of Sudan” (SRS, 2010). It was apparent that SRS defined its role as one of information dissemination. But, is it enough to “objectively” inform people about the peace process, or should the radio actively campaign for peace? There is no straightforward answer, and journalists and communication scholars still debate the role of media in conflict and post-conflict environments. The debate is between the proponents of professional Western journalism practices which hold the view the journalists are ideally objective conveyers of the news, and on the other hand, the advocates of peace journalism who hold that the conventional ideals of objectivity, detachment, and neutrality are myths. Reporting news can never be a neutral process since “‘to report the facts,’ in the time honored phrase, is to suppress—inescapably, since there are more facts than reports” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. xvii, italicized in the original). Accordingly, advocates for the peace journalism approach suggest that “editors and reporters make choices—of what stories to report and about how to report them—to create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 5). This debate takes place not just in academia, but it took place in SRS as well. As a multinational organization, SRS bounced between two visions; one those of Sudanese journalists and
reporters directly affected by the war and consequently unable to detach themselves from the stories about which they were reporting. Interviews with Sudanese journalists in SRS indicated that they perceived their role as peace activists. The other vision was the vision of those who held the sacred canons of Western journalism practices. This camp’s vision was translated into the SRS mission statement quoted above: to provide “accurate” and “objective” information to listeners. Yet, it seems that the traditional professional journalism advocates’ vision dominated the station’s practice.

Lynch (2010) argued that Western journalism practices which value “balance” tend to frame conflict in dualistic form. However, this dualism, noted Lynch, “leads inexorably to Mechanism—A world divided into good and evil—and the last battle between the two, or Armageddon” (p. 73). SRS, in its attempt at objectivity, strived to present the “two” sides of each story. This approach, besides promoting the conflict frame, ignores the multiplicity of each story, only portraying two dimensions. The peace-building process is multifaceted and consisted of many actors, not just the NCP and SPLM/A. Concentrating only on political actors, has led to more emphasis only on the legal aspect of peace—the CPA—and ignoring of the structural and cultural components of peace.

Indeed the CPA ended the direct violence—at least the openly declared violence between the North and South. However to address the structural and cultural aspects of Sudan’s conflict, institutions dedicated to conflict transformation and peace-building needed to go the extra mile to transform the conflict into a constructive force towards
social change. As discussed in the review of the literature, for conflict transformation to take place in societies emerging from conflict, the emphasis should be on transforming the relationships and social structures that supported and contributed to the continuation of the violent conflict or injustices in the first place. Adopting a conflict-sensitive approach to reporting news requires focusing on people across social strata rather than on the elite only, as well as addressing the invisible effects of violence, which often pass unnoticed (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, 2007). SRS, in its reporting, rarely gave voice to ordinary people. Politicians, official sources, and institutions often dominated the news stories.

Conflict transformation also entails contextualizing the conflict. The peace journalism approach upholds reporting that explores conflict formation, within its historical and social context, rather than the conflict arena (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). In societies emerging from intractable conflicts, structural and cultural aspects of violence are often deeply rooted in the society’s social institutions and structures. Therefore, peace-building should not be seen as a static but rather as an ongoing process that needs to be maintained and continuously developed. However, as Lynch and McGoldrick (2007) noted, conventional news production routines are characterized by “a bias of favor of event over process” (p. 258). Consequently, news about specific controversial issues was more frequently reported in SRS than was the process of dealing with these issues.
If framing can be understood as a process of selection and highlighting certain aspects of reality in order to make it more prominent, framing for peace journalism, noted Lynch (2010), is “to adumbrate a strategy covering both structure and agency to increase the platitude of cues and clues for readers and audiences to form their own negotiated or oppositional readings of appeals to support collective violence of one kind or another” (p. 81). Conflict-sensitive reporting does not require journalists to twist the truth in order to promote a peace agenda. This approach recognizes the audience as an active agent in interpretations and meaning construction, and requires framing issues in a way that does not glorify violence. Being truth, people, and solution-oriented means that SRS increases its coverage of issues pertaining to ordinary people’s lives rather than to those of politicians and institutions. It also means that SRS reports on solution-oriented stories, in addition to stories about conflict.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is important to note that in complex and intractable conflicts like Sudan’s, conflict cannot be transformed overnight. Taking into consideration the active agency of audience members in interpreting media messages and developing their own frames, media can only be one of the change agents. Media can play an effective and active role in bringing to light cultural and structural violence that are normally buried under the surface because of domination by one group and the denying of other groups’ voices. However, as the findings of this research revealed, audience members were active agents scrutinizing the media frames and evaluating them against their personal experiences. Audience
members turned to media only to confirm their frames or to seek information on issues they found to be outside the sphere of their direct experience. Therefore, the role of media in conflict transformation and peace-building should be understood in the context of a wider societal effort for reconciliation and peace-building. In this respect, media should facilitate dialogue and public deliberation.

