Conflict in Sudan:
Guns, Globalisation and Accelerated History

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This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Anthropology

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Abstract

Conflict has been a part of life in South Sudan for more than 60 years with very limited periods of peace. It has taken different forms over time, morphing from struggles related to decolonisation, through civil war to interstate conflict and at various stages more than one of these categories simultaneously.

I examine the conflict in South Sudan through the lens of globalisation which collapses the timeframe over which societal change is taking place, a concept called 'accelerated history' by some writers, particularly Abbink (2001). Appadurai (2008) has provided a framework for assessing the effects of globalisation as a series of disjunctive cultural 'scapes' which can be analysed for the global influences that are rapidly changing the world we all live in. In the case of *Greater Sudan* the cultural landscape has been particularly affected by 'ethnoscapes' whereby a fictional primordial ethnic past is being invented, reinvented and re-interpreted, often quite violently and very rapidly with the aid of cheap powerful automatic weapons.

The rampant advance of the AK-47 and equivalent weaponry has fundamentally changed ritual and traditional conflict to the point of no return. Conflict is also both driving the collapse of the age grade elder system, brought on initially by transplanted European values and the desire for efficient, locally run colonial administrations. The transition of young men to paid work rather than traditional cattle herding roles, the small arms race and a desire by young men to 'feel their oats' rather than accepting their community responsibilities are also contributing causes. Finally and as with many post-colonial conflicts there are power plays over political dominance, ethnicity issues and resource allocation which are also driving the conflict.

Acknowledgements

This Honours Thesis marks the end of my university life as a student. It has, by any measure, been a marathon effort over nearly 40 years of on and off study as time and other circumstances dictated. I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few people who have made particular and special contributions along the way.

First I would like to thank Helen Radoslovich for being a patient, loving and supporting spouse of almost as many years. She has critically read many essays and papers along the way and been perceptive in her comments and was adamant that I should finish this thesis this year. To my daughter Kathy, thanks for her invaluable proof reading and ability to help me restructure my writing into something much more coherent. To Ingrid, for being patient when I was studying instead of being a more involved father.

I would also like to thank the many academic staff along the journey who have been more than prepared to help and push me for better results. In particular, I thank my supervisor Prof Andrew Skuse for his patient help in wrangling this thesis into what it is today, but also to Dr Sandra Pannell from much earlier on for convincing me Anthropology was worthwhile continuing. It took a long time but I did come back! Thanks also to Richard Vokes for his contribution this year as Honours Convenor.

Phil Radoslovich

Oct 2017

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Glossary of Terms

Comprehensive Peace Accord:	CPA
Human Security Baseline Assessment	HSBA
Human Rights Watch	HRW
International Crisis Group	ICG
(International) Non Government Organisation	(I) NGO
Small Arms and Light Weapons	SALW
Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army	SPLM/A
Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army In Opposition	SPLM/A-IO
South Sudanese Liberation Movement	SSLM
United Nations	UN
World Food Program	WFP
World War Two	WWII

Introduction

Conflict has been an integral part of Sudanese life for a great many years (Skedsmo et al, 2003). What is apparent, is that over the last one hundred years or so the nature of political and social organisation and armed conflict in *Greater Sudan*[1] has changed significantly, as indeed the nature of armed conflict has changed everywhere. I will examine the changes in the nature of Sudanese conflict, and analyse whether these changes have been hastened or accelerated by the effects of globalisation. This relates particularly to the relatively recent shift from traditional weapons and low technology firearms to automatic weapons and the effects this has had on Sudanese society and culture.

My thesis examines the key drivers of conflict and change and the consequences of those changes as they relate to culture and society. While it is very difficult to separate the various conflicts in *Greater Sudan* which ultimately led to South Sudanese independence, there are some factors including ethnicity, political ambition, corruption and oil which are driving the present conflict in South Sudan.

The personalities and governments of the Republics of Sudan and South Sudan are integrally linked to each other through a mix of informal alliances and military and political support for various non state armed groups and militias (Human Security Baseline Assessment, 2012). In the same way that the conflicts in the Republic of Sudan and in South Sudan are integrally linked, it is near enough to impossible to divorce these conflicts from the impacts and influences which are imparted on neighbouring countries in the region of north east Africa or from the flows from those nations into *Greater Sudan*. These flows and influences include the effects of globalisation, money, weapons, people (including millions of people displaced by the conflicts and insurgent forces resting, training and rearming) and ideas both into and out of the Sudanese conflict zone (Abbink, 2001; Hutchinson 2001). These flows and influences are entirely consistent with Appadurai's concepts of: 'ethnoscapes'; 'technoscapes'; 'ideoscape'; 'financescapes'; and 'mediascapes' that are expressions of changing societal landscapes. He argues there is a fundamentally disjunctive relationship between these aspects of life and culture as they clash in 'imagined worlds that is the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe' (2008 p51-52). A number of anthropologists including Inda and Rosaldo (2008), have produced work in recent years examining the effects of global flows while others such as Jameson (1991; 2000)

[1] This thesis will use the term "Greater Sudan"(as per Ottaway and El Sadany, 2012) when referring to the previously combined nations of The Republic of Sudan and The Republic of South Sudan

have devoted space to assessing the future of the nation state in an increasingly globalised world. It is the combination of these globalising forces with the advances in weapons technology and volume of guns being brought in through legal and illegal means which are combining to give expression to the expression of 'accelerated history' as theorised by authors such as Abbink(2001) and Eriksen (2016) building on earlier work by Hann (1994). Collectively these influences create a strong sense of 'accelerated history' that, following Abbink's theories of 'accelerated history', I argue is fundamentally changing Sudanese society, conflict and culture (Abbink, 2001).

Globalisation has generated massive change around the world and *Greater Sudan* is no exception. We see the effects of globalisation in international trade where increasingly, smaller nation states such as South Sudan[2] are being faced with companies that have turnover far greater than their GDP[3]. This places the advantage in economic decision making firmly in the hands of the company and can have severe consequences for economic development, jobs and the economy. *Greater Sudan* has been confronted with circumstances similar to these with the relatively recent discovery of oil by Chevron among other major companies. Likewise, the global effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union have had a range of cascading effects on the region in which *Greater Sudan* is located. Regime change, refugee and arms flows have all contributed to substantial change.

Chapter 1 of my thesis provides the reader with some general background on *Greater Sudan*, the conflict and its people. For those outside of sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in the Western world, much of the understanding of Sudanese society and culture, comes from the work of several generations of ethnographic research by anthropologists such as Evans-Pritchard (1937, 1940, 1947,1950, 1957), Hutchinson (1996, 2001) and many others, particularly from schools in the tradition of British Social Anthropology. This knowledge is important to understanding aspects of the conflict in Greater Sudan, which, particularly for the Nuer, has retained some traditional drivers of conflict including cattle raiding, reciprocity, girls and the system of marriage notwithstanding that these traditional drivers are being significantly adapted and changed by the irrepressible effects of globalisation and 'accelerated history'.

[2] Trading Economics, South Sudan GDP Constant Prices, https://tradingeconomics.com/south-sudan/gdp) accessed 18/10/17

[3] Chevron Global 2016 Annual Report, https://www.chevron.com/annual-report/2016/financials accessed 18/10/17

(Evans-Pritchard 1947; Hutchinson 1996; Skedsmo et al 2003; Appadurai, 2008; Abbink, 2009).

Chapter 2 focuses on social and political organisation within *Greater Sudan* and changes brought about through a number of interrelated local, regional and global factors. There has been considerable change in the intensity (Abbink 2001; Blanchard 2016), style and overall amount of conflict across the East African region in general and as argued by Eriksen (2016) within both the *Greater Sudan* and Ethiopia sub regions more specifically, since the end of the cold war. I examine the conflict in *Greater Sudan*, and particularly South Sudan through the conceptual lens of the notion of ''accelerated history'' developed by Abbink, (2001) in an ethnographic study of the Suri people in remote southern Ethiopia near its border with South Sudan. The process of 'accelerated history' is described by Abbink as follows: 'in the last ten to fifteen years the Suri have had to deal with far reaching processes of socio-political change. Indeed they can be seen as being in a phase of 'accelerated history' (2001, p128). Abbink lists a number of accelerations including 'drought, famine and cattle disease; influx of new arms technology (automatic weapons) plus a range of economic and political changes (ibid, p128). These changes have swept through many societies not just those in the region of *Greater Sudan*. The factors which distinguish *Greater Sudan* from a number of other areas are the highly weaponised nature of society; the persistent and brutal nature of the conflicts; changes from traditional to modern combat practices; and the mix of ethnic, grievance, social, political and globalisation drivers.

Conflict is a core expression of many different cultures in East Africa, particularly among pastoral semi nomadic peoples. The Suri of southern Ethiopia are among these pastoral groups in the region which borders South Sudan. Along with many other ethnic groups including a number in *Greater Sudan* – e.g. Azande, Nuer and Dinka, the Suri have traditionally engaged in ritual combat with sticks and spears (Abbink 2001; Hutchinson, 1996; Evans-Pritchard, 1956). Stick fighting is a way of impressing girls and or demonstrating one's prowess as a warrior, leader and fighter. (Hutchinson, 1996; Abbink, 2001; Abbink 2009; Gurtong Trust, 2017). One of the areas of change I examine is how modes of fighting have changed from this traditional and highly ritualised form of stick fighting to much less controlled and much more brutal forms of real combat with automatic weapons. It is not only the style of fighting which has changed but also the scale of the conflict which has significantly increased across the region and especially in *Greater Sudan* and importantly for comparative purposes in southern Ethiopia.

The links between ‘accelerated history’ and the concurrent rising level of conflict to a parallel breakdown in the system of age grade elders in Suri culture have been made by Abbink (1996) and he establishes conclusively that there are significant causal connections between the two. I will extend this discussion in Chapter 2 to examine conflict in the Sudanese context and establish if these issues are playing out there. On this basis, it seems a reasonable proposition to ask if the issues around ‘accelerated history’ and concomitant breakdown of the age-grade elder system within the Suri culture, are, to at least some extent responsible for the scale of conflict in *Greater Sudan*.

Sudanese society is flooded with Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). These weapons have been imported legally and illegally for well over 100 years and have arrived in waves coinciding with a number of global changes including the two world wars, several changes in weapons technologies in Europe over time and the change in political dynamics in the wake of the cold war. (Beachey, 1962; Hutchinson, 1996; Skedsmo, Daniher and Luak, 2003; Abbink, 2001; 2009).

