

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: RISKING WAR: REGIME CRISES,
POLITICAL EXCLUSION AND
INDISCRIMINATE VIOLENCE IN AFRICA

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2007

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Between 1956 and 1999 one-third of the civil wars in the world occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. The prevailing explanation given to account for this fact is the economic weakness of African states. While low income is a robust determinant of civil war onset in global models, it is not as precise a predictor *within* sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, I argue that civil war is often a consequence of how African rulers respond to threats to regime survival, such as failed coups d'état and other regime crises.

In the wake of regime crises, rulers, concerned by their tenuous hold on power, seek to reduce the risk of future coups by eliminating disloyal agents from within the government and increasing spoils for more trusted clients to try to guarantee their support should another coup or threat materialize. The problem for the ruler is distinguishing loyal agents from traitors. To overcome this information problem rulers often use ethnicity as a cue to restructure their ruling networks, excluding perceived 'ethnic enemies' from spoils. The consequence of such ethnic exclusion is that, due to the weakness of formal state

structures, the ruler forfeits his leverage over and information about such societal groups, undermining the government's ability to effectively prevent and contain violent mobilization and increasing the risk of civil war.

To test this hypothesis, I employ a nested research design. The first part quantitatively tests the causal logic on a sample of 40 African countries between independence and 1999. I find that in the five years after a regime crisis there is a significant increase in the risk of civil war onset, often when the government resorts to indiscriminate violence to regulate the opposition. Part two examines this argument at the micro-level by examining two cases in Sudan based on hundreds of interviews during more than 14-months of fieldwork between 2005 and 2006. The second Sudan case illustrates that the civil war in Darfur in 2003 was a consequence of how the central government responded to a crisis within the Islamic movement in 1999 and 2000.

RISKING WAR: REGIME CRISES, POLITICAL EXCLUSION AND
INDISCRIMINATE VIOLENCE IN AFRICA

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2007

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Foreword

I am grateful to have had the support of many individuals in the process of completing this project. First, I must thank my dissertation committee in the Department of Government and Politics, University of Maryland for their support and guidance. I am particularly grateful for the encouragement from my adviser, Mark Lichbach. Ann Marie Clark and Cissy Abu Rahman from the Government and Politics office also deserve special thanks for all of their assistance, without which I would not have successfully received my degree. I finished writing the dissertation while at the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), Stanford University. I benefitted tremendously from interactions with Jeremy Weinstein, Jim Fearon, Macartan Humphreys, David Abernethy, and David Laitin and the guidance of Lynn Eden.

Data collection on indiscriminate violence was supported by a Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation. Field research in Sudan in 2005 and 2006 was supported by a David L. Boren Fellowship from the National Security Education Program. I am grateful to all the Sudanese who were willing to grant me interviews, especially those from Darfur who courageously spoke with me. To protect those who have helped me, I cannot name them here.

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Anne and Jim, for their inspiration and to my lovely wife, Kate, for her patience, faith, and love.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Darfur, Sudan, April 2003

On April 12, 2003, Sudan's President, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, flew into the dusty town of El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur. Facing growing unrest in the Darfur region, Bashir addressed a mass rally in the city's stadium and vowed to "crush" those committing "acts of banditry" and subverting "the authority of the state and the law." "Don't bring me one wounded or prisoner of war," the bellicose Sudanese ruler declared with Idriss Deby, the Chadian president and Bashir's friend and ally, standing at his side.¹

Bashir's speech was a declaration of war against an armed group, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), that had been secretly organizing in Jebel Marra² since August 2001 when a group of young dissidents and their self-defense forces from the Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups merged together. In June 2002 the rebels began attacking government installations and first announced itself as the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF) in February 2003, changing its name to the SLA in March. In 2001 and 2002, the central government downplayed the burgeoning insurgency as banditry or a local tribal issue. In May 2002, it had delegated authority to General Ibrahim Suleiman, governor of North Darfur, to head a security committee and restore order in the region. During the next year, General Suleiman, a Darfurian and former minister of defense and chief of staff of the army, had been holding a series of tribal meetings to try to reduce levels of violence and sought to negotiate with leaders of the SLA through tribal interlocutors. The hawks from the ministry

¹ Various interviews with participants at the El Fasher rally; Khartoum, Sudan, March 2006.

² A mountain (3000 meters in elevation) located in the central part of the western region of Darfur.

of interior, national security and military intelligence were becoming impatient with General Suleiman's conciliatory approach, however. They felt appropriate force could wipe out the rebels in two weeks.

As Bashir traveled to El Fasher in April 2003, a joint operation between the Sudanese and Chadian armies was under way. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) devised a plan to surround the rebel bases, which were concentrated in the Ain Sirro hills, near Kutum in North Darfur (115 kilometers northwest of El Fasher), and launch a massive ground and air assault. While SAF began to move its limited forces from El Fasher, Kabkabiyah, Geneina and Kutum to the Ain Sirro area,³ a battalion of Chadian forces armed, supplied and paid for by the Sudanese government was approaching from Tina, a town on the border between Chad and Sudan. In addition, local militias in the Kutum region were being mobilized to aid in the offensive (Amnesty International 2003). Upon returning to Khartoum from El Fasher, Bashir was confident that over the next two weeks the rebels would be crushed.

By April 24, the battle for Ain Sirro was raging. SAF had started to move troops and tanks into the Ain Sirro hills to wipe out the rebels' bases. Antonov planes and helicopter gunships stationed at El Fasher airport bombarded the hills by air. The Sudanese military was convinced they had the rebels surrounded and on the verge of defeat.

Early on the morning of April 25, however, an SLA convoy of less than 40 Land Cruisers with some 250 rebels launched a spectacular surprise attack on El Fasher. Intent on debilitating the government's air advantage, they targeted the airport, and destroyed two Antonov bombers and four helicopter gunships.⁴ Almost 70 government soldiers were killed, while 30 were taken prisoner, including the regional commander of the air force, Major

³ The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) had two Darfur army divisions, but most of the units were operating in southern Sudan where war had been waging since 1983, leaving not more than two battalions actually in Darfur in early 2003.

⁴ See "Aircraft Wreckage Cleared from Scene of Rebel Attack in Western Sudan," *Agence France Presse* (AFP), April 29, 2003.

General Ibrahim Bushra Ismail. At the same time, in the Ain Sirro hills the rebels counterattacked the government's forces, wiping out its tanks and capturing other armaments. The SAF troops on the ground called for air support, but El Fasher could only radio back the "planes are ashes" (Flint and de Waal 2005, 100).

The government of Sudan was blindsided by the El Fasher attack. Sudan's director of military intelligence was in the state capital at the time of the assault overseeing operations in Ain Sirro but had no information the rebels had moved significant forces outside of the hills, let alone were planning to attack the El Fasher airport.⁵ For President Bashir and the hawks in Khartoum it was a rude awakening; they quickly realized the military did not have the upper-hand and the rebellion was much stronger than they estimated. Humiliated and infuriated, Bashir and his security clique sought to strike back with a vengeance. The problem was the SLA was operating freely in Dar Zaghawa⁶ in Northern Darfur where the regime had little presence and access to minimal local information. Moreover, the army, with much of its rank-and-file coming from Darfur, was wilting in the face of the rebellion. Four military battalions deployed in the months after the El Fasher attack were defeated by the SLA.⁷ Desperate to slow the rebellion and turn the tide of the war, the government intensified its aerial bombardment and its use of local militias (to be known as the *janjaweed*), primarily those from the Abbala (camel-herding) Arab tribes. Together the military and militias launched a brutal scorched-earth campaign against villages and civilian populations in Dar Zaghawa and other areas of Northern Darfur as the rebellion spread to South and West Darfur. Over time the government's counterinsurgency policy would

⁵ Interview with Sudanese Armed Forces General, Abuja, Nigeria, April 2006.

⁶ Historically land in Darfur is owned communally by tribes concentrated in different dars (or homelands). The dar of the Zaghawa, a non-Arab ethnic group, is located in North Darfur, northwest of Kutum.

⁷ Interview with Sudanese Armed Forces General, Abuja, Nigeria, April 2006.

succeed in slowing the rebellion and forcing a military stalemate, but at a devastating cost for the people of Darfur—genocide.

The Puzzle: Civil War Onset in Africa

Why did the government of Sudan so badly underestimate the SLA in April 2003? When faced with a burgeoning rebellion throughout 2002 and early 2003, why did it fail to politically accommodate or militarily contain the movement? Why did Darfurian dissidents turn to violent mobilization at the risk of provoking mass killing from a regime that has consistently employed the practice since taking power in 1989?⁸ Why did the SLA succeed in 2003, when an insurgency in Darfur more than a decade earlier was crushed by the government in only a few months?

This dissertation addresses these questions. It seeks to explain why some disputes over power and wealth between dissidents and the central government lead to full-scale civil war and others do not. This puzzle is not unique to Sudan. Politics across sub-Saharan Africa⁹ over the last 50 years has been characterized by a high-stakes struggle between the *regime*—the ruling group who controls the state and seeks to maintain its hold on power—and the *dissident*—those excluded from the regime who seek a greater share of power and resources. With the state the primary vehicle for wealth accumulation and in the absence of democratic rules and institutions for regulating political control, the incentive to use force to

⁸ Governments of Sudan (the Bashir regime and previous governments in the 1980s) consistently applied scorched-earth policies and other devastating counterinsurgency measures (which some human rights groups believe constitute genocide) against people in the Nuba Mountains and southern Sudan (See African Rights 1995; Rone 2003; Burr 1998; International Crisis Group 2002).

⁹ In this paper I use the terms sub-Saharan Africa and Africa interchangeably. The dataset includes 40 Sub-Saharan African countries (it excludes Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, and Swaziland). Data coverage begins the year of the country's independence, except Liberia and Ethiopia which both begin in 1955, and ends in 1999.

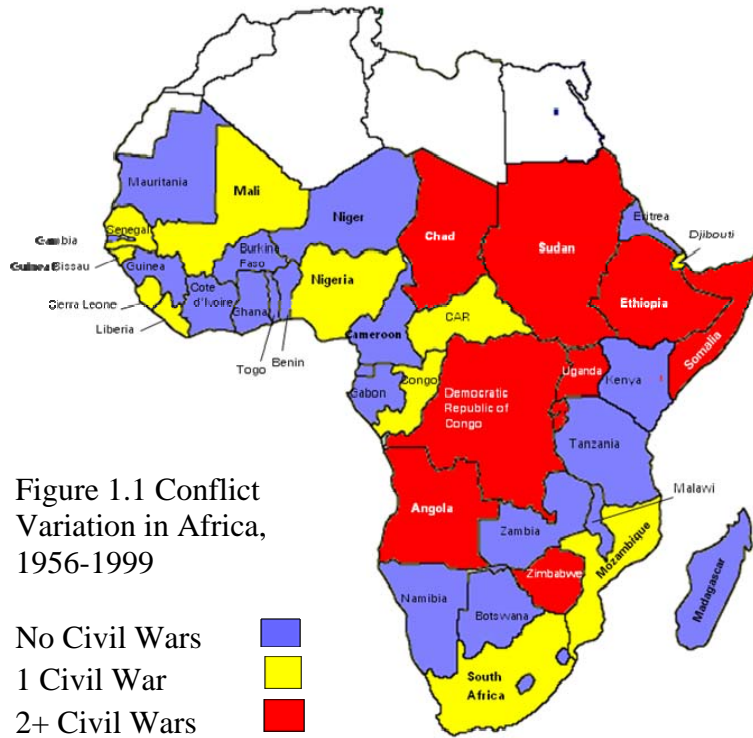
gain political power has always been high. Full-scale civil war,¹⁰ however, has been a rare occurrence. Generally African rulers have been able to prevent the competition for control of the state from leading to civil war through a combination of *clientelism*—privately distributing state resources to co-opt individuals or groups to join or support the government—and *repression*—the use of coercion to regulate those excluded from and opposed to the ruling regime. In the forty sub-Saharan African countries covered in this study, there have not been more than 50 incidences of civil war onset¹¹ out of 1499 country-years.