Social change is not only about transmitting information but also about exchanging meanings to effect change. This shift in theorizing about communication for social change is particularly significant in peace and conflict transformation. Sustainable peace, more than any other human need, demands active engagement by the people affected by conflict. Building sustainable peace requires more than signing agreements; it demands a change in hearts and minds.

In the radio sector, if the NCP-dominated government of Sudan is serious about conflict transformation and peace-building efforts, the structural and cultural injustices that have characterized relations among different groups need to be discussed openly and addressed adequately. This can only be achieved if a serious overhaul of the media structure takes place. However, while the abovementioned recommendations represent the ideal, the reality is different. The question of the role of state-owned media in societies emerging from conflict, especially state-sponsored conflict, remains fundamental. Experiences in transitional countries indicated two paths to take: reform of state media or development of a private media sector (Thompson & Price, 2002). In countries like Sudan, where development of private media can be hindered by political
and economic constraints, there is “no better alternative than attempting to establish some form of public service broadcasting” (Thompson & Price, 2002, p. 21). Yet, it is remarkable that, despite the role of mass media in Sudanese political life, little attention was paid to media reforms in the CPA. While the interim constitution stressed issues of freedom of the press, the electronic media sector was, in large measure, left under the control of the NCP.

Haselock (2010) pointed out four areas that should be targeted in media reform in countries emerging from violent conflicts: public service broadcasting, legal framework, independent regulatory structure, and training and professional development. International Media Support in its assessment of media in Sudan suggested similar areas of intervention (IMS, 2007).

The electronic media sector in Sudan has been a government monopoly for a long time. Therefore, establishing a public broadcasting service, that is publicly funded, should be accompanied by constitutional and legal reforms to ensure media independence from government control. The reformed legal framework would allow for multiple actors, and freedom of expression. The regulatory framework should allow for the establishment of a body which is autonomous and independent with capacity to exercise oversight on media operations. The independent regulatory body should have clear and transparent standards and mechanisms for granting licenses and determining violations. Without these legal guarantees any media intervention is bound to fail. For instance, in 2006
authorities in North Sudan refused to grant a license for the UN sponsored radio (radio Miraya) to broadcast in the North.

However, it is important to note that these stipulations can be meaningless without the human capital to implement them. One of the first steps that the Islamist movement took to consolidate its grip on power was to revamp civil service sector by replacing many civil servants with those who could carry on the Islamization project. As explained in Chapter Two, “in slightly more than four years, [the Islamist movement] laid off 73,640 people . . . , or more than double those laid off since 1904” (Sidahmed & Sidahmed, 2005, p. 58). It was only those who were loyal to the regime, not the most qualified, who were absorbed in the civil service. Without over generalizations, one can conclude that loyalists of the Islamist movement occupy decision-making positions in electronic media sector. Without taking this into consideration and implementing a rigorous program for recruitment that is based on merit and qualifications, and not political loyalty, media reforms cannot take place. Building human capital should be accompanied by training and capacity building for journalists in professional journalism standards as well as conflict sensitive reporting. An assessment of media sector in Sudan in 2007 concluded,

The standards of journalism in Sudan remain poor, and providing objective and relevant reporting is consequently a challenge for many Sudanese media outlets. One of the major obstacles is the lack of qualified education and training, which
are either too theoretical (in universities) or too ad hoc and short-term oriented.

(IMS, 2007, p. 56)

Training journalists in professional reporting is essential, especially in the case of SNR. However, the complex realities and polarization in Sudanese society need to be handled carefully. Strictly adhering to traditional Western journalism values may result in production of news that is elite-focused, event rather than process oriented, and ignoring the indirect and long-term consequences of the conflict. In conflict situations, news is not neutral enterprise; it is always value-laden. As such, reporting just the “facts,” journalist run into the danger of perpetuating deep-seated mistrust and trauma between communities. At the other extreme, adopting an activist approach to reporting not only would compromise the news legitimacy in the public’s perception, but would carry the danger of imposing censorship under the name of strengthening peace. Therefore, both SNR and SRS need to adopt a conflict-sensitive approach in reporting. Such an approach does not mean that journalists hide facts or twist the truth to promote peace.

Conflict-sensitive journalism is an approach that “searches for new voices and new ideas about the conflict” (Howard, 2003, p. 15). This reporting avoids showing the conflict from one point of view (as is the case is with SNR practices,) or a dualistic opposing sides angle either (as is the case with SRS practice). Journalists should seek multiple voices and try to find a common ground. To change the journalistic practices, training and capacity building needs to target short-term as well as long-term goals. Incorporating conflict-sensitive reporting as well as professional journalism standards in
journalism schools, in the long run, could create a human resources infrastructure that perceive itself as servants of the citizenry not the government.