In the Concluding section the consequences of the conflicts in *Greater Sudan* will be discussed. The key issues which will be analysed include how, globalisation driven ‘accelerated history’ is eroding the age grade elder system and the resultant impact that it has on society and the conflict in *Greater Sudan*. I will also examine the shift in the balance of conflict from being largely in equilibrium, generally low technology and relatively low impact to being asymmetric, severe in impact and quite unbalanced. The third major aspect addressed in this chapter is the impact of the conflict on women in particular, and also children.

Figure 1 Map of Greater Sudan (One World - Nations Online)

Chapter 1

Background and Introduction to Greater Sudan

Greater Sudan was formerly known as The Sudan. It was the largest country in Africa by area until it split into the separate nations of the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan[4] in 2011. Geographically, both countries sit astride the Nile River between its source in central Africa and Egypt to the North see Figure . Sudan was invaded and colonised separately by Egyptians from 1820 to 1881 and the British briefly from the time they took control of Egypt in 1882 until they were defeated by the Sudanese under the Mahdi in 1883.[5] Sudan was also occupied by a joint Anglo Egyptian Condominium at various times during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Britain and Egypt then jointly took control of Sudan in the late 19th century and finally ceded independence to Sudan in 1956, during a period of rapid decolonization of Britain's global empire following WWII[6].

The north of *Greater Sudan* is largely of Arabic descent and Islamic in faith as shown in the map at figure 2. Southern Sudan is more sub-Saharan African in descent and culturally (as distinct from Arabic). The dominant faith groups are Animist African beliefs and Christianity, which although historically present in parts of *Greater Sudan*, is essentially a relatively modern development as a result of having been re-introduced through missionary groups largely associated with European colonial expansion[7]. Christianity has had a revival more recently as a result of displaced South Sudanese being influenced by the Christian faith while living in refugee camps in Ethiopia (Hutchinson, 2001).

The Republic of Sudan has access to the Red Sea and several ports including Port Sudan service trade between it and the rest of the world. South Sudan is land locked, which creates some significant strategic risks given the considerable amount of conflict the region has seen over the last 60 years. It also gives rise to substantial issues for movement of exports and imports, especially oil (Klare, 2012). The largest export by far is oil and the oil fields, which are located predominantly in northern South Sudan near its border with the Republic of Sudan, have been a source of friction between the two nations for several decades (Ross, 2004). These oil fields, centred on Western Upper Nile and Unity states were discovered and developed by some of

[4] Also referred to as South Sudan

[5] http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sudan.html accessed 28/9/17

[6] ibid

[7] ibid

the biggest multi-national companies such as Chevron, Talisman[8] and Arakis[9] in the late 1970s and early 1980s, after the conclusion of the first Sudanese civil war (Hutchinson, 2001; Sefa-Nyarko, 2016, p200). The friction between the two countries is further exacerbated by the fact that the oil is currently piped from fields in South Sudan to Port Sudan which is in the territory of the Republic of Sudan and for which the Republic of Sudan extracts much higher than normal charges when oil is pumped (Klare, 2012). The Republic of Sudan created Unity State, where most of the oil is located, essentially by arbitrarily altering the boundary between what was then the two regions (North and South) of *Greater Sudan.* This was in an attempt to get around the 1972 Addis Ababa peace deal that ended the first civil war and which stipulated that the South should have control over oil revenues from *Greater Sudan* (Sefa-Nyarko, 2016, p200). The oil infrastructure including a 1600km pipeline to Port Sudan has been subject to intense fighting, and at various times has been under the control of many different groups.

Ethnicity

The conflict in Sudan has often been depicted as ethnic in character, so it is necessary to understand the nature of ethnicity and more specifically how this plays out in the Sudanese conflicts. Solomon, Shulika and Okeke-Uzodike define ethnicity as follows: 'Ethnicity is a social phenomenon that describes 'the condition of belonging to an ethnic group, the sense of ethnic identity felt by members of an ethnic community' (2013 p25). Ojie extends the definition

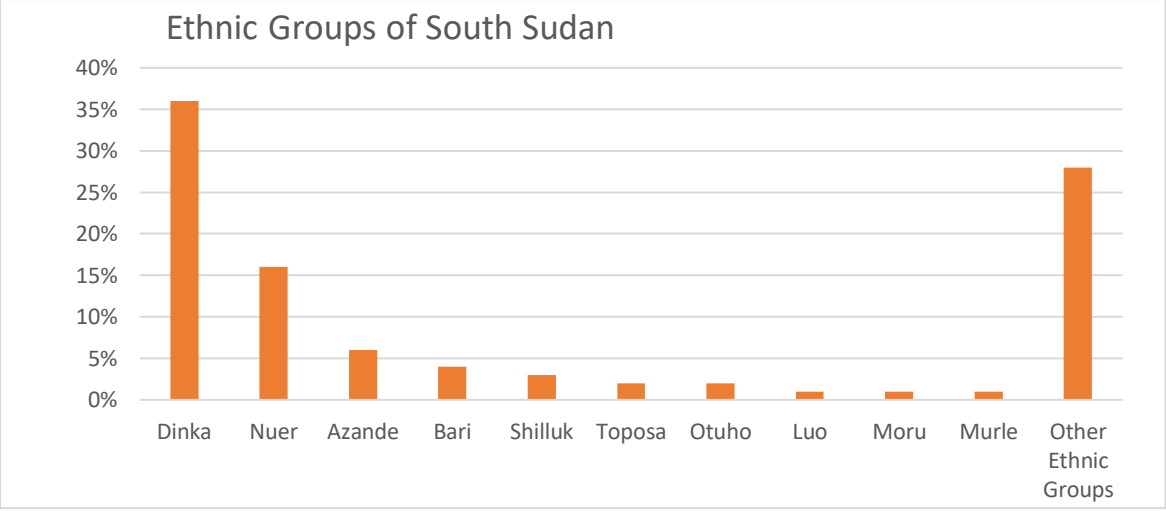

Table 1 Ethnic Groups of South Sudan (Data source: World Atlas, 2017)

[8] Canadian company.

[9] Malaysian company.

further and argues that: ‘Ethnicity exists only within a political society consisting of diverse ethnic groups’ and that essentially it is a process of defining oneself (and others of the same ethnicity) in opposition to other groups, that it tends to be ‘exclusive’; that ‘acceptance and rejection on linguistic-cultural grounds characterizes social relations’ and that it is ‘characterised by conflict’ (2006, p548). The main tensions between ethnic groups are between the Nuer and Dinka, as well as the Nuer and the Murle although this is less intense than the relationship with the Dinka (Shulika and Okeke-Uzodike 2013). There is also considerable tension between various clans and tribes within the Nuer, however these disputes are much more in the nature of political and power related conflict than straight ethnic tensions.

The Dinka are the largest ethnic group in South Sudan and together with the Nuer make up slightly more than half the population. The Azande are next largest with 6% followed by the Bari and Shilluk and there are many smaller groups (World Atlas, 2017). Ethnicity has flourished in a number of former colonies under colonial administrations driven by British divide and rule policy which played on and encouraged ethnic divisions in the colonies (Ojie (2005). This policy which enabled a limited number of colonial administrators to control, albeit supported by force of arms in the form of mainly colonial units of the British Army, has however, been profoundly disruptive in post-colonial politics in many nations. Of course it was not only the British but a number of other European colonial powers, most notably Belgium, which had similar policies (Sadowski, 1998).

In order to effectively analyse the impact of colonization and the subsequent decolonization process on political and ethnic relations in Africa it is necessary to understand the underlying construction of the narrative or perspective which is used to describe the process. According to Ojie there have been ‘two dominant perspectives on politicized ethnicity in Africa’ which are ‘the *modernization* and *Marxist* perspectives’ (2006, p549). The *modernization* perspective was in vogue during the decolonization period of the 1950s and 1960s and in essence its central argument was, that as so called ‘traditional (African) society’ gave way to modernity, so would ethnicity and its importance to the population, give way to modern political structures and goals such as education, paid employment and individual wealth creation. In other words, it was believed people would be more inclined to ascribe to values and beliefs associated with the new nationalism they had obtained in the period of decolonization. But the reality has been quite different. Ethnic identity and ethnicity have not only persisted but have flourished quite rapidly in African polity.

The second main theoretical position is the *Marxist* perspective, which according to Ojie, 'sought to explain ethnicity in African politics in class terms (2006, p549)'. In the *Marxist* view, ethnicity in Africa was, essentially an invention by the ruling colonial classes designed