Though infrequent, civil wars in Africa have been widespread (occurring in 21 out of the 40 countries included in this analysis; see Figure 1.1), have wrought incredible devastation and, once they begin, have been difficult to end (Fearon 2004). The average civil war in Africa has lasted more than 8 years (or a total of 268 country-years), killing thousands,¹² displacing tens of thousands, reducing economic growth, and spreading conflict into neighboring countries. What accounts for these exceptional, but devastating, civil wars is important to understand

¹⁰ In this paper, civil war is defined as a violent struggle within a state between the regime and one or more armed local dissidents over the distribution of power, resources, territory, or other goods, in which the violence reaches significant thresholds (at least 1,000 battlefield deaths), with a minimal proportion of it (100 battlefield deaths in the first year) produced by the dissidents (Sambanis 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003).

¹¹ In this study I use two sources for coding civil war onset, Fearon and Laitin (2003) and Sambanis (2004). Fearon and Laitin (2003) count 34 civil war onsets in the 40 sub-Saharan African countries between 1956 and 1999, while Sambanis (2004) counts 49. In chapter 4, I explain what accounts for the discrepancies in the two datasets.

¹² According to the Battle Deaths Dataset from the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo, there have been about 1,750,000 battlefield deaths due to civil wars in Africa between 1956 and 2005 (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005). This does not include war-related deaths due to disease, malnutrition, etc, which would increase the figure into the tens of millions. According to the International Rescue Committee, there have been almost 4 million war-related deaths in the Democratic Republic of Congo over the past decade. See <http://www.theirc.org/news/latest/inside-congo-an-unspeakable.html>



Beyond Economic Explanations of Civil War

The prevailing explanation given for civil war is low-levels of economic development (Elbadawi and Sambanis 2000; Collier and Hoeffler 2002; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2005; Hegre and Sambanis 2006). Low income is thought to make countries more susceptible to civil war as it reduces the opportunity cost for citizens to take up weapons (Collier and Hoeffler 2001) and reduces the capacity of the state to respond to violent political challengers (Fearon and Laitin 2003). In low income states, Fearon and Laitin (2003) write, insurgency is “more feasible and attractive due to weak local policing or inept and corrupt counterinsurgency practices,” including “a propensity for brutal and indiscriminate retaliation that helps drive noncombatant locals into rebel forces.” Collier and Hoeffler (2002, 25) estimate that if Africa had experienced economic growth on par with the rest of the world between 1970 and 1995, its incidence of conflict in the 1990s would have been almost halved.

While certainly Africa’s poverty, corruption, and economic stagnation have increased its risk of civil war compared to wealthier parts of the world, one of the key conclusions of this study is that *within* sub-Saharan Africa low income is not a very robust determinant of civil war. Instead, I argue a factor that has a more consequential effect on the likelihood of civil war onset across African countries is the institution of *clientelism*—that is the system of personal ties between the ruler (and other key regime elites) and societal intermediaries from across the country. Due to the weakness of the formal state apparatus in Africa, it is through the clientelist networks that the regime is able to maintain political control over its diverse population. An extensive clientelist network that includes ethnoregional intermediaries from many or all politically-relevant societal groups enhances the regime’s leverage over and

information about societal groups, facilitating its ability to effectively prevent and contain rebellion. On the other hand, regimes with very narrow or exclusive networks have fewer local channels through which they are able to mobilize local support and extract information about societal grievances and dissidents, undermining their counterinsurgency capabilities. Under what conditions do regimes build more inclusive or exclusive clientelist networks?

Argument

The central finding of this dissertation is that political exclusion is the dominant strategy rulers employ after facing a credible internal threat to their political survival, such as a coup attempt or a breakdown of the ruling coalition. Concerned by their tenuous hold on power and fearful of future internal threats, rulers usually respond to regime crises by narrowing their ruling network, often through a series of purges, mass arrests, and other brutal tactics against those perceived as disloyal. When ethnicity is politicized, these repressive policies are sometimes perpetrated broadly against members of ‘enemy’ ethnic groups, targeting political actors and civilians alike. Exclusion serves to both prevent distrusted factions and groups from having an inside track to state power and to increase spoils for those the ruler feels he¹³ can trust to ensure that they fight on his behalf should another coup or threat materialize.

Violent exclusion, particularly when members of an ethnic group are targeted collectively, has dramatic consequences for the regime’s societal penetration and control. First, it inflames opposition to the regime and increases the pool of dissidents. Second, the regime forfeits its ties with local intermediaries, compromising its ability to access

¹³ Historically men have been the dominant political rulers in sub-Saharan Africa. In the independence period there have been only three women head of states (Sylvie Kinigi, acting president of Burundi in 1993 and 1994; Ruth Perry, chairperson of the council of state of Liberia in 1996 and 1997; and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, elected president of Liberia for a six-year term beginning in 2006). I will use the pronoun ‘he’ when referring to African rulers.

information about opposition activities in the excluded group's territory and to credibly sway local communities to support the government against any dissidents. When dissidents from these excluded groups mobilize, usually from their ethnic homeland or from the sanctuary of a neighboring country, to regain their privileged position, the regime has to rely predominantly on state violence to counter the threat. But, deficient in leverage and information, its counterinsurgency campaign tends to be indiscriminate, further facilitating insurgency formation and triggering full-scale civil war. *In sum, in the wake of regime crises, African rulers tend to choose strategies that substitute civil war risk for coup risk.*

Mechanisms

Political Rule in Africa and the Logic of Exclusion

Colonialism left sub-Saharan Africa with a devastating legacy. It created weak, artificial states that alienated rather than integrated ethnic groups (Mamdani 1996; Englebert 2000; Posner 2005) and concentrated political power disproportionately in capital cities (Herbst 2000). It also left the state as the key source of material wealth (Bates 1981), but failed to institutionalize democratic rules to regulate competition for its control (Young 1994). The post-World War II international system and cold war rivalry further raised the premium for gaining and holding political power, while providing no requisite incentives for democratization or state-building (Jackson and Rosberg 1982b; Reno 1998; Herbst 2000). Accordingly, post-colonial politics became a high-stakes competition for control of the state between and within different societal groups. The challenge for groups who captured the state was establishing political domination over other societal groups who each sought control themselves.

To establish political authority, African rulers relied on the institution of *neopatrimonialism* (or *clientelism*)—in which rulers entered into bargains with intermediaries from key societal groups by exchanging access to power and state resources for political support (Roth 1968; Lemarchand 1972; Clapham 1982; Sandbrook 1985; Boone 1992; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Reno 1998). Due to the weakness of the formal state bureaucracy, the regime's penetration of society and external political control hinged upon the structure of the ruling network, the degree to which representatives from all groups participated as clients or some were systematically excluded. The modal ruling strategy was what Rothchild (1997) terms, proportional inclusion, in which rulers made an effort to balance the composition of their cabinets and governments to reflect their society's diversity and underwrite political stability.

As the coup d'état became ubiquitous in Africa as the primary means of acceding state power, however, rulers prioritized internal regime security over societal control or integration, and began to estimate that proportional inclusion was too costly and risky to maintain. One of the central deficiencies of clientelism is the institution is based on a multiplicity of principal-agent relationships. The ruler serves as the principal and enters into a contract with ethnoregional intermediaries, the agents, who pledge to work on behalf of the ruler in exchange for access to state resources. Hiring a diverse group of clients to assist the ruler was an expedient means to facilitate monitoring and political control of distinct cultural and linguistic groups without having to expend the costs to build up the formal state structures. But like all contractual arrangements, information asymmetries exist which make it difficult for the ruler to be absolutely certain that the client's pledges to regime survival are genuine. Rulers are always wary of clients exploiting their access to the state to pass along sensitive information about the regime's political strategy, diverting material resources to

groups opposed to the regime, or coordinating with the army, security or other coercive organizations, to undermine, rather than support, the ruler's political survival.

To minimize this risk and try to enforce their clients' loyalty, rulers used such techniques as frequent cabinet reshuffles or the threat of arrest or execution of anyone who dared shirk from their commitment to the ruler. A more extreme solution was political exclusion, which sometimes manifest itself in what Horowitz (1985) calls, ethnocracy—the complete domination of the state by a single ethnic group. Political exclusion restructured the ruling network to reduce the screening and monitoring costs to ensure only those identified as loyal clients served the ruler. Often rulers favored members from their own ethnic groups, where mutual preferences, language, and culture reduced the costs of monitoring, while systematically excluding those from 'ethnic rivals.'

Another constraint to proportional inclusion is it was costly because of budget constraints. The larger the network and the more clients included in the regime, the fewer spoils for each individual client. Thus rulers always had an incentive to narrow the network to try to maximize spoils for each person in order to try to guarantee their loyalty. As African rulers faced persistent economic decline in the 1970s and 1980s and a shortage of state resources, they started to narrow the size of their patronage networks (Reno 1998). Rulers often used political exclusion as a means to reduce the number of beneficiaries of state resources, while expropriation and redistribution of excluded groups' property and wealth was a mechanism to increase patronage to regime allies.

Regime Crises, Political Exclusion, and Civil War Onset

While all African rulers have an incentive to minimize the principal-agent problem and maximize spoils for ruling elites, this incentive is particularly high in the aftermath of a failed coup d'état or other regime crisis. Startled by their near loss of power and the urgency

of defending against future threats, rulers are desperate to try to bolster internal regime security. They cannot afford having uncommitted clients close to power or others, particularly in the military or security, who are wavering in their support. Political exclusion is a short-cut to minimize these problems. It at once purges the regime of disloyal clients, especially those who have been identified as supporting or abetting the initial challenge, even if just linked by ethnicity, while providing the ruler with an opportunity to increase spoils for critical elements of the security or army.

Political exclusion is not without its costs, however. First, it is often carried out violently and in a humiliating fashion. To signal the consequences of betraying the ruler and try to deter future threats, clients caught participating in a coup attempt are arrested and, often, publicly executed. Others, suspected of supporting the plotters, are removed from their government jobs, detained and interrogated to try to extract information about future schemes. Moreover, some regimes after internal threats collectively punish 'disloyal' ethnic groups by attacking their villages or indiscriminately arresting their members. These policies tend to enrage individuals and groups and provoke resistance.

As the regime violently excludes mistrustful individuals or groups, it restructures its ruling network and may seek to compensate for the loss of one set of ethnoregional intermediaries with the ruler's own ethnic cohorts or another group perceived as more loyal. The consequence of the restructuring of the ruling network, however, is it compromises the regime's information about and leverage over the excluded group at a time when clients-turned-dissidents are seeking to mobilize to regain their lost power and spoils. In addition, restructuring increases the costs for the regime to bargain with the dissidents from the excluded group as their share of the spoils are redistributed among the ruling group and transferred to new clients.

The regime's repression and restructuring of the ruling network, particularly when carried out along ethnic lines, creates space for dissidents to mobilize, while inciting young people and local communities to support and join their nascent rebel organization. If the dissident successfully finds material support from abroad in the form of weapons and sanctuary, it further facilitates its ability to form an insurgency. Facing this violent mobilization, the government lacks the information and local ties to respond effectively. Instead, it once again turns to indiscriminate violence to contain the rebellion, which inflames the violence and triggers a full-scale civil war.

In sum, the policies rulers pursue to stabilize the regime in the aftermath of failed coups and other regime crises significantly increase the likelihood of full scale civil war. The process is summarized in Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2 From Regime Crisis to Full-Scale Civil War

*Failed Coup or Regime Crisis → Political Exclusion + Repression →
Violent Dissident Mobilization → Indiscriminate Violence → Civil War Onset*

Methodology and Summary of Findings

To build and test this argument, I employ a “nested analysis.”¹⁴ Part one quantitatively tests the causal logic on a sample of 40 African countries between independence and 1999. First, I examine the consequences of regime crises and the degree to which they are linked to increases in repression, purges, ethnic exclusion, and indiscriminate violence. I find that regime crises have immediate and enduring effects on government

¹⁴ A nested analysis combines “the statistical analysis of a large sample of cases with the in-depth investigation of one or more of the cases contained within the large sample” (Lieberman 2005, 435-436).

policies. Second, civil war onset is regressed on proxy variables measuring regime crises (failed coup d'états or other government crises), indiscriminate violence, and availability of external support, while controlling for low income, level of democracy, population size, history of civil war, mountainous terrain, and other factors commonly associated with civil war. The multivariate results are consistent with the central argument: civil war onset is significantly more likely in the five years after a regime crisis and when the government resorts to indiscriminate violence to regulate the opposition. Between 1981 and 1999, regimes that experienced a regime crisis in the previous five years and carried out indiscriminate repression in the previous year are almost 15 percent more likely to suffer a civil war onset, *ceteris paribus*.