However, it is important to note that any reform of the media should take into consideration local ownership. While international agencies and experts can be beneficial in areas of capacity building and training, sensitivity to the local context is crucial. Radio and television have been dominated by state control for too long. This has affected not only the nature of news reporting, but the organizational culture in these institutions as well. Many professionals I interviewed in SNR perceived their role as support of the government rather than as agents in service of Sudanese citizens. These realities cannot change quickly and sensitivity to these issues is necessary. For any social change to be effective, beneficiaries should be considered as active agents of change, not as passive recipients. This also applies to SRS, where international expertise should give more attention to the local staff who are more familiar with the local realities on the ground.

Ideally, an open media and independent media system in Sudan would give voice to all groups who were historically denied political agency and voice. It is important to note that a systematic and deliberate effort to grant entry to the marginalized voices in the production of public discourse through the media is necessary in order to reverse patterns of historical exclusion. Efforts of granting access to historically marginalized groups could be enhanced by introducing community media. Through inclusion of local issues, histories, languages, and cultural narratives, community media can provide voice and venues of empowerment for local communities. Community media can also present “both
formal and informal systems of education by employing a rich cultural capital that is [already] available” (Gathigi, 2009, p. 277). Creating such platform helps challenging the domination of Arabic-Islamic culture and creating a discursive space where Sudan’s cultural diversity is appreciated.

Another area of intervention could be combining mass media efforts with traditional media. As discussed earlier, the development of mass media in Africa and other former colonized countries was in large part inherited from colonial powers, and developed in the post-independence states as “channels for the dissemination of modern ideas and practices, [and] . . . as integral to the very process of social transformation” (West & Fair, 1993, p. 91). However, and as result of the failure of the dominant modernization paradigm, global South scholars (especially from Africa and Latin America) started questioning the Western concepts of the role of communication and mass media in development. One perspective that emerged from that debate was that Western models ignored the existence of vast indigenous systems of communication. For instance, Frank Ugboajah (1985) emphasized the role of what he called oramedia or folk media (song, drama, storytelling, marketplace, etc.) in the communicative process in African communities. Similarly, Ellis (1989) also discussed the role of informal oral communicative channels, or what he termed “pavement radio.” He noted that “pavement radio plays an important role in cementing popular belief in certain ideas and in propagating an enduring view of important political events” (p. 330). The findings of this research suggest that in Sudan people turn to media to confirm, not to seek new
information, unless they have no other sources of information. As the case in many non-Western societies, there was heavy reliance on *oral media* (orality, family, friends, etc) as primary sources of information. Information obtained from social circles may thus carry more weight and have more influence in shaping audience members’ frames than that which comes through the media. It is important to note that the Sudanese have confidence in and are loyal to these circles. Hence, effective communication reigns orally. Secondly, politics in Sudan has for a long time been characterized by censorship and limited media freedom. What has been passed through the media for many years has been propaganda from the government of the day. To counter this, Sudanese have learned to seek information from alternative sources which they perceive to be more credible. Even for independent media, such as SRS, participants sought to confirm what they heard through opinions of others or the community. Integrating interpersonal communication techniques and group communication such as campaigns and street theater, among others, could lend itself as an effective tool to contribute to peace-building.

However, media cannot facilitate dialogue and public deliberation alone. This can only be achieved if the media sector reform is accompanied by a more open atmosphere of public deliberation and transformation that targets all social institutions. Fostering peace needs a reversal of patterns of marginalization and structural injustice, as well addressing any cultural aspects that legitimize violence or dehumanize those who are different. One important area of intervention, besides mass media, is educational institutions. Educational system in Sudan had been subject to political control. Schools, among other societal
institutions, can play an essential role in promoting peace (or violence). Taking into consideration that educational institutions “help set the canons of truthfulness and, as such, also help re-create a major reference point of what knowledge, culture, belief, and morality really are,” (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 4) transforming educational institutions can have far reaching implications on conflict transformation. However, it is important to note that transforming structural relations in intractable conflicts needs political will. Addressing that is indeed beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Limitations of the Research and Suggestions for Future Research

This research set out to examine the radio in conflict transformation and peace-building in Sudan. However, no single study can capture the complex and multifaceted realities of its participants. This study had several limitations.

First, the focus was news programming only in the two radio stations selected. Bartic (2005), in his research about different projects of peace media, identified three general genres: news programs, entertainment programs, and campaigns. Both radio stations actively engage in production of the three genres. Further and closer investigation of the content of other non-news programs in SRS and/or SNR would complement the findings of this research.