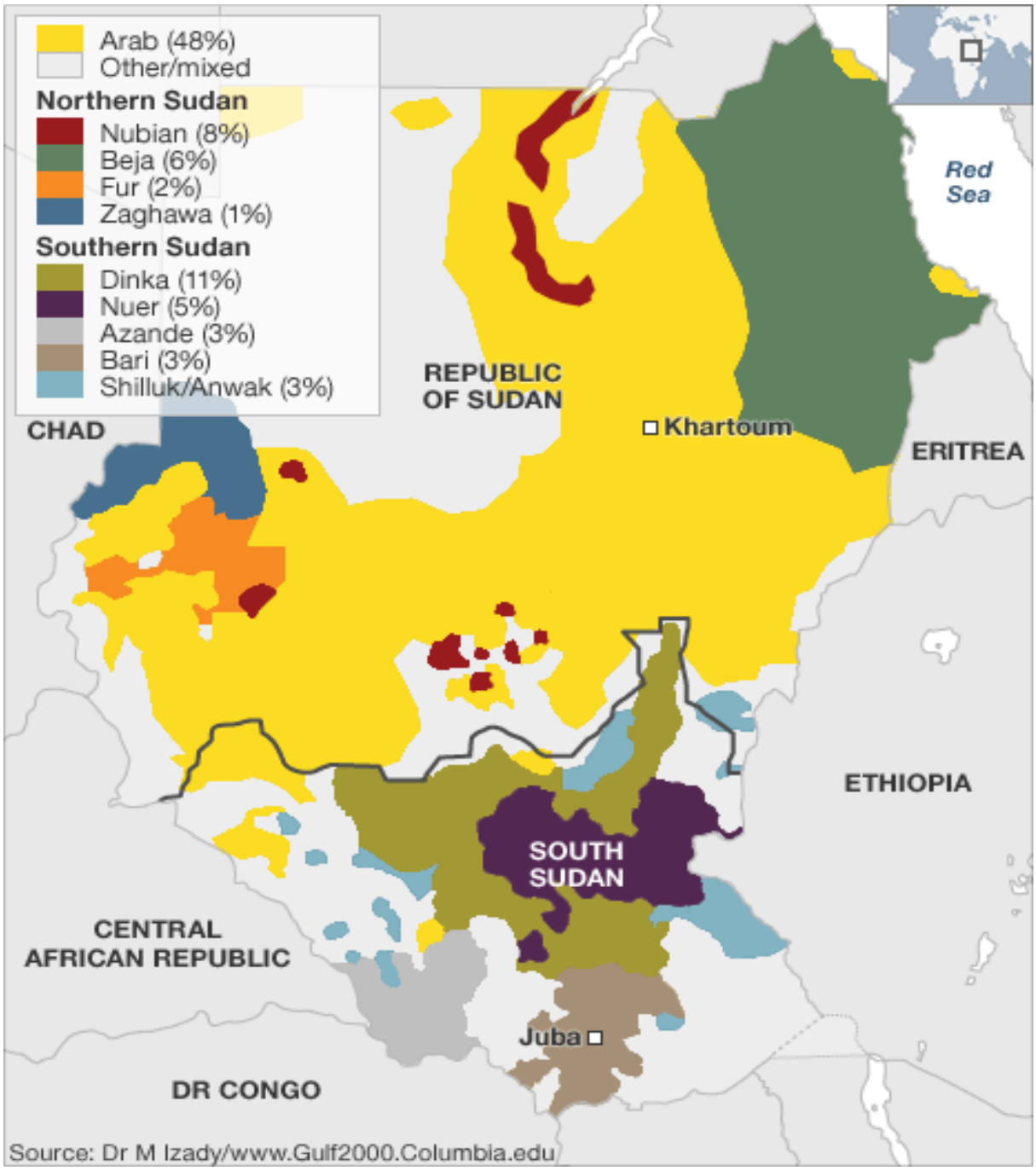

Figure 2 Ethnic distribution in Greater Sudan (BBC News, Africa, 2013)

both to dominate and 'divide and rule' (Ojie, 2006, p549). While Ojie's study related to Nigeria, there are strong similarities between the Nigerian example and *Greater Sudan* both in the way that Britain managed and in a sense promoted ethnicity and also in the process of decolonization. As Britain implemented a similar model of colonial rule in many colonies

during the 19th Century, there appears to be some partial justification for this argument, at least as far as the motivations of the British administrators are concerned (Bleich 2005). The reality has been that ethnicity has merged to some extent with emerging nationalist sentiment and has, as a result, underpinned the strongly Nuer dominated secessionist movement in southern Sudan in opposition to the Dinka, who broadly favoured remaining in one nation with the rest of *Greater Sudan* (Hutchinson 2001).

Kinship and Marriage in Southern Sudan

Like ethnicity, kinship and marriage in southern Sudan is largely determined by birth (Abbink, 2001), and follows the line of the father. Members see themselves related as classificatory fathers, sons, brothers etc. (Radcliffe-Browne 1987). They tend to also be exogamous systems where men marry women outside of the clan and polygynous where men typically have more than one wife (Evans-Pritchard 1947; Hutchinson 1996; Abbink 2001). Ross (1986) argues that cross cutting marriage ties tend to promote multiple loyalties with the effect of reducing both the quantum and severity of conflict between groups related in this way. He also notes that: 'One good measure of low cross cutting in modern nations is the existence of separate ethnic and language minorities within a country' (p434). A number of ethnic groups including the Suri, Dizi and Nuer transfer cattle as part of bride-wealth exchanges (Abbink 2009). Skedsmo notes that 'cattle and women are, and always have been central objects of reproductive exchange and cornerstones of the distinctive Nuer culture' (2003, p60). While cattle and women have been historical drivers of conflict as noted by many authors including Evans-Pritchard (1947), Hutchinson (1996), and Abbink (2009) there are differences in approach between the ethnographies that have been written. Evans-Pritchard was looking to explain the structure of the cultural groups he studied and use a structural functionalist model to do so where elements of a society are analysed to determine the role they play individually and collectively in that society to explain group behaviours.

The model of one society was then compared to others to establish if possible some broader conclusions about how human groups operate. Evans-Pritchard was looking to see what factors held cultures together in the region of *Greater Sudan*. His narratives show how conflict was held in check or equilibrium to a greater or lesser degree by cross cutting ties through marriage and exchange of cattle whereas Hutchinson writing fifty years later is examining the changes and impact on Nuer society brought about by decades of conflict and the impact of SALW.

Changing cultural landscape

In this next section I examine the changes noted above, particularly those relating to cattle and marriage to understand how those changes have impacted the cultural landscape in Greater Sudan. According to Hutchinson (1996), there has been significant change in the cultural landscape since Evans-Pritchard carried out his fieldwork. In particular Hutchinson notes the rapid loss of power that men, particularly elders, have suffered in the 1990's compared to that of men in the 1930s when Evans-Pritchard was doing his research. This, according to Hutchinson, is the result of the loss of their social place as protectors of home and herd and in making decisions about the welfare of women and dependents in the family groups they lived in. Nuer Men, she writes, were first 'challenged by government guns and were increasingly subject to the "scrutiny of government appointed courts and distant administrative officials' (1996, p158). This change is important as it has rapidly accelerated the breaking down of traditional Nuer culture and customs. Not all changes are so recent however, as even back in the early 20th C there was early evidence of globalisation in action with substantial changes being made by the British in *Greater Sudan*. Evans-Prichard notes:

> During the past twenty five years of British rule women's position in society has changed and they have been invested with privileges they did not previously enjoy. Azande unanimously declare this reform has led to serious disruption of family life.
>
> (1937, p16)

Cattle and (Changing) Cultures

Other changes in Nuer society noted by Hutchinson that are significantly different to when Evans- Pritchard wrote in the 1940s, are the somewhat reduced importance of cattle. In Evans-Pritchard's time cattle were 'one of the main sources of food and they supply many other domestic requirements, they have a prestige value and they have a religious importance' (Evans-Pritchard, 1947, p181). Hutchinson notes that 'though major intercommunity feuds and fights continued to erupt among the Nuer throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, cattle were rarely identified as the focus of such hostilities' (1996 pp26-27). Rather, she suggests that the Nuer are much more politicised than in Evans-Pritchard's time which, by implication, has more to do with conflict than cattle, and the impact of Christianity that has had a significant influence over the reduction of the religious importance of cattle in Nuer culture. This change in Nuer culture has seemingly been a gradual one however, as even into the 1970s there were still strong

links between cattle and their spiritual importance. This is important for men in particular, because of links between cattle and human homicide in the form of raids on other communities and cultural groups. The relationship between cattle and raiding was wide spread among a number pastoral cultures in East Africa according to Fukui (1979). Notwithstanding these changes, cattle are still a significant factor in raiding between different groups and still have a very important place within many different cultural groups across the globe as the prime currency of bride wealth. Because marriage and cattle are at the heart of pastoral cultures which are in turn governed to a large degree by the age grade elder system it is evident that changes to customs around these aspects of life will be influential in changes to the role and influence of elders.

Cattle also traditionally played an important role in settling disputes which involved homicide. One of the many social engineering changes the British colonial administrators made was the introduction of a western style justice system (Podder, 2014, Hutchinson, 1996) and the fixing in law of blood wealth transfers of cattle (Hutchinson 1996). This changed the relativity within Nuer culture of bride wealth and blood wealth contributions, creating confusion and undermining the traditional role of ties binding communities and the chiefs and elders who controlled them. Allen (2005) makes a similar observation about changes to the Acholi traditional culture in northern Uganda. He combines threads of the historical introduction of firearms in northern Uganda with analysis of how the colonisation of East Africa changed systems of power among local cultures and argues that the British instituted a system of "Paramount Chiefs" and that prior to colonisation 'there is no evidence that there existed some form of detailed legal code' (Allen 2005, p84). These changes fundamentally shifted the balance of power from Clan based elders to a much more centralised administrative system. Allen also points to changes in the conduct of chiefs and others in power who had access to firearms:

> Chiefs, elders and warlords needed to attract and sustain their followers by being generous, offering protection and arbitrating in disputes. Where there was an antipathy towards an individual, exile or death appear to have been likely. Also those leaders who had guns and external allies seem to have acted more ruthlessly and arbitrarily, partly to demonstrate their exceptional power.
>
> (2005, p84)

I have shown in this section that the role of elders is very important on a number of levels including raiding, dispute resolution, marriage and management of cattle. In the next section I will discuss some of the changes affecting age grade elders and how they have driven 'accelerated history.'

Age grade elder system

The age grade or age set elder system is essentially the means by which a number of pastoralist cultural groups select those they want to have a governance role within the society. The age grade elder system in Suri society generally has four age grades of men and boys. There are two levels of uninitiated being boys and young male warriors. Once initiated, men progress into the ranks of junior elders until finally reaching the highest level of elder. There is a similar system of initiation present in a number of other east African pastoral societies including the Nuer, although the frequency of initiations and the range of ages in each age grade varies. Suri initiations are carried out about every twenty to twenty five years, during which an age cohort of young men who, having satisfied the relevant criteria are initiated as elders. Initiated men undergo a change in status once they are initiated which, among other rights means they are able to take wives and procreate (Hutchinson, 1996).

Elders also have a range of community and cultural roles and responsibilities including dispute resolution, herding, and the protection of cattle and women (Hutchinson 1996; Abbink 2001). In *Greater Sudan* there is also an age set elder system in many of the cultural groups including the main groups of the Nuer and the Dinka. The Nuer recognise "boyhood" and "manhood" as the primary classifications with initiations being carried out on approximately a cycle of every ten years. Thus a group of initiated youth become an "age set" and over time gradually acquire more status and authority as they progress toward the more senior end of the age scale and the elders in front of them die out. The practice of scarification which involves inflicting 6 parallel scars across the forehead of Nuer initiates is one of the distinguishing features of Nuer men (Hutchinson, 1996).

Abbink tells us the younger (lower level) men are normally subservient to the two higher grades, however this is changing with access to gold and guns by younger men making them more able to 'ward off claims of the elders, and stall their own initiation' (2001, p132). The effect of this is to provide the young men more time and freedom to, as Abbink reports, 'extend their period of youthful exuberance'(2001, p132), which in effect means they are seeking a

good time and not taking on their expected responsibilities. In turn this also breaks down respect for the elders as it is plain to all that their influence is waning.