Part two entails in-depth case studies of Africa's largest country, Sudan, to examine the micro-level effects of regime crises on clientelism and the subsequent consequences for civil war onset. Do the cases provide evidence to suggest that there is a causal effect of regime crises on civil war onset? Is this causal effect primarily due to the regime's restructuring of its clientelist network in order to minimize the risk of coups d'état as theorized or through an alternative set of mechanisms?

The two case studies are based on hundreds of interviews during more than 14-months of fieldwork in Sudan, its neighboring countries, Abuja, Nigeria, Europe, and the United States between 2005 and 2006.¹⁵ In the first case I describe the structure of the government of Sudan's ruling network after the National Islamic Front came to power in a 1989 coup d'état and explain how the extensive structure of its Islamist network helped the government to defeat an expeditionary force sent by the Sudan People's Liberation Army

¹⁵ I am grateful to the National Security Education Program (NSEP) for supporting my field research in Sudan.

(SPLA)¹⁶ into Darfur in 1991. The second case revisits Darfur a decade later. It explains how a regime crisis at the end of 1999 split the Islamic movement into two factions and led President Bashir and those supporting him to restructure the regime's clientelist network, excluding members from the Zaghawa and other non-Arab groups in Darfur. When the Sudanese government faced violent mobilization from Darfur in 2002 and 2003, it found it was unable to effectively contain the rebellion, except through indiscriminate violence.

Plan of Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation proceeds as follows. In Chapter 2, "A Theory of Civil War," I conceptualize the process of civil war as a function of sustained bargaining failure and conflict escalation. I then employ the rationalist theories of bargaining and collective action to derive mechanisms that explain these sub-processes. I conclude by suggesting how bargaining failure and conflict escalation are related and the implications for predicting different conflict outcomes.

Chapter 3, "Political Rule and Civil War Onset in Africa," explains how neopatrimonialism became the institutional foundation of political rule in post-colonial Africa. Neopatrimonialism was an expedient mechanism to maintain political control without expending resources to build up the state, but it also contained inherent deficiencies, which created incentives for political exclusion in the wake of regime crises. I end the chapter by developing a set of hypotheses about how exclusion increases the likelihood of civil war onset.

In Chapter 4, "Regime Crises, Violent Exclusion, and Civil War: Cross-National Evidence," I operationalize the argument developed in chapter 3 to empirically test it on a

¹⁶ The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) is a rebel group, based primarily in southern Sudan, that emerged in 1983, calling for a 'New Sudan' based on secularism, federalism, and democracy.

dataset of 40 sub-Saharan African countries from independence to 1999. Preliminary tests are carried out to tease out the effects of regime crises on coercion and clientelism. Regime crises are shown to increase state repression, purges, exclusion of politically-active ethnic groups and indiscriminate violence. Then the results of a logistic regression are reported which suggest that civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa are more likely in the five years after a regime crisis or failed coup d'état. Indiscriminate violence is also found to have a significant effect on civil war onset.

In Chapters 5 through 7, I turn my attention to the country of Sudan to explore the micro-level dynamics of the central argument. Chapter 5, "Sudan: The Rise of the National Islamic Front," outlines the comparative case methodology, describes the post-colonial political history of Sudan, and examines the rise to power of the National Islamic Front, an Islamic movement which began as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the late 1940s but evolved into an autonomous Sudanese political organization and came into power in 1989 through a coup d'état.

In Chapter 6, "Darfur I (1989-1992): Insurgency Defeated," I describe how the structure of the regime's clientelist network in Darfur in 1991, one of the regions of the country where the NIF was most developed, facilitated the government to crush an insurgency launched from southern Sudan by Fur dissidents and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The extensive clientelist network allowed the government to win the information battle against the rebels, leverage against local mobilization, and apply selective repression.

Over the next decade, however, a power-struggle ensued between the president, Omar al-Bashir, and the secretary general of the National Islamic Front, Hassan al-Turabi. Turabi, recognizing his waning power at the top, called for radical political reforms to weaken the president's hold on power. Fearful of Turabi's plan, Bashir moved against

Turabi and purged his supporters, especially those in Darfur, from the ruling network. Though this divided the Islamic movement and weakened the regime's support in Darfur, it helped Bashir to consolidate his internal control. To compensate for the purge of Turabi supporters, the Bashir group relied more heavily on their ethnic brethren from northern Sudan at the center and Abbala Arabs in Darfur. Consequently, when a new insurgency emerged in 2002, the government found itself having little local information about the rebellion and no leverage over local populations. In an attempt to compensate for its lack of information in Dar Zaghawa, it made the debilitating mistake of relying on a battalion from neighboring, Chad, to try to crush the dissidents. When this exploit failed as the Chadian army passed sensitive information to the SLA in April 2003, allowing it to launch the spectacular attack on El Fasher, Darfur's military and political capital, the government resorted to large-scale ethnic cleansing to slow the rebellion. This entails Chapter 7, "Darfur II (2001-2003): Full-Scale Civil War."

In Chapter 8, "Conclusion," I summarize the dissertation and explain how it advances are understanding of civil war onset in Africa and beyond.

Chapter 2: A Theory of Civil War

Civil war is a violent struggle within a state between the government and one or more armed local groups over the distribution of power, resources, territory, or other goods, in which the violence reaches significant thresholds (at least 1,000 battlefield deaths), with a minimal proportion of it (100 battlefield deaths in the first year) produced by the opposition (Sambanis 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003). Accordingly, civil war onset is the result of two simultaneous and interrelated sub-processes: *bargaining failure* and *escalation*. Bargaining failure occurs when two adversaries are unable to peacefully agree upon the division of power or resources and resort to violence to try to shift the bargaining range in one's favor. As bargaining failure is sustained and neither side is able to force the other to concede, the conflict escalates—leads to greater levels of violence—as the adversaries try to inflict increased costs on the other.

The process of civil war raises several intriguing theoretical puzzles (see Lichbach 2004). The first is the bargaining puzzle. Why do adversaries resort to violence in the first place when there exists an *ex ante* bargaining range that both should prefer to the costs and risks of war (Fearon 1995)? Moreover, why is bargaining failure sustained as mobilization and counter-mobilization provide important information about capacity and resolve that may have been private in initial bargaining rounds (Powell 2006)? Finally, how does bargaining failure translate into the production of high levels of violence? How is the dissident able to organize effective resistance, inflict substantial costs on the state, and avoid defeat at the hands of a much stronger opponent (Lichbach 1995; Weinstein 2006)?

Over the last decade, two coherent research programs have emerged to address these puzzles (see Lichbach 2004). The bargaining theory of war focuses on what conditions prevent the government and opposition from locating a pre-conflict solution. Scholars who employ this theoretical framework have identified private information and commitment problems as the key mechanisms facilitating bargaining failure. The second research program concentrates on the dynamics of insurgency formation. They analyze the opposition's access to different types of resources and ability to exploit these resources to overcome its collective action problem to organize an insurgency.

Rarely has there been any cross-fertilization between the two research programs, however. Studies of bargaining often do not problematize conflict escalation, but assume the generation of greater levels of violence follows automatically from continued rounds of bargaining failure. At the same time, studies of insurgency formation normally overlook the bargaining dynamics and how they may trigger dissident mobilization and the regime's efforts to counter-mobilize.

What is the interaction between bargaining failure and escalation? I assert that frequently the constraints and blinders which prevent the regime from providing the minimal concessions to avoid bargaining failure also hinder the effectiveness of its counter-mobilization, which, due to its indiscriminate nature, tends to facilitate insurgency formation. In other words, the regime suffers information and commitment problems all the way down, which ensure bargaining failure translates into escalating violence. In the rest of this chapter, I review the bargaining and collective action theories of civil war and explain how and why this is the case.

Bargaining Failure

Civil war emerges out of a repeated struggle over the distribution of power and state resources between the *regime*—the ruling group who controls the central government and seeks to ensure its political survival—and the *dissident*—those excluded from the regime who wish to reform or replace it (Lichbach 1995). The dissident demands a greater share of power and state resources, which the regime is reluctant to concede for fear of weakening its political control. To compel the regime to offer concessions, the dissident threatens to mobilize its supporters and inflict costs on the regime which, it claims, will prove more costly to the regime than if it were willing to meet the dissident's demands.

The bargaining theory of war is useful for developing predictions about the outcome of this bargaining game. Because of the high costs of conflict, the theory proposes that a mutually preferable pre-mobilization bargaining range always exists by which the adversaries could agree to divide power and resources (Fearon 1995, 388-389). To reach a bargain *ex ante*, however, requires shared information about each other's capabilities and resolve, and agreement about the potential costs and outcome if conflict were to occur. It also requires that both sides are willing to credibly commit to any bargain made and provide guarantees that they will not renege in the future (Fearon 1995).

These conditions of shared information and irrevocable commitment are difficult to attain because of incentives to cheat to get a better deal. During periods of uncertainty, an actor may attempt to conceal or exaggerate its capabilities in order to secure greater concessions from the other party (Fearon 1995). Because of this tendency, words are cheap; each side doubts the other side's stated capabilities and resolve. As "little new information is ever generated unless actors take direct action," (Ginkel and Smith 1999, 303), mobilization and counter-mobilization become a means to test and learn about the other side's true

capabilities and credibly prove, or signal, one's own commitment and strength. In short, incentives for keeping private information can contribute to conflict initiation.

Yet, even with complete information and an agreement on the location of the bargaining range, the commitment problem still serves as an obstacle to a settlement because of issue indivisibilities (Powell 2006) or the absence of guarantees preventing the weaker side from reneging on the deal in the future if there is a change in the balance of power (Fearon 1995; Walter 2002; Powell 2002). Issue indivisibilities prevent bargaining because the adversaries perceive the disputed good cannot be divided or the adversaries are unable to abide by any commitments which require dividing the good (Powell 2006). Because of this constraint, the costs of trying to violently contain dissident mobilization are estimated to be lower than the concessions necessary to prevent the conflict.

The commitment problem also explains why failed bargaining is sustained even as mobilization and counter-mobilization reveal information that may have been private before the conflict and contributed to the initial bargaining failure. For example, facing a burgeoning insurgency that it recognized it vastly underestimated, a government offers the dissident group concessions that meet the rebels' demands. For the rebels, however, these concessions are not credible as it has no guarantees that the temporarily weak regime will not renege on its promises if the government regains a position of strength (Fearon 2004). Because of this concern, the temporarily stronger insurgents will choose to exploit its advantage rather than seek a settlement (Powell 2004).

In sum, the bargaining theory of war posits that bargaining failure is initiated and sustained because of information and commitment problems. The former leads adversaries to dismiss an opponent's stated capabilities because of incentives to bluff which increases the likelihood of miscalculations and conflict; the latter provides incentives for conflict for fear

of being exploited in the future or because of bargaining constraints due to issue indivisibilities.

Escalation

As sustained bargaining failure gives way to violence, what explains the outcome of the conflict, whether it escalates to full-scale civil war, remains at a low-level, or is completely suppressed by the government? The bargaining theory of war is not as useful for predicting escalation. Escalation is a function of dissident mobilization outpacing regime counter-mobilization (Lichbach, Davenport, and Armstrong 2003, 3).

To explain mobilization, scholars have employed a theory of collective action. As Olson (1965) originally defined the problem, collective action is difficult because of incentives for free-riding to obtain public benefits, a problem especially acute in rebel organizations in which the potential cost of joining is death. To overcome this obstacle, Olson (1965) theorized that groups must distribute selective incentives and provide other private benefits to recruit participants. Crucial to rebel collective action, therefore, has been the dissidents' access to social, economic, and military resources which help it to overcome the costs of distributing selective incentives and employing other measures (e.g., sanctioning, protection) to persuade individuals to risk their lives and join the rebellion (Weinstein 2007).

An important factor in dissident collective action is the role of the government. As the dissident is trying to mobilize resources and overcome its collective action problem, the government is trying to raise the costs for dissidents to organize an insurgency. Governments use a variety of tactics to thwart dissident collective action, such as co-optation, policies of divide-and-rule (e.g., sponsoring rival rebel organizations or political movements), and repression—the use of violent or non-violent coercion (e.g., arrest, death, exile, co-optation) to incarcerate and incapacitate current challengers, while deterring future ones.

Repression is most effective when it is applied selectively—against those who are politically active, while courting or leaving civilians and other non-political actors alone (Mason and Krane 1989). Selective repression serves two functions. First, it arrests the activities and organizing of the key dissident leaders, striking a blow to dissident organization. Second, it creates an incentive structure for quiescence. As Kalyvas (2006, 144) notes, selective repression “personalizes threats; if people are targeted on the basis of their actions, then refraining from such actions guarantees safety.” This should help to deter support for the dissidents.