The audience members of this research represent two isolated segments. Each radio station’s frames were compared to its audience’s frames. This helped better understand the ways in which media frames inform audience’s frames. However, with SRS expanding its reach inside Sudan, it would be beneficial to examine a segment of
audience members who are exposed to both SRS and SNR to examine their relationship to a state-owned radio and an independent radio. Moreover, examination of audience members’ frames in relation to different media outlets’ frames (different radio stations, television and print media) could be beneficial in understanding the best practices and channels for enhancing the role of media in peace-building.

I am of the opinion that both SNR and SRS could benefit from a more in-depth look at how their work does contribute and could contribute more to peace-building in Sudan. This research took into account the end product – the frames that these two radio stations produced. An in-depth look at the process and factors contributing to frames production, cultural organization, and how these factors affected the way the frames were produced, would shed light on better ways to adopt frames that contribute to conflict transformation and more subtle ways of peace-building.

Personal Reflections

In my research journey, I faced challenges and learned lessons, not only about the research topic and the participants, but about myself as well. I consider my major lesson in this research journey to be the concept of research as crafting an artwork with all the complexity and creativity of such a process. From the moment of the idea’s inception to the writing of this concluding section, I experienced many turning points; it was never a linear process. I learned that the qualitative research entailed not only a process of recording, analyzing and interpreting data, but also a dialectic relationship between the “intensified and redefined forms of experiences” both for me and for the participants.
(Dewy, 1934/1978, as quoted in Janesick, 2000, p. 381). It was also a didactic relationship between myself and others. In my attempt to grasp the complexity of the research “in terms of situating and re-contextualizing the research project within the shared experience of . . . [myself] and the participants in the study,” I often found myself in a process of performing and reforming my own identity in relation to my participants (Janesick, 2000, p. 380). The result was a realization that, as much as I gained understanding of the experiences of the audience members in this research, it was also a learning experience about me: my identity, my limitations and my aspirations. It was a challenging experience, yet a rewarding one.

My first challenge was the continuous performance and redefinition of identity. During my fieldwork I felt challenged to navigate the waters of identity in the deeply polarized society of Sudan. As I explained in Chapter Four, I embodied all the complexities of being culturally Arabized and ethnically Nubian from the far north, but regionally identified as from the Blue Nile in Southeastern Sudan, and above all, I was U. S.-educated. That is in addition to other facets of my identity. I chose to introduce myself as someone from Blue Nile State for various reasons. First and foremost, because that is the place to which my family traced their roots, and to where I felt I belonged. Secondly, I thought identifying myself as someone from a historically marginalized area would help me establish a connection with my participants. However, I discovered that my way of thinking was simplistic and naive and did not fully embrace the intricacy of Sudanese identity politics. The connection was not well-made with some participants, though
accordin to regional identification they belonged to marginalized communities. For instance, some of my participants from South Kordofan State considered themselves Arabs and were alienated by my Blue Nile heritage. Najeeb, a case in point here, was happy to discover in an informal conversation that I am from the Danagla tribe (which put me in the Arabized Sudanese category) and told me he was surprised when I said I am from the Blue Nile, because I didn’t look like a typical Blue Nile person. It was an implicitly racist comment that I look like an Arab (sic), and not African (sic) from Blue Nile, according to Sudanese social hierarchy. He later told me his ethnic group’s Arabic roots to make the connection with me (as an Arab). In moments like this, I found myself in tension between how I chose to identify myself, and how others chose to label me. Moreover, there was tension between accepting such a racist comment or standing for my personal convictions and risk losing my interview. It was a delicate choice. Above all, I came into experience with complexity and fluidity of identity as a social construct—something that adopted different forms and definitions depending on actors, interests, and positionality.

Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland (2006) argued that our self-concept(s) or identity(ies) are an integral part of the way we perform and negotiate our interactions with others in everyday life. However, all the identities each of us has embody “the relative salience of any particular identity is likely to vary with whomever you are interacting at the moment” (p. 135). As explained in Chapter Four, when I was headed to Kakuma Refugee Camp, I was apprehensive about how I, as a Northerner, would be
received. Interestingly, two other aspects of my identity stood out to most participants: my Swahili communicative skills, and not being associated with the UNHCR or the repatriation process. I believe that my ability to hold basic conversations in Swahili helped me build trust with my participants and showed my willingness to let go of my perceived privileged identity as an Arabized Sudanese. While I did not conduct any interviews in Kakuma in Swahili, the Swahili language was my entry point to many households, and helped me overcome barriers of mistrust. Northern Sudanese rarely learn any African languages, as they consider them inferior to their own—Arabic language. Therefore, my conversational skills in Swahili were rather odd, unexpected and came across as a big surprise to most of my participants. Generally, I felt that I was dissuading most of them of their presuppositions and preconceptions of a typical Arabized Northern Sudanese — me. This became a foundational element in the building of trust, relaxing my participants, and making them open up during interviews.