Abbink's work focusses on the area of Ethiopia where it borders Sudan. My thesis will explore issues raised by Abbink in relation to the Suri people in Ethiopia and assess their utility in relation to conflict in *Greater Sudan.* This follows a long standing anthropological convention of working from what Abbink describes as:

> …local-level empirical studies to explore the nature of diversity and similarity in human behaviour, usually on the assumptions that humans function on the basis of similar and comparable psycho-biological traits, and that socio-cultural conditions are decisive in determining how and to what extent these traits are expressed.
>
> (2001, p123)

The gradual breakdown of this system of social control was at least in part caused by changes brought about by British colonial administration which put in place administrative structures and laws that invested power in the elders by making them a part of the government administration but rather ironically reduced their informal power and influence dramatically through other changes in legislation. These changes have left a legacy of ongoing ethnic based conflict in addition to the changes specially targeting district administration, which was formerly once much more the traditional role of elders. The breakdown of the influence of elders also has had the effect of intensifying and prolonging the conflict because the age grade elder system is no longer as effective as it once was in management of internecine conflict in particular (Hutchinson 1996).

Drivers of Conflict

South Sudan is a nation wracked by conflict and very poor economic and development growth. It is also a nation with two dominant although not completely evenly matched ethnic groups plus a large number of much smaller ethnic groupings, and as such is a nation to which these conflict theories seem applicable. While the ethnicity factors may put nations at risk of conflict, Riphenburg (2005) also makes the point that there needs to be a trigger for conflict. Several reports (Hutchinson, 2001; Sudd Institute, 2014; Blanchard, 2016; Sefa-Nyarko, 2016) suggest that at least part of the genesis for the current conflict in South Sudan is plain old fashioned political rivalry within the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The Sudd Report notes 'ethnic rivalry and poor provision of social services make for a deadly combination' and

also that ‘many young people who essentially became the White Army, had not had access to formal education and jobs’ which the authors argue ‘made it very easy to arouse their frustrations and provide a fighting force for the rebellions’(2014, p8). The authors also draw attention to what they view as the over representation of Nuer soldiers in the army who were brought in at inflated ranks which placed them above their former enemy from the SPLA in the national force.

There are two fundamental drivers of conflict that are examined econometrically by Collier and Hoeffler (2004). These are ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’ and in their paper they statistically analyse a number of contributing factors and variables. Without going into their statistical analysis here due to space constraints it is possible to examine some of the key risk indicators raised in their work in relation to South Sudan. Included among the indicators suggesting a significantly higher risk for civil war are high reliance on commodity exports, especially oil; a large diaspora which is inclined to financially support forces opposed to the government, low levels of male education, particularly secondary education which they use as a proxy for male earnings, a dominant ethnic group – more than 45 % and less than 90% the presence of mountains and forests which are important as refuges for rebel fighters and the length of time since the previous conflict. South Sudan in particular fits many of these criteria. It has low rates of secondary education, is both forested and mountainous, has a dominant ethnic group in the Dinka and when oil is flowing it is very heavily reliant on oil as an export to support the economy. Anecdotally there is a large US diaspora of Sudanese, which in Collier and Hoeffler’s analysis is assumed to be endogenously linked to conflict – people move away when there is conflict. Education and income is important – especially for young men as the higher their income the more they have to lose by fighting. In the case of South Sudan there is a culture of young men being warriors so when combined with high levels of gun access in the community this trigger seems particularly pertinent. Their statistical analysis shows much more support for the greed model supporting conflict than grievances, yet while there is strong support for the argument of greed driving conflict there is also an element of fear which is at play as well. Within ethnic conflict scenarios such as South Sudan and other similar conflicts including Rwanda or Afghanistan there is evidence that suggests conflict is in part at least driven by a fear of a well organised power seeking minority ethnic group.

Fear of Minorities

Appadurai argues that prior to quite recent history, large scale ‘cultural transactions between social groups in the past have generally been restricted, sometimes by geography and ecology

and sometimes by active resistance to interactions with the Other' and that the predominant drivers of 'sustained cultural interaction' were warfare and religions of conversion, sometimes acting together (2008 p47). In the case of *Greater Sudan* the Ottoman Empire is a case in point that brought Egypt into sustained interaction with *Greater Sudan*, an interaction which was not to the liking of all in what became Sudan. The advent of expansionist maritime powers in Western Europe with their attendant desire for conquest, migration and riches created long term interactions between Europe and Africa (Iweriebor, 2017). The method of colonial administration described above, of promoting various ethnic groups and creating structures within them to divide and rule helped create what Appadurai calls the 'paradox of constructed primordialism'(2008 p48). It is this imaginary constructed past which he argues is being recalled as real under certain circumstances that is driving ethnic conflict in a number of different countries in the present and recent past.

Taking these arguments a step further Appadurai (2002) has analysed violence toward minority groups from the perspective of the fear and disruption they pose to majorities. He does not believe that this is a phenomenon limited to just *Greater Sudan* or even Africa but is one which is worldwide. Appadurai suggests that minorities are in fact a product of the modern state and national boundaries. Reliance on census counts, electoral roles and other similar forms of identity documentation have created minorities. The administratively constructed view of ethnicity is a point echoed by Riphenburg who argues that: 'Ethnic groups are no longer viewed as primordial, but are considered to be the products of history, the design of concrete procedures of administrative classification, political organization and socialisation' (2005, pp31-32). At the heart of the issue, is the constant reminder that minorities bring to the nation that attempts to create 'one people' e.g. Sudanese, has failed.

Riphenburg although writing specifically about Afghanistan, but following Posner's (2003) work on Zambia, also notes that countries are often more 'violence prone' where there is one large and or two similarly matched ethnic groups, as distinct from 'those with a larger number of equally sized groups'. She also notes that Countries with a large number of small ethnic groups demonstrate slower economic growth than countries that are more ethnically homogenous' (2005, p32). This is a point echoed by Richards (2005) and to some extent Collier and Hoeffler (2004). Collier and Hoeffler analysed a number of grievance factors related to rebellion and found that although 'ethnic dominance' in the form of one group being in the majority was an 'adverse effect' i.e. driver of grievance, societies with ethnic and religious

diversity (without dominance of one group) were safer than 'homogenous societies' (2004, p588).

Ethnic Conflict

The Sudanese conflict has strong ethnic overtones to it, although at heart it is an essentially political fight. There have been other recent conflicts with similar ethnic ratios and colonial histories within the East African region. A case in point is the Rwandan genocide in the 1993/94 period, a case which Sadowski (1998) has studied, and which has a number of similarities to that of *Greater Sudan*. Like the Dinka in Sudan, there was a majority ethnic group in Rwanda (Hutus) who were traditionally farmers and like the Nuer in *Greater Sudan*, the Tutsi are a similar sized minority group (approx. 14-15%) of semi nomadic pastoralists in Rwanda. Both nations had been subject to colonial rule and arguably mismanagement with substantial changes to traditional roles and culture having been forcibly imposed by colonial administrators. Each country had a ruling class among the majority group and intermarriage was not uncommon between tribes. Modern violence started in both countries in the mid-late 1950s in the immediate aftermath of decolonization. Both conflicts were widely blamed on ethnic schisms and largely this is incorrect in both cases. In fact, Sadowski argues a number of power and or ideological struggles around the world have been classified as ethnic in character when in fact they are not. In pre-colonial times there was some conflict in both countries between the various ethnic groups but it was largely controlled by traditional governance and settlement procedures managed by communal elders. Sadowski attributes the severity and rapid spread of violent conflict in Rwanda not to traditional conflict of the type Robert Kaplan (1994) suggests in his work, but rather to what Sadowski calls 'modern hate' (1998, p13).

In the case of Rwanda and also in *Greater Sudan* and more particularly South Sudan, 'modern hate' is, in Sadowski's (1998) view, generated more by those seeking power organizing in the first instance to entrench their positions and then through a cycle of violence triggered by disproportionate violent retaliation to incidents of violence by all parties involved. Sadowski also argues that: 'the most gruesome ethnic wars are found in poorer societies-Afghanistan and Sudan, for example,-where economic frustration reinforces political rage' (1998, p20). Arguing along very similar lines to Sadowski that ethnic conflicts are much worse in poorer countries, Stewart attributes one of the root causes of such conflict to what he defines as 'horizontal inequality' and in particular 'horizontal political inequality' (Stewart, 2009, p5). In order to effectively gain support Stewart argues that group leaders, for example those leaders of ethnic groups, need to effectively persuade people their identity is primordial in nature – such as it is

often seen in ethnic terms, and not as is the reality in many cases a socially constructed identity. 'Horizontal inequality' is a concept where groups of people who might otherwise be assumed to have equality of opportunity and wealth or close to it, are in fact quite differently treated by those in power and are both aggrieved enough and prepared enough to take action. It differs from vertical inequality which is generally much more easily accepted by most. This is perhaps because broadly most people recognise that some have more talent and or resources through no one's fault or through some form of corruption or inequitable distribution and that as a consequence some will do better than others as individuals and families.

South Sudan: Contemporary Conflict

Conflict in South Sudan and the causes attributed to it have also been written about extensively. Historically there has been periodic conflict between the Nuer, a semi nomadic pastoral people and their neighbours including the Dinka, an agrarian pastoralist group (Metz, 1991). Neither group had a history of centralised power, instead being comprised of a number of clan groups. Despite being different ethnic groups the Dinka and Nuer share similar language and cultural roots and are not as separate as may be imagined. As an example, there are some cross cutting ties of marriage between Dinka and Nuer stemming in part, from Dinka that have been absorbed into Nuer communities as captives from raiding, and across clans within each ethnic group (Newcomer, 1972). There was, and is still, considerable conflict within and between these rival groups. There are various causes for this conflict including competition for scarce resources such as water and grazing land, as well as cattle raiding and "stealing of wives" (Hutchinson, 1996, p159).

The current conflict in South Sudan started in Dec 2013 (HRW, 2017, Sudd Institute, 2014, International Crisis Group 2016) with fighting in the capital Juba between soldiers loyal to President Kiir and Vice President Marchar but has its roots in unresolved tensions going back to the 'inception of the SPLM' in 1983 over both its vision and leadership (Sudd Report 2014, p2). In Aug 2015 there was a peace agreement struck between the sides and eventually lead to a Government of National Unity (TGNU). Further clashes erupted in July 2016 which ultimately resulted in Pres Kiir declaring Marchar's position as Vice President vacant (Marchar disputes the reasons) and replacing him with Taban Deng Gai in contravention of the August 2015 peace Agreement terms. This re-ignited the conflict (HRW 2017).