Selective repression is contingent upon the regime’s access to local information. Fearon and Laitin (2003, 80) assert, “If government forces knew who the rebels were and how to find them, they would be fairly easily destroyed or captured. This is true even in states whose military and police capacities are low.” In the absence of local information, however, governments are unable to make the crucial distinction between active dissidents and those who remain non-political, instead relying on imprecise counterinsurgency operations, which target political and nonpolitical individuals alike (Kalyvas 2006). This undermines quiescence as “nonelites can no longer assure themselves of immunity from repression by simply remaining politically inert” (Mason and Krane 1989, 176). Moreover, it engenders feelings of hatred and resentment, which radicalizes the opposition and increases the risks it is willing to take to challenge the regime (Petersen 2002 cited in Sambanis and Zinn 2004). Consequently, indiscriminate repression may backfire and encourage violent mobilization for self-defense (Goodwin 2001, 48) or provoke vengeance killings. Moreover, indiscriminate violence provides dissident leaders with the opportunity to offer protection to civilians and activists as a selective incentive for joining or supporting the movement (Mason and Krane 1989; Regan and Norton 2005; Kalyvas 2006, 157). In short, whether repression

of dissent is applied selectively or indiscriminately plays a significant role in either arresting or facilitating rebel collective action.

The Nexus between Bargaining Failure and Escalation: Information Problems All the Way Down

How can we integrate the bargaining theory of war and collective action theory? Because information and commitment problems are theorized to affect both bargaining and escalation simultaneously, we can make different predictions about the outcome of the civil war process depending upon the degree to which the regime faces information problems, commitment problems, or both.

In the absence of commitment and information problems, bargaining is predicted to succeed and civil war is unlikely. Regimes should be in a position to quickly learn about local grievances before they generate large-scale dissident activities and be willing to provide the minimal concessions to prevent dissident violence. On the occasion that bargaining breaks down, the regime should be able to effectively suppress dissident mobilization through selective repression and co-optation.

On the other hand, in the presence of both information and commitment problems, the risk of civil war is very high. The commitment problem keeps the regime from making the necessary concessions which would prevent dissident mobilization and predisposes it to employ repression and other coercive means to try to raise the costs of dissident mobilization, but, lacking local information, this repression tends to be indiscriminate and ineffective. Thus, instead of thwarting rebellion, the government facilitates it. Often this indiscriminate violence is the key factor that tips the balance of a conflict from low-level to full-scale civil war. As Goodwin (2001, 26) concludes in his studies of revolutionary movements between 1945 and 1991, “the formation of revolutionary movements in the periphery has been

unintentionally facilitated and even encouraged by...violent and exclusionary authoritarian states...”

It is also possible to have conditions under which information problems are low and commitment problems are high, or vice versa. In the former, we would expect conflict to arise because of the regime’s inability to offer concessions which would prevent mobilization, but the government should be in a position to effectively suppress the insurgency because of its access to local information. With a low commitment problem combined with a more pronounced information problem, we also would expect conflict to arise as the government is unable to properly estimate the risk of conflict, but as violence allows it to update its estimates of conflict, it should nip the mobilization in the bud by offering the dissident concessions to bargain.¹⁷ Table 2.1 illustrates these different predictions.

¹⁷ Though as Powell (2006, 182) argues under these conditions, when there is a “shift in the distribution of power” that “is sufficiently large and rapid,” there is a risk that the temporarily stronger actor (in this case, the insurgents) will not see the regime’s concessions as credible, since it may renege on them once the situation stabilizes. Moreover, the regime’s information problem may cause its initial counter-mobilization tactics to be indiscriminate and ineffective, actually strengthening the rebellion, and ensuring that the dissident does press forward with its gains on the battlefield.

Table 2.1 The Effects of Information and Commitment Problems on Conflict

		Commitment Problem	
		Low	High
Information Problem	High	Low-scale conflict	Civil War
	Low	Bargaining	Suppressed/Averted Insurgency

Summary

Civil war presents a paradox: A government fails to make the necessary policy concessions to avert dissident mobilization, but then finds itself unable to effectively counter the mobilization when it arises. Why does the regime not commit to bargaining if it lacks the capability to suppress insurgency? The bargaining theory of war suggests that this is often a consequence of information and commitment problems. The regime may lack accurate information about the strength of the opposition and its ability to mobilize and thus underestimate the costs of suppressing any dissident mobilization. Or it may recognize the costs of counter-mobilization and pledge to bargain but be unable to abide by any commitments made because of issue indivisibilities, namely the unwillingness to bargain away their political survival. But what are the mechanisms by which bargaining failure leads to conflict escalation? I argue that the same constraints that tie the regime's hands at the bargaining table also tie its hands on the battlefield. The factors that predispose the regime to bargaining failure ensure that it lacks the necessary local information to effectively counter dissident mobilization. Consequently, it is the regime's counterinsurgency campaign that often tips the balance of a conflict from low-level to full-scale civil war.

What empirical factors enhance the regime's information and commitment problems, increasing the risk of bargaining failure and conflict escalation? In the next chapter, I develop an argument that explains the logic of political exclusion in Africa and illustrates how rulers who employ political exclusion as a mechanism to increase the likelihood of political survival often commit themselves to civil war by compromising their own access to local information and willingness to abide to commitments made to the excluded group.

Chapter 3: Political Rule and Civil War Onset in Africa

In post-independence Africa, the basis of political control rested not in the authority of the rational-bureaucratic state or commanding ideologies, such as communism or nationalism, but in the institution of clientelism, a set of informal bargains between the ruler and key societal intermediaries from across the country. The ruler, capitalizing on the state's heavy intervention in the economy, distributed resource rents and other forms of patronage in exchange for political support. This ruling contract between the ruler and societal elites was the key institution linking state and society in Africa and superseded the importance of formal state structures. Despite the centrality of clientelism to political rule in sub-Saharan Africa, rarely has the institution been applied to the study of civil war onset. In this chapter, I aim to fill this void in the literature by theorizing how different structures of clientelism may facilitate or impede information and commitment problems, affecting the likelihood of bargaining failure and/or conflict escalation between regime and dissidents.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, I describe the rise of clientelism as the dominant political institution in the post-colonial period. I then theorize under what conditions rulers construct more inclusive or exclusive clientelist networks and how different clientelist structures affect regime-dissident strategic interactions and the likelihood of bargaining failure and conflict escalation.

Political Rule in Africa

The Colonial Legacy

European colonialism, though only a brief interlude in African history, has had enduring effects on the development of the region's political institutions and state structures. Colonial borders were arbitrarily demarcated by the European powers at the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885 with little knowledge of the cultural, political, or economic conditions that existed in Africa (Collins 1994). As a consequence, an estimated 44 per cent of African borders contained straight lines (Barbour 1961 cited in Englebert, Tarango, and Carter 2002, 1096) and colonies incorporated diverse nations and ethnic groups with little common political history or culture. Using data from Asiwaju (1985), Englebert, Tarango, and Carter (2002, 1096) calculate that "no less than 177 African cultural or ethnic groups are partitioned across borders, representing on average 43% of their country's population."

More devastating than the arbitrariness of borders, however, was the European strategy of governing their colonies. Concerned primarily with extracting and exporting raw materials, the Europeans invested minimal resources into administering their colonies and employed local collaborators and intermediaries, those they identified (often erroneously) as 'traditional' authorities, in an effort to legitimize their rule and facilitate the domination of an indigenous majority with a foreign minority (Robinson 1972; Ranger 1983; Mamdani 1996).¹⁸

The colonial policies created, what Mamdani (1996) called, a "bifurcated state" as indigenous Africans were ruled by a "state-enforced customary order" (Mamdani 1996, 18) and European settlers lived in the modern, bureaucratic sphere. This policy of "apartheid" (Mamdani 1996) had lasting consequences for political authority in post-colonial Africa.

¹⁸ Chabal (1994, 62) succinctly describes the colonial formula as "cost-plus-law-and-order."

First it contributed to the creation of a coercive and centralized, but artificial, bureaucratic state (Young 1994) that was disproportionately concentrated in capital cities (Herbst 2000). Because “the colonial state was imposed from above” (Chabal 1994, 75) and dominated by foreign officers, it lacked indigenous legitimacy and just as importantly well-trained stewards. Upon independence the bureaucratic structures endured, but African citizens and civil servants had not internalized the requisite rational-legal norms¹⁹ and rules nor learned the technical skills essential to run a bureaucracy.

Another colonial legacy was ethnic identities became reified and politicized. By administering their colonies through ethnic intermediaries, known in British colonies as ‘Native Authorities,’ and empowering them with the right to tax, settle internal disputes, distribute loans, and carry out other administrative duties, the colonial administrators created an incentive structure for citizens to identify themselves as part of a tribe or cultural group with a ‘recognized’ Native Authority (Posner 2005). In some cases, this led to the “invention of ethnicities that often bore little correspondence to pre-colonial identities and communities, and were occasionally, as in the case of the ‘Luba’ in the Belgian Congo, entirely novel creations,” (Berman 1998, 321). The politicization of ethnicity under colonialism ensured that political mobilization in the run up to independence frequently occurred along ethnic lines (Horowitz 1985).

Third, it left the state as “the primary arena of class formation and state control the primary means for the accumulation of personal wealth” (Diamond 1988), but failed to institutionalize democratic rules to regulate competition for its control (Young 1994). Not surprisingly, brief experiments in democracy in the first years of independence gave way to political centralization and single-party rule (Collier 1982), though the degree of political

¹⁹ The colonial policy of relegating Africans to a separate sphere dominated by customary authority further impeded learning of bureaucratic norms (Mamdani 1996).

participation and competition would vary across the continent over the next fifty years (Bratton and van de Walle 1997).

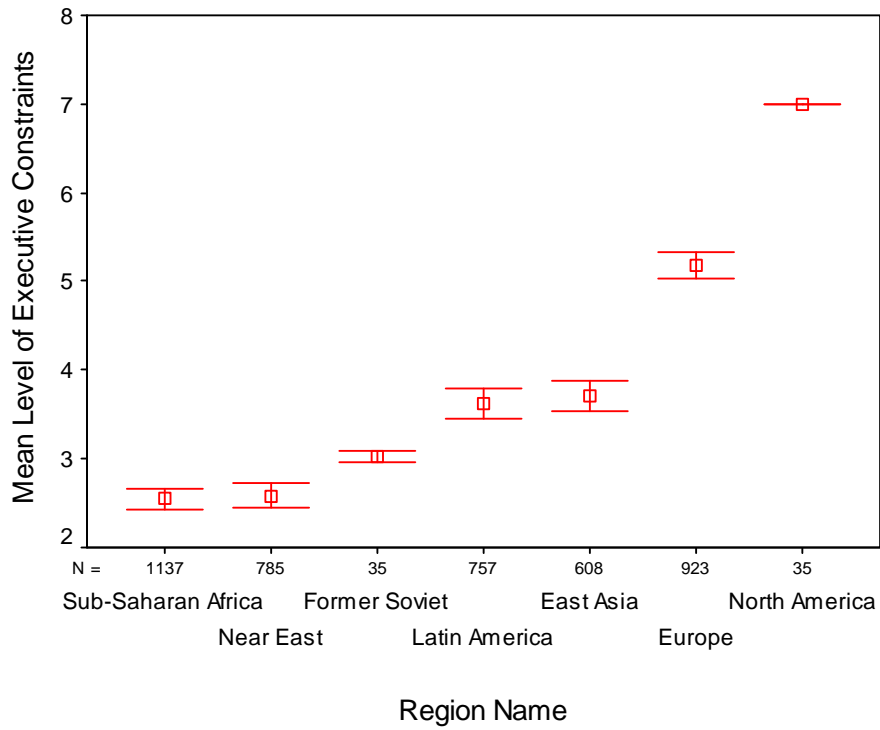
The post-World War II international system provided few incentives for African rulers to move off the centralized and authoritarian path that they inherited from their colonial predecessors (Herbst 2000; Bates 2001). The United Nations guaranteed territorial sovereignty for the newly independent states and the founding charter of the Organization of African Unity decided to retain the colonial borders and pledged non-interference in each other's affairs (Jackson 1992; Herbst 1989). Meanwhile, economic and military aid flowed freely from the cold war superpowers and other foreign donors. Thus, African states became "gatekeeper states" in which their power was derived from sitting "astride the interface between a territory and the rest of the world, collecting and distributing resources that derived from the gate itself: customs revenue and foreign aid; permits to do business in the territory; entry and exit visas; and permission to move currency in and out" (Cooper 2002, 157). The permissive external environment, in sharp contrast to Europe during the Middle Ages (Tilly 1990), and external sources of patronage ensured political survival did not necessitate building efficient bureaucracies to extract taxes and mobilize armies to defend against foreign threats nor require regimes to engage in an implicit bargain with society in which political rights were exchanged for taxation or support in the war effort (Herbst 2000, 126, 131; Bates 2001, 83).