Qualitative research is inherently relational. The qualitative researcher strives to build rapport with the research participants to gain rich understanding of their lives, feelings, and perceptions. However, once the researcher acquires the needed data, she or he has to leave the field. My research was no exception. The field exit can sometimes be accompanied by what Rossman and Rallis (2003) called the feeling of abandonment and betrayal. Researchers might feel that they have abandoned the participants and that the whole purpose of the research relationship was to gain the participants’ stories. The feeling of betrayal comes from the fact that once the researcher gets what she or he wants
then the participants are left behind, betraying the trust, time, and emotions they invested in the research relationship. I too had faced these feelings. Many times, I found myself deeply involved with the life stories and situations of participants. The tension of bouncing between “distance and surrender” in managing the relationship with the participants was a never-ending process (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 57). Although Lofland et al. (2006) warned against surrender and advised researchers to manage the distance between themselves and the participants, human relationships are more complex and cannot always be subject to calculation. When I was in Kakuma Refugee Camp, many shared with me the stress they were facing with the closure of schools and the denying of Sudanese children an education in order to pressure the families to repatriate to South Sudan. To listen to these stories, among others that were directly related to my research, then to write them in my field notes and leave behind the participants after completing my research was painful. Although I kept contact with participants from Kakuma, it was not easy to fight the feelings of abandonment and betrayal after returning to the U. S. and continuing with my life, though it was never the same as before.

These feelings of betrayal and abandonment intensify when researching such sensitive topics as issues of peace and conflict. Smyth (2001) posed the question “Does researching divided societies make any difference? Does it have positive effect? Is research done to satisfy researchers’ quest for knowledge, or need to enhance their publication records?” (p. 6). Although Smyth (2001) acknowledged that opening issues of conflict and identity to discussion in divided societies contributes to healing processes
in these societies, I remained challenged by the ethical questions of the impact of my research on the lives of the participants. My visit to the Mapan community in Blue Nile was one of those difficult moments. It was after that visit that I wrote the following in my field notes:

When I told the elderly lady what I am doing she said, “Peace for me means returning home,” then she said something in the Mapan language. I noticed that the interpreter did not interpret for me and he continued talking with her. I asked him: What did she say? He was reluctant. I insisted, and then he told me that she said, “Peace means that I can go home, can you help me going home?” He was trying to explain to her that I am a researcher and had no authority to take her back to Upper Nile, her homeland. That was one of my most difficult moments in my research journey. Thinking of myself as a miner who is coming to excavate information from this community, but what am I giving back? I cannot make any promises that I cannot keep. It was a challenge that influenced my whole day in that community. I came back so frustrated and with a deep sense of helpless self. I have seen extreme poverty, bitterness, exclusion, and hopelessness in this community. “What can I do to give back to this community?” a nagging question that kept popping up in my head that whole day [and the days after.] (Field notes, February 17, 2009)

I kept questioning the impact of my research on those who contributed to it through their stories, voices and opinions. What can I give back to these communities that
hosted me, opened their homes and put their trust in me? Indeed, I am bringing out their voices. However, I remained challenged that it was nearly impossible to share the findings with all of my participants who were not only dispersed all over Sudan, and Kenya, but most of whom cannot read nor comprehend what I have written in English.

Writing in a language other than my native tongue, and other than the language in which I conducted more than half of my interviews remained one of my biggest challenges in this research. Temple (1997) acknowledged the power of language in qualitative research, since “language at the same time constructs as it describes the world” (p. 906). In interpretative qualitative research meaning is co-constructed through the participants’ interviews/words and the researcher’s interpretation/writing. In qualitative research the knowledge production cannot be rendered as a neutral process, but rather is situated in the context in which it was produced and the way that it was expressed. I found myself bouncing back and forth between Arabic, the language of my everyday life, the radio messages and interviews in Sudan, and English, the language of my academic training. Not only was it difficult for me to express exactly what I wanted to say in a language other than my own, but issues of representation when translating my participants’ words into another language puzzled me. As argued by Philips “almost any utterance in any language carries with it a set of assumptions, feelings, and values” (quoted in Muller, 2007, p. 207). Language does not only describe, it carries cultural weight. For instance, the Arabic words *ashiqaa* and *ikhwa* can both be translated as “brothers” in English. But in Arabic they carry different weights. *Ashiga* is more
intimate; it carries the connotation of blood ties. SNR used *ashiqa* to describe Arabs and
*ikwa* to describe Africans. When translating both words as “brothers,” we lose the
cultural meaning that distinguishes Arabs from Africans in SNR and Northern Sudan
political discourse. Not only language, but ways of expression were equally important
and can be difficult when working across languages and cultures. African ways of
communication rely heavily on storytelling and parables. This tendency was evident even
in the interviews conducted in Kakuma in English. Many participants would tell me long
stories to illustrate a point. Quoting these stories in an academic document presented in a
Western academic institution would not convey what the participants tried to say, simply
because it was a different system of meaning and telling. Nevertheless the essence of
their stories was captured, I believe and trust.