Salva Kiir, the President of South Sudan, is reported to have indicated at a meeting with Thabo Mbeki, the South African President that he would step down in 2015 at the end of his term as

president (The Sudd Institute, 2014). Plans of this sort made in political life, when made public or leaked to opponents often leads to those perceiving themselves to be next in line for the top job to jockey for position and ultimately power. South Sudan is certainly not atypical in this regard as the Sudd report notes. The then Vice President Riek Marchar, among others, reportedly played on these factors to challenge the president, which in due course, led to Marchar being sacked.

Salva Kiir is Dinka and Riek Marchar is Nuer and notwithstanding the intense political rivalry the power struggle quickly took on ethnic overtones as a consequence (Blanchard, 2016). This alone may not lead to taking up of arms, but a populace weary of many broken promises about better security, economic development and education, infrastructure improvement, and who are in the grip of famine, having lost opportunities for employment and whose crops are failing are likely to be much more inclined to fight for their rights. Rhetoric about prevention of illegitimate or perceived illegitimate power plays especially by a leader with a poor track record of delivering basic services play into the hands of would be insurgents. This is particularly the case when many of the population are combat veterans armed with automatic weapons and there is an ethnic element to the dispute.

Conflict in *Greater Sudan* has been a series of Civil Wars and insurgencies. Civil wars are distinct from other forms of mass intrastate violence at law, by deployment of uniformed personnel in clearly defined forces with identifiable hierarchies (Kloos, 2001). Kloos also notes that civil wars are waged within the boundaries of a single state, and that often they are started by a minority ethnic group seeking to topple a 'legitimate government'2001, p178). The causes of the fighting for conflicts between the northern and southern regions of *Greater Sudan* have some common elements and linkages but there are also substantial differences when compared to the causes of conflict within particular regions of either the north or the south of *Greater Sudan*. Some of the conflicts in *Greater Sudan* (1st (1955-72) and 2nd Civil wars (1983-2005) meet these definitional requirements of civil war. There are more recently, elements of interstate conflict between The Republic of Sudan and South Sudan over the border between the nations and the oil which is located there. The insurgency running in South Sudan is increasingly taking on the characteristics of a civil war as described above.

It is not only the current South Sudanese conflict which owes its roots to political rivalry and grievances. Clement Sefa-Nyarko breaks the causes of the two main civil wars in *Greater Sudan* into a number of constituent factors including grievance factors, political and ethnic rivalry. These factors are all common to both the civil wars in *Greater Sudan* and have

contributed to both commencement and to the duration of the conflicts. Factors applying to a single conflict include, for the first civil war from 1955-72, the Southern policy implemented by the British colonial administration in relation to the southern region of *Greater Sudan* (now South Sudan). Oil is the other major factor which contributed to the outbreak and length of the second civil war from 1982-2005 (Ross, 2004; Klare, 2012, Sefa-Nyarko, 2016). Oil is also a key driver in the conflict which ultimately achieve the separation of the two Sudans, a goal of many southern Sudanese for generations. Oil has indeed been, in the words of Michael Ross, a 'resource curse' for *Greater Sudan*, but especially for South Sudan which relies so heavily on oil export earnings (2014, p240). The riches expected by many to result from it are often corralled into the hands of a very few at the top, which in turn unleashes considerable grievances among the broader population. Additionally, as noted above, it has led to systematic brutality as part of the process of depopulating the areas where the oil is located.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have briefly examined the culture, ethnicity and background to conflict in South Sudan. The relationship between the two dominant ethnic groups has been discussed and in particular the question of fear of minorities as proposed by Appadurai (2008). The nature of ethnicity, which is often a modern construct and reinterpreted into something much more 'primordial' has been analysed to determine if there is a connection to conflict within nations, particularly post-colonial nations, dominated by two unequal but numerically large ethnic groups. The current conflict in South Sudan is, as I have shown, at its heart a conflict between forces loyal to several key players driven by their determination for power and unresolved leadership tensions stemming from earlier separatist insurgency conflicts within Greater Sudan. However it does also have ethnic tensions driving the conflict in common with a number of other nations in the region. I have also considered the nature of an insurgency and how this applied to Sudanese conflict.

Chapter 2

Drivers of Change

Introduction

In this chapter I argue that globalisation and adaptation have significantly changed aspects of Sudanese culture brought on by the process of 'accelerated history', a concept developed by several authors (Abbink, 2001; Eriksen 2016) following earlier work by Hann (1994) to explain the quite rapid changes in traditional structures and operation of certain societal groups. The fact that in Greater Sudan these changes have been violent, widespread and drawn out for decades is brought about in large part by easy and relatively cheap access to SALW and a concomitant breakdown of social structures and controls largely caused by the effects of globalisation. Globalisation is having a marked impact on culture through rapid change in global cultural flows. Appadurai (2008) identifies ethnicity, technology, ideology, finance and media as key areas of influence. He labels these 'ethnoscapes', 'technoscapes', 'ideoscape', 'financescapes', and 'mediascapes' respectively and argues there is a fundamentally disjunctive relationship between these aspects of life and culture and they come together in 'imagined worlds, that is the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe' (2008 p51-52). Shifting ethnoscapes he argues means people are moving faster and further in greater numbers with consequential importing and exporting of ideas from one culture and group to another. Likewise technology transfer is more rapid than ever and in particular the globalization of culture through changing armaments e.g. AK-47 and their portrayal in the media and film is helping create new imaginaries of youthful masculinity involving increased violence and bigger and better weapons (Appadurai, 2008). This is evident in *Greater Sudan* where up-arming from traditional weapons to new technology reflects past global flows and has been going on for some time as I argue in the next section.

From Traditional weapons to guns

Evans-Pritchard described the cultures and ascribed structure to these societies in great detail, albeit with a significant colonialist view of the world. In his article on Zande warfare he describes a society with a considerable history of conflict:

> There were wars between kingdom and kingdom, border raids between provinces of one kingdom and another, civil wars when princes struggled for

> dominance, wars of conquest against foreign Negroes[10], and wars against Arab traders, the Egyptian Government and the Belgian, French and Anglo-Egyptian administrations. Indeed Zande history is more or less a history of battles.
>
> (1957, p239)

The weapons and the tactics employed by the Zande in their campaigns are described in rich detail by Evans- Pritchard. While his writings are subject to some qualification particularly with respect to motive given he was writing for a colonial administration, these works are nevertheless still very useful in providing basic details on the structure of various cultural groups and describing many aspects of life. This work has also provided a baseline for measuring change. Writing about the fighting qualities of the Anuak on a WWII patrol, Evans-Pritchard notes:

> They are brave but become very excited and expose themselves unnecessarily. They like to fire from the hip and when firing from the shoulder do not use the sights, so to conduct a successful skirmish it is necessary to take them right up to the enemy and let them shoot at point blank range.
>
> (Cited by Geertz, 1988)

While this piece tells us much about British attitudes to so called 'native soldiers', it also tells us that in 1941 globalised modern techniques for fighting using firearms are still being learned by the Sudanese and changing traditional practices in the process. The tactics described by Evans-Pritchard are much more akin to traditional methods employed when spears and clubs were the traditional weapons of conflict. Hutchinson describes much more recent tactics adopted by fighters in the areas of southern Sudan near the Ethiopian border as:

> Unlike the western Leek Nuer, the eastern Gaajak and Gaaguang Nuer no longer queued up during the early 1980s in opposed fighting lines. Rather, they tended to adopt instead scattered and prone firing positions – a fighting tactic apparently introduced by Anyanya forces during the first civil war.
>
> (Hutchinson, 1996, p141).

[10] Because this is a direct quote I have retained the word Negroes even though it is not a term generally in use or accepted in current anthropological literature.

This is an interesting observation as we also know that many weapons arrived in southern Sudan from across the eastern border with Ethiopia in areas of Greater Sudan occupied by the eastern Gaajak and Gaaguang Nuer (Hutchinson, 1996). It also tells us about differential rates of taking up firearms in combat and about traditional battle methods of various ethnic groups and cultural interchange between geographically dispersed groups as discussed earlier in relation to the comments by Appadurai (2008).

Firearms in *Greater Sudan* have been a part of combat for many years. Evans-Pritchard (1957) mentions early supply and use of firearms prior to 1870 when weapons were gifted to the Zande by various foreign governments including Belgian, French, British and Egyptian administrations. Beachey notes large quantities of muskets being imported into East Africa from 1847 onwards although he notes that some were So perilous to the user that a plausible defence of gun-running was that natives were being led to exchange their effective spears and assegais for a decidedly less dangerous if more noisy weapon' (1962, p451). This arms trade, Beachey notes, was linked to modernisation programs of military weapons in Europe and the surplus older less reliable weapons were: 'thrown on the market: In East Africa – a large unpoliced territory there was an avid demand on the part of Arab and African alike for any type of firearm (1962, p 452). This arms trade which began in the wake of the Crimean War according to Beachey (1962), continues through to the present day in vast numbers. Periodic bans on importation of weapons have been tried including the Brussels Treaty of 1890 (Beachey 1962, p457) right through to more recent EU and UN embargoes on supplying weapons to the governments of Sudan and South Sudan (2012, HSBA p1). More recent contributors on the increased availability of firearms, particularly SALW, are the collapse of the Gaddafi regime in Libya in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. (Ottaway and El Sadany, 2012)

Firearms have radically altered the style of combat, and the casualty rates. They have been the catalyst of change to the nature of ritual bloodletting rites by the eastern Jikany Nuer. The Nuer have a rite known as *bier* where the blood of a person who has killed another is ritually spilled through a small incision made by an earth priest. This bloodletting is to eliminate the 'embittered blood of the victim' which is believed to have entered the body of the killer (Hutchinson 1996, 106-107). The scale of killing in the first civil war in Sudan (1955-1972) led the Nuer to reinterpret this rite to cover mainly those killed with a spear. This traditional weapon was believed by the Nuer to be directly controlled by the user as distinct from guns which had essentially their own force and energy.

The Nuer believed that being shot was similar to death by being struck by lightning – there was a strong element of divine intervention and that no person was personally held responsible. The victims were associated with a spirit known as *col wic* which among other attributes 'could be transformed into a guardian spirit' (Hutchinson, 2001 p314) when properly honoured. This reinterpretation of the relationship between death and the manner in which they died was promoted by Riek Marchar in the period 1987-1991 in an effort to both 'establish the legitimacy of the SPLA forces under his command'(ibid p314) and in an effort to persuade Nuer to join his campaign against the then government in Khartoum. By redefining the process of death in a conflict sense into two categories – 'government war' and 'homeland war' (ibid p314) Marchar was in effect legitimising the use of violence by his followers on other Sudanese and, in the context of 'government war,' was negating any 'social and spiritual risk associated with deaths generated by more localised homeland wars' (ibid p314).