The Institution of Neopatrimonialism

With few existential threats to state survival, the collapse of multi-party politics, a weak civil society, and statist economies, post-independence African rulers developed an incredible degree of discretionary power. Between 1965 and 1989 African leaders, on average, had the fewest executive constraints on their power compared to leaders in other

regions around the world. (See Figure 3.1). In spite of the weakness of institutional constraints, societal pressures, in the form of mobilized and politicized ethnic groups, remained high. The transition to independence had increased ethnic mobilization. As Horowitz (1985, 188-189) writes, “The transfer of power raised the cardinal question of who would rule...In this atmosphere of uncertainty, the greatest group anxiety was to avoid trading an old colonialism for a new one...” The salience of ethnicity persisted beyond this period as it served as the primary organization for individuals “to secure benefits created by the forces of modernization—benefits which are desired but scarce,” (Bates 1983, 152). The politicization of ethnicity and the high stakes for controlling the state (due to the weakness of the private sector and African government’s intervention in the economy) presented a persistent challenge for African rulers: How to establish political control over other societal groups who each sought power themselves.

Figure 3.1 Mean Level of Executive Constraints Across Different Regions of the World, 1955-1989²⁰



²⁰ Executive constraints data is from Polity. The higher the score, the more institutionalized the constraints are on the executive. -66, -77, -88 scores recorded as missing data.

Recognizing that building up the formal state apparatus would be too costly and timely, African rulers relied on the institution of *neopatrimonialism*²¹ to establish political domination over rival ethnic groups. They exploited the state's heavy intervention in the economy and control of resource rents and patronage opportunities to exchange access to state resources for political support (Clapham 1982; Sandbrook 1985; Boone 1992; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Reno 1998). Thus, political rule rested on a set of informal bargains between the ruler and ethnoregional intermediaries from key societal groups from across the country (Roth 1968; Lemarchand 1972; Clapham 1982; Sandbrook 1985; Rothchild 1985; Boone 1992; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Reno 1998).

A classic example is political rule in Cote D'Ivoire under Félix Houphouët-Boigny. Houphouët-Boigny engineered the state to monopolize economic resources and ensure no independent sources of wealth existed (Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 148). He then used this leverage to “demobilize potential ethnoregional challengers by co-opting these local intermediaries into the ruling grand coalition at the center” (Rothchild 1985, 79) and did so in a way that ensured broad ethnic representation. Other African leaders followed suit. Siad Barre after coming to power in a 1969 coup launched a socialist revolution in Somalia, but initially “made cabinet appointments that seemed to tap talent from many clans” (Laitin and Samatar 1987, 91). “In Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroun,” Rothchild (1995, 59)

²¹ Neopatrimonialism is derived from Max Weber's (1978) concept of patrimonialism, a traditional form of political authority in which the ruler “develops an administration and a military force” to “broaden the range of his arbitrary power and put himself in a position to grant grace and favors at the expense of the traditional limitations of patriarchal and gerontocratic structures” (Weber 1978, 231-232). To maintain loyalty of its administration and military force, patrimonial rulers distribute ‘prebends’— “goods or money,” “the appropriation of property income, fees, or taxes,” or other types of ‘benefices’ (Weber 1978). Scholars adopted the term neopatrimonialism to conceptualize post-colonial African states that were bureaucratic in appearance, but in which the distribution of ‘prebends’ was the primary means of securing political control (Eisenstadt 1973; Clapham 1985; Bratton and van de Walle 1997).

concludes, “authoritarian leaders pragmatically included the genuine leaders of the main ethnoregional groupings in an informal bargaining process at the political centre.”

Independence rulers were careful to try to reach out to many key societal groups and cultivate political support from all corners of the country. Moreover, there was an expectation among societal groups that all should have their fair share of the national cake (as illustrated in Achebe 1967). As a member of parliament in Ghana commented in 1969 when the President neglected to appoint a member from his region of the country to a ministerial position: “[O]ne Region out of the nine Regions...is totally out of the Government and I feel that the ninth Region which is not represented in the Government has been reduced to the status of dependent territory” (cited in Rothchild and Foley 1988, 253).

Because of the politicization of ethnicity and the risk of ethnic mobilization, many rulers constructed ruling networks which implicitly followed the principle of *proportional inclusion* (Rothchild 1997), in which ministerial appointments and other types of representation in government or the ruling party generally reflected the country’s ethnic composition. The compositions of cabinets across 35 African countries at independence and in 1972 (the two years for which data are available) reflect the degree to which rulers abided by this principle. For more than half of the countries, the overall ethnic representativeness²² of the cabinets deviate from the ‘expected’ national population distributions by less than 10% (Morrison 1989, 147).²³

²² Morrison et al. (1989, 147, emphasis in original) calculate the cabinet ethnic representativeness coefficient by “measuring the extent to which ethnic proportions in cabinet membership *deviate* from proportions ‘expected’ from the national ethnic population distributions. A high value on this index means the cabinet is unrepresentative of the ethnic composition of the population.”

²³ The mean ethnic representativeness coefficients for the 35 countries at independence and 1972 was 0.237 and 0.208, respectively. The median scores for the two years are considerably lower, 0.08 and 0.085, suggesting several outliers with considerably unrepresentative cabinets (notably Liberia and Chad) are skewing the results.

The institution of proportional inclusion served two key purposes. First, it was an expedient means by which rulers could allow a large number of groups access to the center (Eisenstadt 1978) and create “political order in the face of social and cultural heterogeneity,” (Roth 1968, 204). Thus, it provided the glue by which the young, multi-ethnic countries could avoid disintegration. In describing political rule in Kenya and Tanzania, Goran Hyden (1994, 84) asserts that the “communitarian model of politics in Kenya and Tanzania promotes a...[logic] that stresses inclusion rather than exclusion on the assumption that inability to represent all communities is a sign of weakness.” Second, it opened channels for exchange between state and society (Rothchild 1984), aiding the regime to penetrate the periphery and extract local information and exert external control in the absence of a strong formal bureaucracy. Ethnoregional intermediaries played a crucial role linking the regime and society as they served simultaneously as a representative of the local community and member of the ruling elite with access to state resources (Lemarchand 1972; Rothchild 1984).

The ruling contract between the president and ethnic or regional intermediaries manifest itself in the form of a radial network of patron-client ties with the ruler “occupying a central hub” that was linked to the elites and their constituencies “via patronage spokes” (Snyder 1998, 53). It was the “[p]atronage networks structured like pyramids, linked to state agents and the state apparatus at the top, [which] developed as the flexible, informal political institutions that structured the processes of co-optation and political subordination” (Boone 1992, 17-18).

The patronage networks, reflecting the structure of the ruling contract, often contributed to the redistribution of state resources, sometimes to marginalized areas. Relying on sub-national data on Zambia, Nigeria, and Kenya, Rothchild (1984, 167) concludes “what many observers fail to appreciate is the extent to which state elites have in fact made use of the principles of proportionality (i.e., the distribution of state resources among ethnoregional

units on the basis of their relative numbers) and extraproportionality (i.e., the redistribution of state resources among the ethnoregions in such a way as to benefit the relatively disadvantaged).”

Clientelist networks also served as an important channel for rulers to access local information about the periphery. Because of the weakness of the state and its disproportionate concentration in the capital, it was the patronage network through which rulers learned about grievances among key societal groups. Some rulers would hold meetings directly with local agents to learn of conditions in the periphery. For example, Houphouet Boigny “convened in Abidjan a kind of ‘Estates General’ attended by as many as 2,000 local leaders, who gather to give praise, air grievances, and receive the assurances and instructions of the ruler” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 150).

In sum, in the post-independence period African states were authoritarian and centralized with power heavily concentrated in the president. Facing diverse societies that lacked a common political culture coupled with the weakness of formal bureaucracies, the new rulers relied on clientelist networks to consolidate their hold on power. Despite pernicious effects on African economic development (Sandbrook 1985; van de Walle 2001), clientelism allowed regimes to cultivate allies from across the country and penetrate the periphery.

The Threat of the Coup D'état

On November 17, 1958, Sudan became the first post-colonial government to experience a coup d'état²⁴ when a weak and divided parliamentary government conceded power to the army. Soon the coup d'état would become ubiquitous in Africa. In post-

²⁴ When referring to a coup d'état, I adopt the definition from the American Heritage Dictionary: “the sudden overthrow of a government by a usually small group of persons in or previously in positions of authority.” Accessed at <http://www.bartleby.com/61/46/C0694600.html>.

colonial Africa “[c]oups had become the functional equivalent of elections, virtually the sole manner of ousting incumbent political leaders” (Decalo 1990, 2). Between 1956 and 1985 there were 60 successful coups and 71 failed ones (McGowan and Johnson 1986). The specter of the coup d’état haunted African leaders. Even Houphouët-Boigny, who ruled over one of the most stable countries during the 1960s and 1970s, admitted, “I am like the crocodile. I sleep with one eye open” (quoted in Meredith 2005, 287).

The rise of the coup d’état had profound effects on African leaders and their political strategies. First, it shortened their time horizons. Rulers became concerned less with long-term economic growth, political stability, or national integration than with staying in power over the next week or month. This reinforced clientelism as rulers allocated state resources based on a political logic rather than an economic one (Bates 1981; van de Walle 2001). Second, rulers valued political loyalty in the army and other key security positions over military professionalism and autonomy (Howe 2001). Third, as will be discussed in the next two sections, the threat of the coup d’état increased the costs and risks of proportional inclusion.

Clientelism and the Principal-Agent (PA) Problem

Clientelism presented African rulers with a flexible and economical institution to extend political control over diverse societal groups in spite of the weakness of the formal state apparatus. One of the inherent weaknesses of clientelism, however, is it is based on a multiplicity of principal-agent relationships.²⁵ The ruler (the principal) hires clients (the agents) to work for the government or otherwise to support the regime and its political survival. The central challenge for the principal is to ensure that the agent is faithfully

²⁵ For a general discussion of the principal-agent problem, see Sappington (1991) and Laffont and Martimort (2001).

carrying out the duty for which it was hired. This is difficult for the ruler because of private information and the costs of monitoring all of the agents. “The problem is that in any principal-agent relationship,” Surowiecki (2004) summarizes, “one person knows more than the other, so that the principal is at the agent’s mercy. This arrangement can lead to what economists generously refer to as opportunistic behavior.”

In the case of African rulers, “opportunistic behavior” by their clients, especially in the military, can be lethal. The client may publicly pledge its loyalty to the regime and to fight on the ruler’s behalf, but the ruler is never certain if the client is merely feigning commitment in order to obtain access to state resources and one day try to seize power outright or otherwise shirking from its responsibility to help the regime stay in power. Consequently, the ruler always fears that some clients or groups may be double-dealing and exploiting their access to power and resources for their own ends rather than for the benefit of the regime.

African leaders pursued several strategies to minimize the principal-agent problem. One was the frequent turnover of cabinet ministers to ensure none lasted long enough to organize resistance from inside. Two of Africa’s longest serving leaders, Mobutu Sese Seko, the president of Zaire between 1965 and 1997, and Hastings Banda, president of Malawi from 1964 to 1994, created “atmosphere[s] of perpetual musical chairs” (Dickie and Rake 1973, 259 cited in Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 164) they so frequently reshuffled ministers in and out of the government. Chad’s inaugural president, Francois Tombalbaye, a Sara²⁶ from southern Chad, also regularly replaced ministers to prevent non-Sara politicians from becoming too powerful (Decalo 1980, 499). Jean-Bedel Bokassa, Central African Republic’s

²⁶ The Sara is the plurality ethnic group in Chad comprising roughly 30 percent of the country’s population at independence.

president from 1966 to 1979, shuffled ministers with “monotonous regularity, as often as six times a year, to ensure they did not become a threat” (Meredith 2005, 225).