Although I argued for reflexivity throughout this dissertation, I found it
challenging to insert myself in the writings of the findings of this research. As I reflect
on that now, I realized that there are two reasons for this. First, it was my desire to retain
the focus of this research on my participants rather than myself. I wanted to bring out and
respect their voices and stories. The second reason was related to my cultural
background. I come from a collectivistic culture in which one’s self sense is understood
in relation to others. In collectivistic cultures “private thoughts and feelings about the self
and others are not considered pertinent” (Mpofu, 1994, p. 342). In addition, Na and Choi
(2009) contended that there is a relationship between cultural orientation and choice
between first-person singular versus plural pronouns. In Northern Sudanese culture, the
use of the pronoun “I” in communication is often accompanied by the qualifying sentence “I seek refuge (forgiveness) with Allah from saying ‘I am.’” Using the first person singular pronoun communicates pride and arrogance. I bring this cultural baggage to my writing and interpretation. Often I experienced the tension between being, as a qualitative researcher, self-reflexive and the cultural reluctance of focusing on my individual self. However, I realized that as I was taking comfort and refuge in “my researcher voice that has allowed me to reflect upon and interpret the meanings of other’s stories,” I was also telling about myself (Norander, 2008, p. 265). At the end, this text, as a qualitative research, is my story of the field experience.

As the writing of this dissertation comes to a close, relations remain strained between North and South Sudan in the countdown to the referendum in the South. As the words of my participants testified, South Sudanese feel pushed to escape the long history of injustice by starting their new independent state. The long history of domination and hegemony cost Sudan a dear part of its land and people: South Sudan. However, the story is not ending in secession of South Sudan. Tensions and feelings of exclusion and marginalization remain in the Darfur, the East, and the Nubians of the far north. An estimated more than two million souls have already been lost in the quest for justice, true peace and equality. I hope that this work brings attention to the role of mass media in the pursuit of peace, and contribute in a small way to the quest of social transformation and justice in Sudan.
REFERENCES


The Red Sea Press.

CA: Sage Publications.


prevailed for so long? Paper prepared for Case Study Project on Civil Wars. New 
Haven, CT.

AllAfrica (26 November, 2009). Darfur radio show launched - program will overcome 
Sudanese censorship to deliver news on war crimes justice developments. 


Dar El Thaqafiai.


*doi:10.1177/002200275700100101*


416


International Media Support (IMS) (2007). *Assessment and outline of a strategy for media support: Media in Sudan at a crossroad*. Copenhagen, Denmark: IMS


doi: 10.1080/14781159308412767


Maher, T. M. (2001). Framing: An emerging paradigm or a phase of agenda setting? In S. Reese, H. O. Gandy, & E. A. Grant (Eds.), *Framing public life: Perspectives on*
media and our understanding of the social world (pp. 83-94). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.


Yongo-Bure, B. (1993). The underdevelopment of the Southern Sudan since independence. In M. Daly & A. Sikainga (Eds.), *Civil War in the Sudan* (pp. 51-77). London: British Academic.


A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2. research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: Broadcasting Peace: Radio and Conflict Transformation in Sudan

Project Director: Hala Ibrahim

Department: Media Arts and Studies

Advisor: Drew McCaniel

Rebecca Cale
Institutional Review Board

9/18/08

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved by the IRB (as an amendment) prior to implementation.
APPENDIX B: RESEARCH PERMIT IN KENYA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

When replying please quote

Ref. No: MOHEST/13/001/38C 487/2

HALA ASMIMA IBRAHIM,
OHIO UNIVERSITY,
USA.

Dear Madam,

RE:-- RESEARCH AUTHORISATION:

Following your application for authority to conduct research on “Broadcasting Peace Radio and conflict transformation in Sudan.”

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to conduct research in Nairobi for a period ending 30th October, 2009.

You are advised to report to the Provincial Commissioner and the Provincial Director of Education, Nairobi, before embarking on your research project.

On completion of your research, you are expected to submit Four (4) copies of your research report to this office.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

For: Permanent Secretary,
Co:- The Provincial Commissioner,
        The Provincial Director of Education,
        Nairobi.
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

Title of Research: Broadcasting Peace? Radio and Conflict Transformation in Sudan
Principal Investigator: Hala Guta
Department: Media Arts and Studies

Federal and university regulations require signed consent for participation in research involving human subjects. After reading the statements below, please indicate your consent by signing this form.