Hutchinson also notes the emergent importance of firearms as a weapon of choice over spears and the replacement of 'tribal conflicts' by 'national political issues' (1996, p27). Another factor driving conflict is what we may call the 'bigger, better guns syndrome.' This reinterpretation also had other effects including elimination of the need to sacrifice cattle in respect of deaths in 'government wars'. In her chapter *Guns Warfare and the State (1996)* Hutchinson notes that Nuer in particular, although steeped in traditional fighting history using spears, understood that they were losing the civil war with the Arab dominated forces from the north because of, as she puts it '…the difference in shooting power. It's just that the Arabs guns are bigger' her informants related to her (1996, p103). Consequently there were concerted efforts by Nuer to access more powerful automatic weapons from many different sources including Uganda, and Ethiopia.

The impact of firearms on conflict both modern and traditional is not confined solely to *Greater Sudan* but is much broader than even the area of East Africa as noted by Beachey (1962). Other authors including a number of anthropologists have noted changes in the nature of conflict brought about by access to cheap powerful automatic weapons and plentiful supplies of inexpensive ammunition. Aside from the contribution of people such as Evans-Pritchard and Beachey, those writing more recently about the impact of such weapons and the associated impacts of modernity and globalisation in the context of East Africa and Sudan are Abbink (1997), Hutchinson (1996), Richards (2005), Matthysen, et al (2010), as well as a vast array of reporting by the United Nations, Human Rights Watch and many other Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and interest groups.

Sudan in a Globalised World

Globalization, first felt in Africa in the form of slave traders and European colonization, brought very significant change to *Greater Sudan*. The Sudanese were exposed to the thinking and attitudes of Europeans which at the time considered themselves to be much more civilised than the indigenous populations of the many regions they took over, mostly by use of or implied use of force. While their attitudes were out of step with current thinking, the European colonisers often genuinely believed they were helping the so called 'natives' through pacification of tribal conflict which, Hutchinson (1996) notes, in the case of *Greater Sudan* initially led to dramatic falls in rates of conflict. However, in the long term they so changed the governance systems which had been in place the country was condemned to a 'seemingly endless state of civil war during the post-colonial era' (Hutchinson 1996, p110). Conversion to Christianity and improvement in living standards through economic development were also considered worthy aims by the various colonial administrations. There was however an inherent tension between, 'on the one hand profit minded merchants and on the other, British administrative officers, who were on the whole deeply conservative and paternalistic in their attitudes towards Nuer' (Hutchinson, 1996, p64). Also, as noted above and despite whatever motivation was at play the increased influence of Christianity did impact on the ceremonial role of cattle which in turn has had negative consequences in the settlement of intra-tribal feuds and disputes in particular.

The Cold War and the period of rapid decolonization ran concurrently for approximately three decades from the immediate post WWII period to the mid to late 1970s. Both were major influences of change in many places including Greater Sudan. Decolonization was by and large done very badly and has had an immediate and profound impact on many societies that emerged from the colonial empires of not only Britain, but also Belgium, France, and most recently Portugal. In addition to this list of colonial powers we can also add the proxy influence and regimes associated with the former Soviet Union which largely imploded once the financial and military support ran out with the end of the cold war and collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Political systems put in place largely for the economy and convenience of the colonial powers (including the Soviet Union) have collapsed quite spectacularly and in a very short period of time after independence in places as far apart as Angola and Afghanistan to East Timor and in this case Greater Sudan.

The two influences of decolonization and the Cold War are no doubt linked. The haste with which many of the former colonies were decolonized, with or without wars of independence

and or insurgencies, left ample room for Cold War recruitment by the Soviet Union, and in the process exposure to a different set of broader global influences. The rise of many Marxist ideological regimes supported by Soviet arms and support, no doubt has contributed to a considerable amount of instability within the East African region, as the forces aligned with the Western Allies pushed back and sought influence of their own (Perlez, 1992).

Globalisation and Accelerated History

There is a strong link between globalisation and the concept of 'accelerated history' developed by Abbink (2001) following earlier work by Hann in 1994. The furious pace of change wrought by international business, geo-politics and the arms trade have contributed to a much faster pace of social and cultural change in once remote and in some ways relatively untouched traditional societies in north eastern Africa. It is argued by Abbink that the nature, intensity, frequency and mortality of combat have all changed markedly in remote Ethiopia for the Suri and their neighbouring communities as a result of rapid and 'far reaching socio-political change' a process he describes as 'accelerated history'(2001, p128). He attributes a number of factors in the creation of 'accelerated history'. These include:

- Drought and famine;
- Cattle disease;
- Cheap and plentiful supplies of automatic weapons;
- Expansion of the economic base from agrarian/pastoral to include illegal hunting and gold trading;
- External influences including an emerging level of state influence and tourism;
- External conflicts in the region including that in Sudan, are, according to Abbink also impacting on the Suri people of Southern Ethiopia.

Drought and famine combined with cattle disease are, for semi nomadic pastoral people, significant issues to deal with and led to a breakdown of the relationship between the Suri and their neighbours the Dizi people. Suri expansionism accompanied by much higher levels of violence in turn led to somewhat surprisingly increased levels of intra Suri violence according to Abbink, (2001). Abbink uses an evolutionary psychology approach to explain this apparent anomaly which runs counter to the normal theory that increased disputation with outside groups tends to promote closer internal ties. The link between the breakdown in Suri group dynamics is, according to Abbink, related to the breakdown in the age grade system. Young men who have new found freedoms acquired through more or less unrestricted access to firearms and

through money sourced from non-traditional activities such as gold panning (illegally) were putting off their initiation and traditional responsibilities in favour of lifestyle choices including chasing after young women for pleasure rather than creating families. Critically it is males in the 'third age grade' who as the emerging elders and as fit younger men have the social prestige to undertake traditional activities within Suri society including taking wives, stick duelling, public speaking and debating(2001, p132). All of these activities contribute to cohesiveness and when lacking a loss of restraint in matters of conflict soon followed.

Writing in a similar vein to Abbink (2001), Eriksen (2016) argues that the period post-WWII and right through the Cold War is a period of great change in modern history. He nominates the year 1991 as the year in which the pace of global history and change really began to accelerate Eriksen (2016). There are a number of convergent factors at play in this process according to Eriksen. These factors include the:

- rise of information technologies enabling fast, cheap and ubiquitous global communication in real time;
- demise of the second world of state socialism;
- hegemony of neo-liberal economics;
- the rise of China as an economic world power and
- heightened tensions often violent around religion, (often Islam, but also other religions).

(2016, p472)

It is interesting to note that many of these factors are at play in the case of *Greater Sudan*. In particular the demise of socialist supported and sponsored regimes in Ethiopia and Eritrea in the period from 1989 to 1991 profoundly influenced the flow of weapons across their shared borders into *Greater Sudan.* The collapse of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia also caused problems for the SPLA which had been heavily supported by the Ethiopians. In addition to losing its support, the collapse of the Ethiopian regime contributed to many refugees flooding back across the Sudanese border and thus creating an increasing burden of governance for the SPLA (Podder, 2014).

One of the factors in the north–south conflict in *Greater Sudan*, has been the imposition by those in power in the north of Islam, often forcibly and violently on an unwilling southern population. This is not the only driver in their conflict but it is a contributing factor. Africa generally and Sudan particularly is seeing the expanding influence of China, its economic

power and determination to be a 'player' in African affairs. China, has been building roads, railways, exploiting a variety of natural resources including oil for some time in what appears to be a clearly thought out and implemented strategy of providing aid in various forms in return for access to natural resources either in the present or at a later date. Whether it is ultimately beneficial for Africans or not will be secondary to the argument which is, that it is certainly another phase of global influences in a region which has had arguably more than its fair share of externally driven pain. The hegemony of neo liberal thought and economics is also a significant factor as the following extract shows:

> Neoliberalism, within the context of development, supports the development strategies proposed in the Washington Consensus: free market principles, the privatization of select government entities while also re-orienting and reducing public spending to support growth. Neoliberal policies, when applied to development at the community level, often removes the national government as a key stakeholder at the decision-making table, or at the very least minimizes its role and responsibilities.
>
> (Kang, 2017 p1)

In the context of a conflict situation such as *Greater Sudan* one of the key issues with the neo liberal approach is that it not only cuts the government out of the decision making process but it also isolates and emasculates community leadership, who once and only recently had the responsibility for ensuring their community survived. It is in this sense Kang argues a threat to local communities and I suggest another blow to the age grade elders. Eriksen citing Kwon notes that a combination of decolonization and new political alliances are connected to the recent history of the cold war (2016, p472).

Arms Flows

The Small Arms survey from April 2012 undertook a detailed examination of what it describes as 'Arms Flows and holdings in South Sudan (HSBA 2012 p1). Their assessment is that a number of 'well armed insurgencies were operating in South Sudan at the time (and still are). They argue that despite UN sanctioned arms embargoes, a steady supply of arms and ammunition are not only getting into the country and from there into government arsenals, but these munitions are also getting into the hands of non-state actors and that this threatens to both significantly extend and prolong the various insurgencies within South Sudan (HSBA, 2012). The report relates examples of weapons deals being undertaken in hotels in Juba, hardly the

sort of controls one would wish to see for arms imports, but rather, it is the stereotypical picture painted of African conflict in a host of Hollywood movies over the years. While, according to the report, the arms trade in South Sudan is driven by the needs of the SPLA there are a number of other factors at play. Among these are the proliferation of non state armed groups and militia groups that emerged in the aftermath of the decision to become an independent nation. In effect, the report argues that these groups had collectively taken a wait and see attitude to which side they would support in independence declared their hands and up-armed at much the same time. In synch with this we also see evidence of proxy arming of these groups by a range of external actors including the Republic of Sudan. The report also notes that the SPLA created arms and personnel caches over the border into Sudan in anticipation of conflict between its forces and the Sudan Armed Forces, and finally there was an extensive outbreak of conflict between the Nuer and Murle (HSBA, 2012, p4).