Some spied on their own ministers to make certain they were not carrying out duplicitous activities. Hassen Habre, Chad’s president between 1982 and 1990, had personal intelligence services follow the activities of Idriss Deby and Hassan Djamous, two cabinet ministers from a rival ethnic group who Habre suspected of organizing the supply of weapons to anti-regime forces (Burr and Collins 1999, 241).

Others used more severe measures, including the threat of arrest, torture or execution to deter clients from shirking from their commitment to the regime. After an alleged coup attempt in 1978 and the execution of thirteen military officers, Mobutu went on television to announce, “I solemnly declare that from now on, I will be without pity against all attempts of that kind. In the past executive mercy has been mistaken for weakness. But now whoever tries again to use the sword will perish by the sword” (Kabwit 1979, 396 cited in Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 1980). Haile Mariam Mengistu, the leader of in Ethiopia, followed a similar policy. As Meredith (2005, 245) describes:

At a meeting of the Derg at the Grand Palace on 3 February 1977, Mengistu and his supporters suddenly left the room, leaving behind seven members he considered his enemies. Mengistu’s bodyguards stormed into the room with machine guns and forced them down to the basement. Mengistu joined them there and joined in the executions. He was now in undisputed control.

Where ethnicity was politicized and rulers viewed political supporters and enemies through an ethnic lens, this was reflected in the composition of the ruling network. In Chad in the first five years after independence in the northern Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (B.E.T.) region, Tombalbaye appointed few local administrators, but instead relied on members of his own ethnic group from southern Chad who had limited familiarity with the people or the region. As France gradually withdrew its military presence in this area, Tombalbaye replaced them with six companies recruited mainly from southern Chad (Burr and Collins 1999, 33).

After Siad Barre's socialist coup d'état in 1969, he pledged to eliminate the role of ethnicity in politics. But coming from the small Mareehaan clan, he was fearful of the Majeertan clan, which had dominated the Somalia government prior to Barre's 1969 coup; publicly Barre "made allusions to his enemies among the Majeerteens" and "[i]n 1971, in response to an apparent coup attempt, he identified the rebels as members of three opposition clans" (Laitin and Samatar 1987, 91). Over time Barre "began to surround himself with more people from his clan, from the clan of his mother, and from the clan of his son-in-law...[and] found himself in the center of a Mareehaan-Ogaadeen-Dulbahante clan-based coalition (known as MOD)" (Laitin and Samatar 1987, 92).²⁷

Leaders were most concerned about loyalty in the military, which is the key actor that often determines the success or failure of a coup attempt. Many built "armies according to an ethnic security map" (Enloe 1980; Young 1994 in Widner 1994, 241), recruiting from one's ethnic group or home area to try to increase allegiance. For example, though Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's first president, maintained a relatively inclusive cabinet and government (Rothchild 1997, 70), he ensured that the army and police were dominated by the Kikuyu, his own ethnic group, while Luo were removed from sensitive security positions, particularly after the split in the ruling party in 1969 (Ng'weno 1969 cited in Horowitz 1985, 533). Idi Amin, former president of Uganda from 1971 to 1979, undertook more extreme measures. After overthrowing Milton Obote in January 1971, Amin began to violently root out members of the Ugandan army from the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups, who Amin perceived as loyal to Obote. As Decalo (1990, 165-166) describes:

Extermination squads composed largely of Nilotic and Sudanic personnel systematically purged each army camp of suspected Obote loyalist officers and soldiers. Langi and Acholi officers were

²⁷ Laitin and Samatar (1987, 94) also emphasize that the MOD alliance was not Barre's sole basis of political support and that a substantial number of military officers from non-MOD clans remained in high-ranking positions, though, of course, the most sensitive positions around Mogadishu in the mid-1980s were defended by armed brigades led by Barre's close relatives.

sequestered and individually murdered both before and after the attempted 1972 pro-Obote invasion from Tanzania... The immense gaps in the army's hierarchy and rank and file caused by the liquidation of Langi and Acholi members opened the door for massive recruitment and promotion of personnel personally loyal to Amin from Uganda's Nubians, Southern Sudanese, Nilotics, and Zairien refugees... Since less than one-third of the original army remained intact, in a sense the entire army—Amin's major power prop, though he had constant difficulties in controlling it—was rebuilt from the ground up as a force committed to the hegemony of one region, the far north, and loyal to one individual, Amin.

Where the army itself was too difficult to restructure, leaders created parallel security services to rival the army, such as Kwame Nkrumah's President's Own Guard Regiment (POGR) in Ghana, Siaka Stevens's Special Security Division in Sierra Leone, Mobutu Sese Seko's Division Speciale Presidentielle, Sani Abacha's Special Bodyguard Service in Nigeria, and Juvenal Habyarimana's Presidential Guard in Rwanda (Howe 2001, 44). These parallel services were often granted preferential treatment relative to the army and police and frequently were deployed domestically to eradicate and neutralize perceived political threats.

Internal Threats Accentuate Concerns about the Principal-Agent Problem

While all African rulers faced the principal-agent problem, assassination attempts, failed coups, or even just coup rumors heighten their fears that there are disloyal individuals or groups who have an inside track to state power and remain a security risk. Fearful of losing power, the ruler feels he cannot afford to have disloyal agents with access to power or state resources and other critical clients wavering in their support. During a subsequent coup attempt, these disloyal or otherwise dithering clients may tilt the balance against the ruler and lead to his demise. Given this fear, in the wake of failed coups and other regime crises, rulers are particularly concerned about minimizing the principal-agent problem and trying to guarantee the loyalty of the clients around him.

The quickest way to try to resolve the PA problem after a regime crisis is political exclusion. Thus, the ruler arrests or kills those implicated in organizing and executing the original threat, while other perceived disloyal agents are purged from the government or

ruling network. Often the exclusion is carried out in a brutal fashion as a means to swiftly eradicate disloyal agents from the regime, but also to effectively communicate to other plotters the consequences of challenging the regime. This can set in motion a “vicious cycle of tyranny” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 246) as occurred in Equatorial Guinea after a coup attempt in 1969.²⁸

Where ethnicity is politicized and the initial regime threat came from individuals from outside the ruler’s ethnic group, rulers have a tendency to generalize the threat to the broader ethnic group and target ethnic cohorts of the plotters, even if there is no evidence of their involvement. For example, in Burundi in 1965 after a coup attempt by a group of Hutu army and gendarmerie officers, the ruling Tutsi elite retaliated with a vengeance against Hutus inside and outside the government. As Lemarchand (1994, 71) describes,

The mutineers took a huge gamble and lost—but the losses involved far more than the extermination of thousands of Hutu after the aborted coup. Also lost was an opportunity for the Hutu leadership to share in the exercise of power. After the extensive purges of the army and gendarmerie and the physical elimination of every Hutu leader of any standing, power became the exclusive monopoly of Tutsi elements.

Burundi came close to what Horowitz (1985) describes as “ethnocracy.” The problem is this type of exclusion perpetuates itself. Exclusive political rule leads to greater levels of repression which exacerbates societal mistrust and raises groups’ desire to control the state themselves. This reinforces the regime’s exclusive policies for fear of losing power and facing the vengeance of any group that was once the victim of the regime’s brutal policies.

In sum, the principal-agent problem made it difficult for some African leaders to remain committed to the institution of proportional inclusion. The politicization of ethnicity and the difficulty of monitoring and guaranteeing clients’ commitment to regime survival led

²⁸ “The crucial event in Equatorial Guinea which set in motion what we have called the vicious cycle of tyranny was the violent overreaction of [Francisco Macías Nguema] and his followers to the 1969 coup attempt. ...[after the coup] he embarked upon a round of arbitrary beatings, arrests, brutality, torture, and killing that extended well beyond the plotters, which led to heightened fear and apprehension, to which Macias responded by additional killing and brutality” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982a, 246).

some rulers, such as those in Djibouti, Burundi, Rwanda, Mauritania, Sudan, Chad, Somalia, Liberia, South Africa, to error on the side of systematic exclusion rather than inclusion.

The Cost of Clientelism

In addition to the principal-agent problem another key constraint to clientelism is its costliness. Neopatrimonialism is a type of political authority based on a logic of private goods. The regime solicits political support by privately and selectively distributing state resources in the form of cash, tax breaks, subsidies, special licensing contracts, positions of political power, etc. Neopatrimonial rulers, like other authoritarian regimes, eschew public goods because they are costly and the regime is unable to control who benefits from them, which could lead to the rise of rival strongmen and threaten the rulers' privileged political position (Reno 1998; Migdal 1988).

Public and private goods differ primarily with regards to how their benefits can be consumed. Public goods are both non-rival, "each individual's consumption of such a good leads to no subtraction from any other individual's consumption of that good," (Samuelson 1954, 387), and non-exclusive, all can benefit from the good (Olson 1965). Public goods, such as national defense, clean air, and free education, are intended for broad consumption. Private goods, on the other hand, are exclusive and rivalrous. Their benefits are selective and intended for individual consumption; for example, subsidies to specific industries, private schools, and affirmative action policies.

Because patronage is a private good, the more clients who have access to state resources, the fewer spoils for each person in the coalition. Thus, there is always an incentive to exclude groups and create a minimum winning coalition in an attempt to increase the spoils for those remaining in the network. Fearon (1999) posits that this incentive explains why rulers tend to construct ruling coalitions and networks along ethnic lines.

Because ethnicity is an ascriptive characteristic that cannot be easily changed, it should serve as a barrier to limit the size of the ruling coalition and ensure a high-level of spoils for those already inside.

During times of fiscal crises, the incentive to exclude is particularly acute as rulers prefer to selectively cut out groups it perceives as vulnerable rather than lower patronage across the board to minimize the risk of a coordinated uprising against the regime. Moreover, exclusion gives the regime an opportunity to expropriate wealth from the excluded group and redirect patronage to the remaining groups in the network to try to bolster its hold on power. Exclusion also allows the ruler to use the excluded group as a scapegoat and its threat of mobilization to increase support for the regime.

Summary: The Logic of Exclusion

Because of the costs and the principal-agent problem inherent to clientelism, an incentive structure existed for political exclusion in Africa: the smaller the ruling network, the more internally secure the regime should be as it increases spoils and lowers monitoring and screening costs. Consequently, in the face of persistent threats to its political survival, some African leaders abandoned a policy of proportional inclusion for political exclusion. The key consequence of this policy switch, as to be explained in the next section, is it enhanced the regime's information and commitment problems, and increased the likelihood of civil war onset.

Political Exclusion, Bargaining Failure, and Conflict Escalation

Political exclusion—the purging, barring and limiting of individuals and groups from the ruling network—is a mechanism African rulers have employed to overcome two inherent

deficiencies of clientelism that they perceive undermine internal regime security: the principal-agent problem and its costliness. Exclusion, itself, however, is a risky endeavor. In some cases it may actually lead to a coup d'état, especially among individuals or groups who are organized and have a secure foothold in the army. As elites detect they are being excluded or marginalized, they may launch a coup to try to seize power themselves in order to protect their political and economic interests. For example, some scholars suggest Idi Amin launched his coup d'état when he learned that Obote was going to dismiss him as chief of staff of the army. Similarly, Horowitz (1985) suggests that the downfall of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, in 1966 was brought about in part by Ewe army officers who were upset by Nkrumah's political exclusion of their ethnic brethren (from 1961 there were no Ewe in the cabinet, despite comprising 13 percent of the population).

But for those rulers who are able to consolidate political exclusion, the regime achieves greater internal regime cohesion, at least temporarily, while pushing challengers further from the center. As Horowitz (1985, 499) concludes, "Once an ethnocratic regime is in power, opposition is not likely to make its will felt through further coups." The consequences of trying to achieve internal security through exclusion are it enhances the commitment and information problems that facilitate bargaining failure and escalation, and ultimately lead to civil war. In this section, building on the argument developed in chapter two, I will explain why this is so.

Sustained Bargaining Failure

Due to the weakness of the state in Africa, the primary linkage between state and society and the key channel for information exchange is based upon the regime's clientelist network. The more representative the clientelist network and the more diverse the local intermediaries, the more frequent should be the interactions between the regime and societal

elements. These interactions allow the regime to learn key societal demands and grievances, collect information on potential dissidents, and discover conflict trigger points. Equipped with this information, the regime should be in a better position to understand the minimal concessions necessary to avert conflict.