The proposed research aims to understand the role mass media may play in audiences’ perceptions about peace and social cohesion in Sudan. Two media organizations – Sudan National Radio (SNR) based in Sudan and Sudan Radio Service (SRS) based in Kenya – serve as the case studies for this research. You are being asked to participate in this study because this research seeks to understand your perceptions about peace and conflict in Sudan. If you agree to participate, I will conduct an interview with you in a location of your choice and at a time of your choosing. The interview will take about an hour. More than one interview might be needed if you agree. I will audio tape this interview so I can remember what you said. I will do so only with your permission. You have the right to turn the tape off at any point in the conversation. After the interview, the tape will be transcribed. Any personal information you provide will remain completely confidential. You can choose that your name and identity will be identified or you can choose to not be identified. If you choose not to be identified, I will not use your name or identify you personally in any way in the final project. You can change your mind about identification at any point in the interview and you will be asked to sign a new informed consent.

Your participation in this study does not involve any physical risk or emotional risk to you. Your participation in this study may aid in the understanding of the role of media in the national social cohesion project in Sudan. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you withdraw no more information will be collected from you. When you indicate you wish to withdraw the investigator will ask if the materials already collected in the study can be used. Confidentiality and Records:

The data in this study will be confidential. All audiotapes and recorded records will be destroyed at the end of the study. Results of this study may be used for research, publications, or presentations at scientific meetings. If your individual interview is discussed, and you choose not to be identified, your identity will be protected by using a
study code number rather than your name or other identifying information and only I and the interpreter will have access to the identification key.

Compensation

Your participation in this study will involve no cost to you and you will not be paid for your participation in this study. Any transportation and food expenses will be paid by the investigator.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Hala Ibrahim, cell phone: 09 13586807 (in Sudan before April 2009) or 0717300390 (in Kenya, between April and September 2009), or (001) (740)2741734 (after September 1, 2009).

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (001) (740)593-0664.

I certify that I have read (or the consent form have been explained to me verbally) and understand this consent form and agree to participate as a subject in the research described. I agree that known risks to me have been explained to my satisfaction and I understand that no compensation is available from Ohio University and its employees for any injury resulting from my participation in this research. I certify that I am 18 years of age or older. My participation in this research is given voluntarily. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which I may otherwise be entitled. I certify that I have been given a copy of this consent form to take with me.

Signature ____________________________                               Date  _____________

Printed Name __________________________
## APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE

### Fact Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written / Verbal consent form</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/ Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview Probes

The interviews will be around these broad topics:

- **Life history**
  - Where are you from
  - How long have you lived here/ there
  - How has the war affected your life
  - How has the peace affected your life
  - What does peace mean to you
  - Views on the reason of the conflict

- **Sources of news**
  - Mass Media
  - Neighborhood/ Market/ social gatherings
  - Friends/ co-workers
  - Internet

- **Access to radio**
  - Ownership
  - Available radio stations
  - Favorite radio stations

- **Listening habits (time, individual or collective listening)**
  - Frequency of listening
  - Times of listening
  - Individual or collective listening
  - Discussion during or after the programs
  - What sorts of things that are normally discussed

- **Favorite stations**
  - Why?
  - Favorite radio programs
  - Why
  - What aspects do you like
  - Language influence on the choice of the program/ station
  - Programs you do not like
  - Why? What aspects you do not like

- **What do audiences look for in radio programs**

- **Audience Participation in radio**
  - Call in programs/Letters to a radio station/ SMS

- **Perceptions about the peace process.**
  - Before and after the CPA
- Changes the CPA brought
- How does the CPA affect you/your family
- Radio coverage of peace
- What do you think about the coverage of peace issues
- Coverage of CPA implementation
- Coverage of post-conflict reconstruction
- What is not covered
- Change of coverage over time/Before and after the CPA
- The radio current contribution/Role in the peace process
- The radio ideal contribution/Role in the peace process (What is missing)

- Discussion of recent topics reported in the news
WHEREAS the Government of the Republic of the Sudan (GOS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM/A) (hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”), having met in continuous negotiations between May 2002 and December 2004, in Karen, Machakos, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nanyuki and Naivasha, Kenya, under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Peace Process, and, in respect of the issues related to the Conflict Areas of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States and Abyei Area, under the auspices of the Government of the Republic of Kenya;

CONSCIOUS that the conflict in the Sudan is the longest running conflict in Africa; that it has caused tragic loss of life, destroyed the infrastructure of the country, eroded its economic resources and caused suffering to the people of the Sudan;

MINDFUL of the urgent need to bring peace and security to the people of the Sudan who have endured this conflict for far too long;

AWARE of the fact that peace, stability and development are aspirations shared by all people of the Sudan;