Due to the poor state of control over arms and ammunition stores, and desertions from various armed forces within South Sudan, there is a large quantity of government issued weapons and ammunition that is in the hands of private citizens, non state actors, militia and other armed groups (HSBA 2012). The report goes into some detail tracing batch numbers and serial numbers to not only establish the recent owners of these stock of weapons but has also tracked them back to the source factories in a variety of countries including China, Ukraine, Sudan and aided and assisted in transport and through the provision of false documents by a number of neighbouring states including Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Eritrea (HSBA 2012). The conflict in South Sudan is truly global in its reach and in the number of players involved and the flood of SALW is having a devastating effect on life for the Sudanese. Having such a highly armed populous in a nation with very limited communal governance structures that are functioning effectively, and with no real history of centralised power structures has made building national governance structures quite difficult indeed as I will discuss in the following section.

Building the State and governance

Multiple attempts by many different parties to build sustainable and acceptable governance and governmental structures have been both a cause of conflict and affected by the conflict, particularly in South Sudan. The rivalry between the key players in South Sudan such as Riek Marchar, Salva Kiir and going further back, other figures such as the late John Garang has been well documented by many including The Sudd Institute (2014), International Crisis Group (2016), Human Rights Watch (2017). A common theme of these assessments is that there is no hope of peace within South Sudan until there is a willingness on the part of those currently in

power to deal with the human rights issues and abuses committed during the civil war, which is still ongoing (Sudd Institute, 2014). The Sudd Institute report also makes it clear that Salva Kiir's unwillingness to share power with the opposition as contemplated under the 2015 peace agreement is another significant barrier. The Human Rights Watch report assessment likewise places emphasis on the fact that the 'lack of accountability for grave crimes committed by both sides since 2013 has fuelled the current conflict' (2017, p2). This suggests that the population lacks any confidence in the government to govern for all and that it will even-handedly and fairly dispense justice for all. With the number of SALW that are in the hands of ordinary citizens and under the control of non state actors it seems highly unlikely that the situation will improve while following the current mode of trying to impose top down structure and order from the outside by bodies such as the UN and IGAD. Indeed Podder argues that trying to impose a top down western style democracy is likely to fail:

> In countries with high levels of dependence on traditional, non-governmental, customary and other forms of non-state governance, reform strategies rooted in formalising and institutionalising governance (in line with Western norms of liberal democratic institutionalism) are likely to prove problematic and unsuccessful.
>
> (2014, p216).

The western neo liberal approach to democratic reform has been tried in a number of places including Iraq, Afghanistan and South Sudan and is yet to gain much real traction with local people. One of the reasons it struggles is that it shifts power from elders to remote locations such as Juba, or Kabul and reduces the influence of elders, and those who traditionally gained resources for their communities. This is disempowering for the elders and along with other changes noted and I argue is one of the causes in the rapid decline of age grade elders decline. Podder argues convincingly that this in turn can set up resistance by local 'strong men' to the central authorities (2014, p233). The role of Aid INGOs and other organisations such as the World Food Program (WFP) can also be problematic. Where aid delivery and resources are strongly dominated by INGOs in a country with weak governance systems it can result in the government being effectively bypassed or duplicated by non-government agencies and or rebel forces. This is counter-productive to the cause of good governance and tends to set up culture of dependency on aid providers as local initiatives become less valued, funded and relevant (Podder, 2014).

Conclusion

The drivers of change in Sudanese conflict have reflected the pace of global change in the modern world. We have seen weapons and conflict move from very simple technology, spears and similar weapons to sophisticated and much more lethal SALW in just a few decades. The performative quality of violence has to a significant extent been supplanted by real and lethal conflict. We have also witnessed a very substantial up-arming of large numbers of civilians in Greater Sudan as well as a plethora of armed groups, government soldiers and other law enforcement bodies. Together these effects have given rise to a substantial 'acceleration of history', which in turn has rapidly changed a number of other cultural institutions, of which the age grade elder system of community leadership and governance is a significant and critical casualty. In chapter 3 I will detail some of the consequences of these changes.

Conclusion

The Consequences of Change

Introduction

The consequences of conflict in Greater Sudan have been both profound and devastating. The combination of globalisation and accelerated history have broken down culture and cultural structures such as the system of local governance through village and clan elders. Young men have sought to at least pass on if not skip some of their responsibilities in favour of a 'free life' chasing money and girls, aided by the availability of weapons and the lack of traditional authority which once may have held them in check. In this chapter I analyse the effects of change on the age grade elder system. I also discuss the transition from old forms and codes of fighting to new forms and how this has impacted culture. Women are inevitably caught up in conflict, especially civil wars where the fighting is not confined to defined front lines. Increasingly in civil conflicts women are targeted specifically as both a means of revenge and also as a means of punishing the future from the present. How history is written is critical to understanding the past and it is also of great importance in the understanding of and to the process of writing ethnographies. There is a brief discussion on the importance of history, particularly in ensuring that the effects of globalisation are properly understood in the context of Greater Sudan.

Break down of age set elder system

A number of reasons for the breakdown of the age set elder system have been put forward by various authors including: Evans-Pritchard (1940); Hutchinson, (1996); Abbink, (2009); and Matthysen et al (2010). The structural changes made in civil administration saw the creation of roles such as the appointment of District Administrators and Leopard Skin Chiefs and other similar roles by colonial authorities in *Greater Sudan* (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) from within the indigenous population to assist the colonial powers in the task of governing the populous. Matthysen et al have analysed similar issues within pastoral groups across the Karamoja Cluster, an area which takes in the border regions of South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. The fact that many of these appointments were not of people who were recognised elders left the age grade elder system vulnerable. They observe 'that traditional leaders were sidelined by the new administration that created a modern leadership structure' (2010 p8) and importantly that there is still to the present day confusion about how traditional leadership by community elders fits in with 'elected local authorities' (ibid p8). Matthysen et al also note that the traditional handover of power from elders to younger generations was delayed during the later

days of colonial rule, a development which generated ‘feelings of disgruntlement within younger generations , decreasing their sympathy and respect for the elders and their authority’ (Matthysen et al 2010, p8). Hutchinson notes that among the Eastern Jikany Nuer these ‘chiefs’ that had been created were provided with rifles for prestige reasons, a move which clearly backfired as the British then had to arm the police chiefs as well. By 1939 the British had essentially given up any notion of being able to disarm the population in the regions where this practice had occurred leaving a populous which was both armed and confused about where authority should reside within the community.

The widespread availability of SALW within the region of Greater Sudan and in fact across the entire Horn of Africa region has also changed cattle raiding behaviour which in turn has a knock on effect on the authority of the elders (Matthysen et al 2010). Prior to the widespread availability of arms, elders had a degree of reverence and clan loyalty given to them by younger generations. The communities they controlled were not without problems but in general survived, in part due to the wisdom and experience of the elders which was gradually imparted to future generations. Guns fundamentally changed this situation. A cattle raid by a group of heavily armed youth will, absent something extraordinary happening go badly for the people being raided if they are not similarly armed. This then reflects badly on the elders whose task it is to maintain balance, control and where necessary reciprocity among other functions. Abbink notes that in Ethiopia cattle raiding became much more violent after guns became widely available and that there have been instances of cattle being machine gunned to death where capture was not possible (2009 p33/34). This type of violence is unheard of in traditional pastoral communities because it is completely out of balance with cultural norms. It is making a statement which is that if I cannot steal your cattle you will not be able to keep them. This targets an entire community which rely on the cattle as well as their belief systems and processes of bride wealth transfer, striking at the heart of culture and identity in the process.

New forms and codes of fighting

Changes in fighting methods, style and the code of fighting itself, brought on by the influx of new weapons technology and globalisation has been noted by a number of authors over the last 70-80 years including Evans-Pritchard, Hutchinson (1996), and Abbink (2009). In his paper Abbink makes the point that ‘the nature of conflict has significantly changed: more arms are involved, more people are being killed, and the rules of engagement are changing and those of reconciliation are deteriorating’ (2009 p23). This is not only the case for the Suri who he studied but very much is the case in *Greater Sudan.* In her paper on religious and political

dimensions of the conflict in South Sudan Hutchinson has noted that as recently as the mid-1980s there were still spears being used against the AK-47.

Relations between the two Sudans are complicated by oil and a number of alliances both acknowledged and unacknowledged between various key figures in South Sudan politics. Each government accuses the other of meddling in its internal affairs and there appears to be some truth to these accusations. Guns in general and automatic weapons in particular are increasingly being associated with masculinity (Hutchinson 1996; Skedsmo 2003) and with new found power of young men (Abbink, 2001). With guns and the freedom from responsibility that avoiding initiation brings, young men are changing the system of bride wealth quite rapidly with guns being traded for cattle to be used in bride wealth exchange (Hutchinson 1996). New phrases such as 'cattle of money' (referring to cattle bought with wages) and 'cattle of guns' were entering Nuer culture alongside 'cattle of girls' (Hutchinson 1996 p100-102).

Among the more disturbing aspects of change in the identity that young men are adopting in Suri society is what Abbink describes as a 'new "masculine" identity' (2009, p33). He argues that young men armed with bigger and better guns, and being prepared to use them with very little or no restraint is a very different type of identity to 'the former Suri warrior persona of the old days, as someone who defended the herds, who respected a code of the proper use of violence and who did not kill women and children on raids' (ibid, 2009, p33). Abbink makes the point that this type of behaviour is out of step with current thinking and 'reinforces gender opposites changed from old days' (Abbink, 2009 p33).

In *Greater Sudan* Nuer men also continued to be challenged by what Hutchinson refers to as 'the emergence of the "Bull Boys" (1996, p170). The 'Bull Boys' are young men of an age where they could and ordinarily would be initiated and become 'men'. The 'Bull Boys', influenced by modern globalised thinking and formal education, choose not to undergo initiation thereby relieving themselves of the responsibilities which attach to the process. But as fully grown adult males often armed with automatic weapons they wield considerable power – as distinct from what we might call the influence and responsibilities of men recognised as 'elders'. This transformation is being felt in many ways. In a multi class society such as the Nuer the age grade elder system is the main arm of control and governance within the community. While often culturally prevented from taking positions of power these young males have nevertheless imposed themselves at times literally through force of arms and through changes made by both colonial and post -independence governments' to the rules about who

can be chiefs (Hutchinson, 1996). This quite possibly explains the reactions of the chiefs Allen wrote about in Uganda once they had acquired firearms.

The system of age grade elders provided a measure of control that is critical in the way that conflict was managed through the ages in Sudan. Elders (particularly Nuer) organised collective defence based on family and clan groups and initiated men provided the warrior force. Over time and with increasing government suppression of localised conflict through the military, this role has diminished. In 1987, Riek Marchar, then a Senior SPLA commander and who is not initiated himself, attempted to ban initiation for Western Nuer youth. Reasons given included differentiation from Dinka when fighting them, medical reasons and the increasing emigration of children to overseas countries where initiation was no relevant, and scarification was presumably not attractive (Hutchinson 1996 p296). Whether these changes are simply cosmetic or more profound it is still evidence of the effects of globalisation rapidly impacting a society which until relatively recently was much more isolated from the winds of such change.