Political exclusion, however, severely narrows the ruling network. With fewer ethno-regional intermediaries in the network from excluded groups, the regime has less sway over their members and is able to extract less local information. Control often rests on clients from outside the community to serve as local intermediaries, which can cause friction and further alienate the groups. For example, according to Decalo (1980, 499) the southerners brought in by Tombalbaye to rule the northern Muslim groups in Chad right after independence sparked violence “as they illegally extorted from the population up to three times the taxes due, pocketing the difference themselves.” In Burundi in 1988 the central government’s refusal to remove two local Tutsi firebrands in the communities of Marangara and Ntega despite the protests of the local Hutus ignited ethnic violence that would kill tens of thousands and displace hundreds of thousands (Lemarchand 1994, 124-127).

Senegal is also illuminating in this regard. With the Casamance region of southern Senegal separated from the north by the country of Gambia and populated by ethnic groups with a less hierarchical societal structure, the central government in Dakar built a less extensive network in Casamance relative to the northern part of the country, despite the region having great potential for agricultural production. Moreover, it relied more on northern intermediaries and direct agents from Dakar more than local Casamançais to rule the region (Boone 2003). “One consequence of this strategy for the regime,” Boone (2003, 124) explains, “was real limits on the efficacy of government: the state was too aloof, too distant, and too lacking in local grounding to communicate with the rural population.” This caused

Dakar to underestimate the degree of local hostility to the government's expropriation of land in the early 1980s.

Not only does exclusion limit the regime's access to private information about societal grievances and dissident activities, it often receives bad information. As it restructures its ruling network, the ruler often replaces clients from groups it feel it cannot trust with their local rivals who pledge loyalty to the regime. This often encourages sycophancy—the local intermediaries say what the regime wants to hear to secure more benefits from the state. But it also provides an incentive where these local clients may exaggerate the threat posed by the excluded group in order to incite the government to attack and weaken their rivals.

Proposition 1: Exclusive regimes should be less likely to make minimal political concessions that prevent conflict initiation.

Though exclusive regimes lack accurate local information to prevent a burgeoning conflict from growing into a larger conflagration, as the conflict escalates they should quickly update their calculations of the threat posed by dissident mobilization and the cost of suppressing it. Even as it becomes obvious that the rebellion will be extremely costly to suppress, exclusion produces other constraints which make it difficult for the regime to commit to bargaining. One constraint on the regime is that while political exclusion has disadvantaged some groups, it has increased the spoils for other key allies of the regime. This makes it costly for the regime to make concessions to the insurgents if it dilutes the power and spoils of those who benefited from exclusion in the first place and who are in a position to unseat the ruler through a coup d'état.

This is the situation that played out in Burundi in the early 1990s. Political liberalization paved the way for competitive elections and the election of a Hutu president for

the first time in the country's history. But Tutsi spoilers in the army could not accept this new political arrangement and the implications for control of state resources and launched a coup d'état to try to preserve their privileged status. In short, once rulers start down the exclusive path it is difficult for them to reverse course without antagonizing those close to power and risking an internal challenger.

Another constraint on bargaining is that exclusion undermines the credibility of the regime and any concessions it offers to the dissidents. Regimes with more extensive networks should have fewer commitment problems because the existence of an extensive patronage network sends a signal that the regime has already committed to sharing resources and therefore promises of side payments to avoid unrest should be credible. In contrast, regimes with more exclusive networks lack the foundation for the distribution of resources. Offers of concessions may be viewed as one time payments.

Proposition 2: Exclusion increases spoils for key regime allies, making it costly to undo if it jeopardizes their privileged political or economic position.

The regime is not the only actor with a credibility problem, however. One of the underlying reasons for exclusion is the regime's mistrust of members from the excluded group and fears of granting them access to state resources or power, which they may exploit to seize political control outright. Thus, when dissidents from the excluded group violently mobilize, this validates the regime's mistrust of the group and concerns about incorporating them in the regime, even if it estimates it will be costly to contain the rebellion. Here the commitment problem trumps the increased information the regime acquires from mobilization and counter-mobilization.

Proposition 3: Violent mobilization reinforces a regime's mistrust of the excluded group and increases the costs it is willing to incur to contain the rebellion.

Escalation

Exclusion facilitates bargaining failure. Rulers lack private information about the real threat posed by the dissident mobilization, while often receiving bad information from biased intermediaries. Moreover, the violent mobilization by members from the excluded group confirms the regime's perception that this group cannot be trusted and is unwilling to make major concessions that would end the violence. But why isn't the regime able to suppress the rebellion? Why does the conflict escalate to civil war? The same exclusive network that sabotages bargaining also ties the regime's hands on the battlefield. Unwilling to bargain, the ruler resorts to state violence to try to contain dissident mobilization, but poor information ensures this only inflames the conflict.

A key consequence of political exclusion is the regime usually forfeits its non-violent control of members of the excluded group. Instead, it has to rely on repression and strategies of divide-and-rule. It jails dissident leaders, confiscates their property and land, and seeks to exploit divisions within the group to thwart mobilization. Moreover, it provides incentives for rival groups to exploit the excluded group, while turning a blind eye, or worse, abetting, communal violence. When this repression is indiscriminate this can often backfire since it tends to be indiscriminate, which has little deterrent value, but instead fuels security dilemmas and encourages self-defense organizations and other forms of violence.

For example, Mobutu's regime in 1981 declared to bar the Banyamulenge, an ethnic group in eastern Zaire originally from Rwanda, as citizens. When the Rwandan crisis spilled over into eastern Zaire after the 1994 genocide, the Mobutu government allowed the former Rwandan army to attack the Banyamulenge. Facing ethnic cleansing at the hands of the former government of Rwanda backed by the Zaire army, the Banyamulenge fought back and

their self-defense forces became the nucleus of the insurgency that would overthrow Mobutu (Reed 1998, 146-147).

Proposition 4: Regimes more frequently apply violent repression against excluded groups.

Violent repression often forces dissidents to shift from non-violent mobilization to violent mobilization. If non-violent protest proves to be (or is perceived to be) futile because it merely provokes government repression without any subsequent change in the regime's willingness to bargain, then the opposition has to decide whether to suspend political activities or to alter its tactics (Lichbach 1987), such as employing violence to try to inflict even greater costs on the government. This was the situation that faced the opposition in Uganda in 1980 following Milton Obote's controversial election victory. Accusing Obote of using fraudulent and coercive means to win the election, the opposition contemplated a non-violent mass uprising to force Obote to step down, but feared his "armed forces, the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), would scarcely hesitate to mow down any mass demonstration in the streets of Kampala" (Ngoga 1998, 94). Faced with this reality, the opposition led by Yoweri Museveni began to explore alternative tactics, including guerilla warfare.

Proposition 5: Repression causes dissidents to shift to violent mobilization.

The dissident's ability to organize violently and form an insurgency, however, does not rest solely on the barriers to non-violent activities, but also on its ability to overcome the costs of violence. If the costs of violence are low or are decreasing, then there is a greater likelihood of an initiation of or a shift to violent mobilization. On the other hand, if the government is able to simultaneously maintain high costs of both violent and non-violent mobilization, then the ruling regime should be able to induce political quiescence.

There are two conditions that are often decisive in facilitating dissident mobilization to become an insurgency: continued indiscriminate violence by the government and access to foreign sanctuary and support.

As mentioned in chapter two, not only does the lack of information undermine the government's ability to address grievances by making the minimal concessions to thwart mobilization, it also hinders the government's ability to respond effectively to armed incursions. It lacks information on the whereabouts of the rebels and their strength, leading to indiscriminate violence. This type of repression helps the dissident to recruit soldiers and mobilize support. Small groups of soldiers quickly grow into armies in the thousands. As one leading member of the NRA said in an interview to Pascal Ngoga, 'the main recruiting officer for NRA was Obote himself.' In response to the NRA's initial success, the security apparatus of the Obote regime engaged as a matter of routine in looting, rape and arresting young people suspected sympathy with the NRA, both in the war zone and more generally in the south and west of Uganda. Many young people joined the NRA as an alternative to government repression" (Ngoga 1998, 98). Similarly in Liberia in 1989, the central government's ethnic cleansing against Gio and Mano in response to a violent incursion across the border from Guinea made it easy for the rebels to recruit local support. As Charles Taylor told Bill Berkeley (2001, 49), "As the NPFL came in...We didn't even have to act. People came to us and said, 'Give me a gun. How can I kill the man who killed my mother?'"

Proposition 6: Exclusive regimes are more likely to apply indiscriminate violence in the face of violent mobilization, which facilitates insurgency formation.

Excluded from access to state resources and facing violent repression, dissidents in exclusive regimes seek to organize an insurgency to simultaneously inflict costs on the regime and protect its members from arrest or death. Because of their exclusion from ruling

networks at home, these dissidents hit the regional circuit looking for foreign patrons willing to back their endeavor to launch an insurgency back in their home state. Regional powers have played an indispensable role in supporting insurgents succeed in their home countries.

Proposition 7: Excluded groups which are able to receive external support or sanctuary are more likely to form a credible insurgency.

Summary

This chapter builds an argument to explain what empirical circumstances enhance information and commitment problems and increase the likelihood of civil war onset. I contend that bargaining failure and escalation are often a consequence of political exclusion, in which rulers, concerned about internal threats to their hold on power, restructure their ruling networks to keep mistrusted groups at arm's length, while seeking to fortify internal regime control. This policy reduces the regime's willingness to bargain with the excluded groups and increases its reliance on violent coercion to regulate them. Lacking access to local information, however, ensures that repression tends to be indiscriminate, which accelerates rather than deters violent mobilization and facilitates insurgent formation. As the insurgency quickly outpaces counterinsurgency, the regime relies on greater levels of indiscriminate violence and seeks to tribalize the conflict to stall it. In the next chapter, I test this argument cross-nationally in sub-Saharan Africa, while controlling for rival alternative hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Regime Crises, Violent Exclusion, and Civil War Onset in Africa: Cross-National Evidence

Chapter three described the emergence and consolidation of clientelism as the predominant institution of political rule in post-colonial Africa. It also argued that the structure of a regime's clientelist network—the degree to which it is more inclusive (co-opting ethnoregional intermediaries from all key societal groups) or exclusive (intentionally excluding or limiting the participation of some)—has significant mediating effects on regime-dissident interactions and decisive consequences on the likelihood of bargaining failure and escalation. In this chapter, I seek to test the argument.

Lacking an adequate measure of clientelist structures, however, I set out to test one of the central observable implications of the argument: The principal-agent problem inherent to clientelism²⁹ creates incentives for rulers to narrow their ruling networks and increase political exclusion in the aftermath of failed coups and other regime crises. A more exclusive network reduces the ruler's costs to screen and monitor clients in an effort to fortify internal regime control and try to minimize the risk from future coups d'état. The tradeoff of political exclusion, however, is the ruler compromises his access to local information and non-violent leverage over excluded groups, while reducing his willingness and ability to bargain with former clients who are now dissidents. In other words, failed coups and other regime crises should trigger violent exclusion which significantly increases the risk of civil war onset.

²⁹ The key PA problem for African rulers is that they hire clients to work on their behalf but information asymmetries prevent them from being absolutely certain of their clients' commitment to regime survival and constantly fear the clients may exploit their access to power and resources to seize power on their own or otherwise undermine regime survival.

To test this claim, I examine the bivariate effects of regime crises on state repression, purges, exclusion of politically-active ethnic groups, future coup attempts, the rate of successful coups, and civil war onset. I also disaggregate these effects over time in order to identify any temporal patterns. Beyond basic bivariate graphs, I use a logit analysis to regress civil war onset on several measures of regime crises, while incorporating a number of control variables in the model. I also test the hypothesis that indiscriminate violence is often a key consequence of regime crises and a trigger of conflict escalation and civil war.

Dependent Variable: Civil War Onset

Civil war is defined as a violent struggle within a state between the regime and one or more armed local dissidents over the distribution of power, resources, territory, or other goods, in which the violence reaches significant thresholds (at least 1,000 battlefield deaths), with a minimal proportion of it (100 battlefield deaths in the first year) produced by the dissidents (Sambanis 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003). To measure civil war onset in the 40 sub-Saharan African countries covered in this analysis, I employ the scores from Fearon and Laitin's (2003) study of civil war. Fearon and Laitin (2003) count 34 incidences of civil war onset in sub-Saharan Africa between 1956 and 1999. A brief description of the key actors and the dates of these 34 civil wars are included in Appendix II.