IN PURSUANCE OF the commitment of the Parties to a negotiated settlement on the basis of a democratic system of governance which, on the one hand, recognizes the right of the people of Southern Sudan to self-determination and seeks to make unity attractive during the Interim Period, while at the same time is founded on the values of justice, democracy, good governance, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, mutual understanding and tolerance of diversity within the realities of the Sudan;

RECORDING AND RECONFIRMING that in pursuance of this commitment the Parties duly reached agreement on the following texts: the Machakos Protocol, dated 20th July, 2002 which is set out in Chapter I of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA); the Agreement on Security Arrangements, dated 25th September, 2003 which is set out in Chapter VI of the CPA; the Agreement on Wealth Sharing, dated 7th January, 2004 which is set out in Chapter III of the CPA; the Protocol on Power Sharing, dated 26th May, 2004 which is set out in Chapter II of the CPA; the Protocol on the Resolution of the Conflict In Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, dated 26th May, 2004 which is set out in Chapter V of the CPA; and the Protocol on the Resolution of the Conflict in Abyei Area, dated 26th May, 2004 which is set out in Chapter IV of the CPA; and that the Security Council of the United Nations in its Resolution 1574 of 19th November, 2004, took note of these aforementioned Protocols and Agreements;

RECOGNIZING that the Parties have concluded an Agreement on a Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities During the Pre-Interim and Interim Periods dated 31st December, 2004 which is set out in Annexure I of the CPA, within the Framework of the Agreement on Security Arrangements of 25th September, 2003;
FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the Parties have also concluded the Agreement on the Implementation Modalities of the Protocols and Agreements dated 31st December, 2004 which is set out in Annexure II of the CPA;

NOW HEREBIN THE PARTIES JOINTLY ACKNOWLEDGE that the CPA offers not only hope but also a concrete model for solving problems and other conflicts in the country;

THE PARTIES FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE that the successful implementation of the CPA shall provide a model for good governance in the Sudan that will help create a solid basis to preserve peace and make unity attractive and therefore undertake to fully adhere to the letter and spirit of the CPA so as to guarantee lasting peace, security for all, justice and equality in the Sudan;

NOW THEREFORE, THE PARTIES AGREE, upon signing this Agreement, on the following:

1. The Pre-Interim Period shall commence, and all the obligations and commitments specified in the CPA shall be binding in accordance with the provisions thereof;

2. The CPA shall be comprised of the texts of the Protocols and Agreements already signed, together with this Chapeau, the Agreement on Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities and its appendices as Annexure I and the Agreement on the Implementation Modalities and the Global Implementation Matrix and its appendices as Annexure II;

3. The agreed Arabic and English texts of the CPA shall both be official and authentic. However, in the event of a dispute regarding the meaning of any provision of the text, and only if there is a difference in meaning between the Arabic and English texts; the English text shall be authoritative as English was the language of the peace negotiations.

4. Upon compilation of the official and authentic Arabic and English texts of the CPA, the initialled copies of both texts shall be given to both Parties, and copies shall also be lodged with the United Nations, the African Union, IGAD Secretariat in Djibouti, the League of Arab States and the Republic of Kenya.

5. All persons performing governmental functions shall continue to do so at the place at which they render such services or perform such functions unless or until redeployed or alternative instructions are received in accordance with the arrangements agreed to by the Parties.

6. To establish such priority joint task teams, particularly the Joint National Transitional Team (JNTT), the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC), the
Constitutional Task Team and the Joint Technical Team on “New National Currency” as required to facilitate and prepare for the operationalization of the Agreement once it is put into force;

(7) To take the necessary steps to ensure the effective implementation of the Permanent Ceasefire;

(8) To take such steps as are necessary to ensure that resources and funds are available for the establishment of the structures, bodies and institutions contemplated by the CPA especially the establishment of the Government of Southern Sudan;

THE PARTIES EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE for the persistent efforts of the Facilitators, the IGAD Member States, and the International Community in assisting the people of the Sudan to return to peace and stability, and in particular, to the African Union, IGAD Partners Forum, the United Nations, and the Governments of Italy, Norway, United Kingdom and the United States of America for their support for the IGAD Peace Initiative and their unwavering interest and consistent endeavours in support of the Peace Process;

THE PARTIES JOINTLY APPEAL to the Regional and International Community and call on Organizations and States which have been requested to witness the signing of this Agreement to provide and affirm their unwavering support to the implementation of the CPA, and further appeal to them to avail resources for the necessary and urgent programmes and activities of the transition to peace as contemplated and agreed herein;

THE PARTIES RECOGNIZE the enormity of the tasks that lie ahead in successfully implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and in signing below and before the witnesses here present, they reconfirm their commitment to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement fully and jointly.