Remembering History

Abbink (2001) mentions the similarities between the Suri and other cattle-herding patrilineal polygamous agro-pastoral groups in East Africa. For these groups cattle raiding and varying levels of intra and intercommunal violence are part of their way of life. There are a number of similarities between the Suri people in Ethiopia and other ethnic groups in neighbouring *Greater Sudan* which are discussed below. Anthropologists generally seek to apply patterns of culture and behaviour observed among specific groups to humanity more generally as part of their ethnographic model of enquiry into what makes human behaviour work the way it does. There are however some valid critiques of ethnography which have been made particularly its relationship with other disciplines including history that also seek to explain human behaviour. A recent article by Eriksen (2016) connects 'accelerated history' and globalization very closely to the end of the cold war in 1991 and more broadly to the post industrial world of the last 200 years. Eriksen argues that anthropologists have a key role in sharing the story of globalization and its impacts on 'local lives' of people (2016, p471) and that ethnography is, albeit with some limitations, the best method of enquiry to achieve this. The limitations of ethnography are, according to Eriksen, that it lacks 'historical depth and societal breadth' (2016, p481) which are critiques remarkably similar to those articulated by Evans-Pritchard much earlier, when he wrote:

> Anthropologists have therefore taken one or other of the natural sciences as their model and have turned their backs on history, which sees men in a different way and eschews, in the light of experience, rigid formulations of any kind.
>
> (1950, p123)

Among the effects attributed to globalization are extremely rapid increases in urbanization rates and rapid phasing out of subsistence agriculture in favour of wage paying work (Eriksen, 2016). Allen argues that in addition to this changing employment effect, in order to find paying work people were often forced 'to move away from land associated with ancestors and settle among strangers'(1989, p57). This has had the effect of creating much larger cities and increasing levels of poverty for many.

Allen also makes the point that with the move from land associated with ancestors comes a lowering of the authority of elders, presumably because sites associated with the power of elders in matters spiritual and ancestral are made less or completely inaccessible to them. Links with other clans can also be compromised which can in turn affect cultural practices such as marriage and has also led to increased rates of violence towards women (Abbink, 2001). Many of the pastoral communities in the region of East Africa are exogamous patrilineal societies and there is a long history of raiding neighbouring clans to acquire cattle and women. The advent of much more powerful automatic weapons has changed the nature of such raiding and brought with it a scale and level of violence not seen before. Without the historical context of past ethnographies written by people such as Evans-Pritchard, and with a view to locating these accounts within the history of their time, our ability to comprehend the rapid changes being wrought on greater Sudan would be significantly reduced. In the next section I will discuss how violence toward women is also being perpetrated in non-traditional ways such as by members of the various armed forces by young men not subject to the control and discipline of community elders.

Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence is becoming disturbingly common in the conflicts in both South Sudan and across the broader region of Greater Sudan and the north east of Africa. Abbink (2001 and 2009) reports a number of incidents from both government security forces in Ethiopia and also young men of Suri ethnic group in particular as they were his research focus. Human Rights Watch reports from August 2017 report numerous cases of deliberate targeting of women by

government soldiers of both the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan and, as noted above, Hutchinson (2001) also has provided examples and analysis. These reports allege that 'Sudanese security forces have used sexual violence, intimidation and other forms of abuse to silence female human rights defenders across the country' (HRW World report 2017, p2) and for other purposes such as intimidation of the civilian population, as argued by Hutchinson (2001). In addition to the intent to intimidate and silence critics, there is also targeted gender based violence based on ethnicity persistently being reported. Both government and opposition forces engage in these war crimes of rape and murder, which are designed to shame victims and disrupt and disturb normal life. Young women are particularly vulnerable because they represent the future mothers of whichever ethnic group they belong to, however there are reports of elderly women also being targeted.

Women and children are protected by UN resolutions and various legal and treaty documents as non-combatants, against whom attacks raise allegations of war crimes. According to Hutchinson and others there have been raids by militia backed by the Republic of Sudan across the border both before and after formal separation of the two nations. One such raid by the northern militia who were according to Hutchinson, acting on behalf of the government of Sudan, with a mission to depopulate the newly discovered oil fields is described as follows:

> Mounted on horseback and wielding government-supplied AK-47s these cattle and slave-seeking raiders (from the North of greater Sudan) declared a jihad against a southern civilian population armed with little more than spears. ….these Baggara militias began to kill, rape and enslave hundreds of unarmed Nuer and Dinka women and children in a dramatic breech of previously respected ethical limits on inter-tribal warfare in this region.
>
> (2001, p312)

This passage tells us quite a bit about the changing nature of conflict. Firstly we are painted an image of marauding horsemen attacking poorly armed villages with weapons that fundamentally change the nature of and the rules around combat in the context of Sudanese conflict. Secondly the focus of these attacks are unarmed women and children, who are not only protected by cultural values and traditions but are universally recognised by the Geneva Convention: 'In addition to the general protection from which all civilians benefit, '*women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honour, in particular against rape,*

enforced prostitution or any form of indecent assault' (Krill, 1985 p2, emphasis in original article).

The changes to the rules of engagement are therefore of great significance. The cultural respect for women and children are practices which had held relatively firm over time but which have changed rapidly in recent years. Some of the changes, as in the case cited by Hutchinson are intentional in order to depopulate great swathes of countryside for exploitation and for which the vastly increased use of SALW are certainly an enabler. For those people whom Abbink has studied the answer is less clear and it seems that some of the change may have been, if not accidental then possibly unintentional. According to Abbink (2001) there is a sense of helplessness among the Suri who see the effects of the new and much less restrained forms of combat but are unsure how to control it. This is especially the case with respect to the young men who are the principle perpetrators and who are less and less under the control and moderating influence of the age set elders. This has had a number of effects including the deliberate targeting of women and girls as symbols of fertility in conflict with other groups such as the Dizi (Abbink, 2001, 2009) and reinforces 'gender oppositions and conflicts' and in turn this reduces respect for and has resulted in the tarnishing of the 'warrior persona of the old days' (ibid, 2009 p33). Similar outcomes have been observed in Southern Sudan. The deliberate targeting of women in combat is not just restricted to the localized conflict reported on by Abbink. It is widespread across the Sudanese conflict zone, as indeed it has been among many conflicts. Within the Sudanese context however it takes a special meaning, because of the conjunction of small arms, young men and the system of exogamous marriage.

The marriage system, and importance of cattle to it and small arms being in plentiful supply, is changing the way in which the quite traditional activity of cattle raiding and stealing takes place. Matthysen et al comment in their paper that: 'Another explanatory factor for the high level of insecurity and gun violence, accompanying cattle raiding in the region (Karamoja Cluster) is the changing nature of raiding' (2010, p8). They argue that in the past the whole community were involved in the decision making process regarding who, where and when to raid, that the elders controlled and essentially approved such raids, and that the community benefitted from the cattle acquired. Notice was given beforehand and conflict was controlled and took place outside of villages, a practice which among other things helped reduce casualties among women and children. This is significant because of the principle place in culture and religion of cattle. Cattle are still an acknowledged sign of wealth and means as well as important forms of bride-wealth and less frequent now an object for sacrifice and settlement of

disputes (Hutchinson, 1996). In the current environment however, young men who are heavily armed undertake much more lethal raids deliberately avoiding warriors in the target village and they frequently kill women and children. Human Rights Watch documented a particularly brutal attack on a residential compound in July 2016 which housed expatriate and humanitarian NGOs where journalists and female aid workers were targeted and for which no SPLA soldiers have been prosecuted for sexual violence crimes committed in July 2016 (HRW 2017 p 4). Abbink has shown, this behaviour by armed groups of young men (in the main) is increasingly resulting in 'revenge and retaliation' responses often along ethnic lines (2001, p134). These responses may also involve government or opposition forces who, as noted above, can be equally ill disciplined. The gun culture has meant the owners of guns are often able to act with impunity and little fear of prosecution.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have examined conflict in *Greater Sudan* analysing it through the lens of 'accelerated history' a concept developed by Abbink (2001) and Eriksen (2016) following earlier work by Hann (1994). They argue that the broader effects of globalisation are collapsing the timeframe over which societal change is taking place among pastoral semi nomadic people in north east Africa. Appadurai (2008) has provided a framework for assessing the effects of globalisation as a series of disjunctive cultural 'scapes' which can be analysed for the global influences that are rapidly changing the world we all live in. In the case of *Greater Sudan* the cultural landscape has been particularly affected by 'ethnoscapes' whereby a fictional primordial ethnic past is being invented, reinvented and re-interpreted, often quite violently and very rapidly. This has in turn both fuelled and been driven by an emerging fear of minorities where previously there was little fear or substantial conflict between different ethnic groups who had for the most part cohabited relatively harmoniously. Richards (2005) reminded us that all violence has a performative quality to it and that it isn't simply a mindless response to external stimuli. It takes significant effort and logistic skill to organise and maintain war and to justify this effort there must be rewards, as grievance is generally a less powerful motive than greed (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004).

The rampant advance of the AK-47 and equivalent weaponry has fundamentally changed ritual and traditional conflict to the point of no return. Conflict is both driving and driven by the collapse of the age grade elder system, brought on initially by transplanted European values and the desire by various colonial administrations for 'an easy life'. More recently the age grade elder system has been under stress caused by the transition of young men to paid work

rather than traditional cattle herding roles, their access to and penchant for guns and their desire which seems almost universal among young men to have a good time rather than settle down and take on traditional responsibilities as fathers and initiated elders of their community.

While conflict in *Greater Sudan* has been exacerbated by these causes it has also been driven by other more pragmatic reasons such as oil and political power. I have explored the effects that global oil has had on the conflict and in particular how it has driven the Republic of Sudan to adjust borders and depopulate large swathes of territory to control the resources located under it. The power play between various political leaders in South Sudan in particular has had a significant effect on the conflict. It is directly feeding the insurgency currently running in South Sudan as the forces loyal to Riek Marchar seek to displace Salva Kiir as President and install their own regime. This dispute has also fractured along ethnic lines leaving many people at risk of war crimes and genocide. The speed of the breakdown of age grade elders is in large part due to the impact that globalisation has had in increasing the pace of social and cultural change – which is indeed 'accelerated history.'

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