To ensure the results of the multivariate analysis are not specific to Fearon and Laitin's counting of civil wars, I also employ a second measure of civil war onset from Sambanis (2004). Sambanis (2004) counts 49 incidences. The discrepancy between the two datasets is quite large. One of the key differences is nine of the civil wars that Sambanis

counts as new onsets,³⁰ Fearon and Laitin consider as continuation of older wars or as a single war. For the full lists of civil war onsets, see Appendix II.

Determinants of Civil War Onset

As explained in chapter two, civil war is theorized to be driven by two key sub-processes: *(sustained) bargaining failure*—in which two adversaries fail to find a mutually preferable peaceful bargain and resort to violence (Fearon 1995)—and *escalation*—as this violence becomes more organized and dissident mobilization initially outpaces regime counter-mobilization (Lichbach, Davenport, and Armstrong 2003). Bargaining failure and escalation are often a consequence of a single set of underlying mechanisms—information and commitment problems—that constrain the regime from appropriately estimating and effectively responding to violent mobilization. In this section I generate testable hypotheses about how different political institutions, economic factors, and other conditions facilitate or inhibit these underlying mechanisms and affect the likelihood of civil war onset.

Structure of the Ruling Network

With the weakness of the formal state apparatus in sub-Saharan African countries, the dominant institution linking the ruling regime and society is the clientelist network. The central hypothesis developed in chapter three is that the structure of the regime's ruling network, whether more extensive (i.e., incorporating intermediaries from all key societal groups) or more narrow (intentionally excluding some groups), has decisive consequences on the likelihood of civil war.

³⁰ The onsets that Sambanis consider new civil wars but Fearon and Laitin consider the continuation of old wars are Angola 1997; Chad 1980; Liberia 1992; Rwanda 1994; Sierra Leone 1997; Uganda 1995; Ethiopia 1974-1976.

A regime with an inclusive and extensive ruling network should have a greater number of interactions with societal actors, better penetration of societal groups, and therefore improved access to vital information about local grievances and potential threats. Equipped with this information and considerable leverage over societal actors, the ruler should be in a position to provide the minimal concessions necessary to avert dissident mobilization and, if it were to arise, effectively contain it through selective repression and non-violent co-optation. On the other hand, a narrow or exclusive network reduces the regime's access to local information and leverage over potential dissidents, increasing its reliance on repression, which, given its information problems, tends to be indiscriminate and facilitates dissident collective action.

H0: An exclusive ruling network increases the likelihood of civil war onset.

Measuring the structure of the ruling network is difficult, however. An ideal indicator would capture the degree to which the regime incorporates members from all of the key societal groups into its ruling network as cabinet members, state governors, commissioners, security and army officers, other state employees, and party officials or systematically excludes members from certain groups from these positions. One way to capture the inclusiveness of the regime is to measure the ethnic representativeness of the cabinet as done for the year of independence and 1972 in chapter three. Unfortunately, there is no coverage of the remaining years and constructing this data would require a major research collection effort. Moreover, looking only at the cabinet, a high profile body but sometimes with minimal influence in countries in which a "shadow state" operates (Reno 1995), may over-predict the degree of inclusiveness as rulers are conscious of the norm of proportionality and may fill their cabinets with a few token members from all groups, even

though some of these groups are systematically excluded from the regime and have little sway over regime decision-making.

An alternative is to examine how the regime disburses state resources nationally and sub-nationally by mapping out the location of roads, schools, and hospitals and then analyzing how they overlap with the geographic concentration of certain ethnic groups with the rationale that the greater state investment in any particularly area the denser the patronage networks. Again, however, a dearth of data makes this impractical. Time-series cross-national data does not even exist on the transfer of state resources by the central government to local and state governments, which would reveal important information about a government's willingness to distribute state resources to society writ large.

With no data at this time to construct a measure of the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of African regimes, I seek to operationalize other observable implications of the central argument and test their effect on the likelihood of civil war onset. In Chapters six and seven, using ethnographic evidence collected from Darfur, Sudan in 2005 and 2006, I examine how the structure of the ruling network affects regime-dissident interactions and the likelihood of civil war during two time periods in Darfur, 1989-1992 and 2001-2003.

Failed Coups and Other Regime Crises

Though the structure of the ruling network cannot be directly measured, I instrument political exclusion with a failed coup, breakdown in the ruling coalition, or other regime crisis. These events have profound effects on the structure of the ruling network. First, the ruler becomes aware of his tenuous political position and learns a segment of those close to power are not committed to his survival. Fearful of future threats, the ruler is obsessed with ensuring the loyalty of those around him and becomes particularly sensitive to inherent vulnerabilities of clientelism, namely the principal-agent problem and its costliness. One

method to minimize the inherent weaknesses of clientelism is political exclusion, or a narrowing of the ruling network. Exclusion reduces the monitoring and screening costs required to verify the loyalty of critical clients, while boosting the spoils available to each key client, which increases their pay-off and incentive to side with the incumbent during subsequent coup attempts or challenges.

Exclusion is a mechanism rulers employ to consolidate internal regime control during a period of uncertainty, but it often has devastating consequences for external regime control and provokes dissent. The policy increases the number of individuals who are opposed to the regime, providing a pool of recruits for dissident leaders. Second, the restructuring of the regime's patronage network, particularly when it excludes all or a significant part of a key societal group, forfeits the regime's leverage over and local information about the excluded group. Third, the regime has to increase its use of divide-and-rule and repression to regulate the dissidents and their supporters, which provides incentives for the dissident to switch to violent mobilization to try to inflict costs on the regime. If the dissident is able to organize violent mobilization, the regime lacks the ability to effectively suppress the nascent rebellion and often resorts to indiscriminate violence, which initially inflames the conflict. In sum, an internal threat to the regime's political survival prompts a series of policies that are aimed to minimize the regime's principal-agent problem and consolidate internal control, but often at the consequence of leading the country down the path to civil war.

H1: A failed coup d'état or other credible threat to the regime's hold on power increases the likelihood of civil war over the next five years.

An alternative mechanism is that regime crises send a signal to dissidents that the regime is weak, which prompts the dissident to immediately launch violent mobilization in order to exploit this window of opportunity. If this is the case, we would expect regime crises and civil war onset to occur simultaneously.

H2: Failed coups d'état or other regime crises should occur concurrently with civil wars.

To operationalize hypotheses 1 and 2, I create lagged and non-lagged variables of three different measures. The first is a dichotomous variable, based on data from McGowan (2003),³¹ that reflects whether there has been one or more failed coup attempts in the current year (FCOUP) or one or more failed coup attempts in the previous five years (LFCOUP). The second is a dichotomous variable based on the 'government crises' variable in Arthur S. Banks' Cross-National Time-Series Data (2000). The 'government crises' variable is conceptually distinct from coups d'état and civil wars (the Banks dataset has separate variables to code these events) and indicates, "Any rapidly developing situation that threatens to bring the downfall of the present regime - excluding situations of revolt aimed at such overthrow."³² GCRISIS indicates whether there has been one or more 'government crises' in the current year; LGCRISIS indicates one or more 'government crises' in the past five years. The third variable combines the failed coup and government crises data to indicate whether there has been one or more credible threats to the regime's hold on power from a coup attempt or other government crisis in the current year (FCOUPCRISIS) or previous five years (LFCOUPCRISIS).

Successful Coups

What would the effect of a successful coup d'état be on civil war onset? In contrast to a failed coup or other government crisis, a successful coup d'état leads to the overthrow of the incumbent regime. As it is unlikely the coup will lead to a complete turnover of members

³¹ McGowan (2003, 343) defines a failed coup "as those which involved either (i) displacements [of the government] lasting less than seven days, or (ii) attempted assassinations and arrests of some members of the existing regime, or (iii) the mobilisation of the military, police, or security forces explicitly aimed at a government take-over."

³² The Cross-National Time-Series Data codebook is available at http://www.databanks.sitehosting.net/www/var_alpha_frame.htm

of the old regime, the new ruler now controls a government with officials who may remain loyal to the old ruler and feel this represents a threat. Some rulers, such as Idi Amin, used violent exclusion in order to extirpate those perceived as loyal to the old regime. This should increase the risk of civil war.

At the same time, however, many coup leaders also come to power pledging to redress the pernicious policies of the previous regime and take the opportunity to rewrite the ruling contract bringing in groups who have been excluded and otherwise redistributing state resources. This restructuring of the ruling network may actually help to increase the regime's penetration of certain societal groups and reduce the likelihood of civil war. Thus, the effect of successful coups d'état may not be as straightforward as failed coups.

H3: A successful coup d'état in the previous five years affects the likelihood of civil war.

H4: A successful coup d'état should occur concurrently with civil wars.

The successful coup variables are also dichotomous, coded 1 if there has been one or more successful coups (based on McGowan [2003]) in the previous five years or one or more coups in the current year.

Indiscriminate Repression

In the aftermath of a regime crisis, as the ruler narrows his ruling network to bolster internal regime discipline, he frequently increases his use of coercion to compensate for forfeiting non-violent control over certain groups and individuals. The perpetrators of the original threat and their conspirators are arrested and executed, while those viewed as potential future plotters are detained, forced into exile, or otherwise neutralized. In some cases the ruler extends its repressive policies to the ethnic cohorts of the leaders of the original threat as a form of collective punishment and to weaken them in anticipation that the former clients, now cut out from state resources and privileges, will try to fight their way

back to power. When this state violence is indiscriminate (i.e., fails to distinguish between political and non-political actors) it disrupts the incentive structure for civilians to remain quiescent. Facing the possibility of death despite their inactivity, civilians and other actors feel they have little choice but to support armed dissidents who promise to protect them (Goodwin 2001). If these armed groups do not exist, civilians may create their own self-defense forces.

Those regimes that relied on indiscriminate repression as a means to collectively punish groups it identified as disloyal have little choice but to continue to employ indiscriminate violence in the face of violent dissident mobilization. The regime's narrow network and poor societal penetration limit its access to local information about the strength and organization of the mobilization and undermine its ability to effectively suppress the rebellion (Kalyvas 2006). In short, indiscriminate violence is hypothesized to increase the likelihood of civil war onset by both provoking the formation of self-defense forces and violent mobilization and then triggering the escalation of the conflict from low-level violence to full-scale civil war.

H5: Indiscriminate violence in the previous year(s) significantly increases the likelihood of civil war onset.

Indiscriminate repression is a new variable created by the author. It reflects annual incidences when the government or its proxies use violent coercion against civilians and other actors who are not engaging in political activities. It is a dichotomous variable (one or more incidences of indiscriminate repression for the year is coded a 1, while no evidence of incidences of indiscriminate repression is coded a 0) based on annual reports from Amnesty International and United States Department of State Human

Rights Practices Report. It covers 39 sub-Saharan African countries between 1980 and 1999.³³

Foreign Support

While the government's use of indiscriminate violence is hypothesized to play a key role in provoking violent mobilization, a key reason it does not *overwhelm* the dissident's collective activities (i.e., government violence kills and displaces so many civilians while destroying the capacity of the rebels to defend any of the population that there is little resistance left) is the dissident's access to sanctuaries in neighboring countries. These sanctuaries are indispensable in providing dissidents with a secure territory to organize their rebellion and access finance and weapons, either from the host state itself or at least a protected channel to bring in necessary supplies. Because of the strong norm in Africa against direct foreign intervention in each other's states, African leaders have exploited non-state proxies as a means to exert pressure on their neighbors (Clapham 1996).

H6: Rebel access to foreign sanctuary and support increases the risk of civil war.

An ideal indicator of foreign support would be the willingness of regional or neighboring states to provide sanctuary or material support to rebels in a given country. An objective measure of this indicator does not exist at this time, however. Instead I use a proxy variable which measures for each African country the number of regional states with a major armed conflict.³⁴ The logic is the more regional states with armed conflict, the greater the likelihood that foreign policy between neighbors will become entangled in these conflicts and rebels will find opportunities for sanctuary and support.

³³ A National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant helped to fund research assistants to code the dataset on indiscriminate repression.

³⁴ Source: Monty Marshall <http://members.aol.com/cspm/mgm/>

Determinants of Civil War: Controls

Having introduced the hypotheses about how internal threats, political exclusion, repression, and foreign support increase the likelihood of civil war onset, often as part of a single process, it is important in the multivariate tests to control for plausible rival hypotheses. In this section I introduce several alternative factors and explain their causal logic before testing them statistically.

GDP Per Capita and Natural Resources

One of the most robust findings in the civil war literature is that low-levels of economic development significantly increase the risk of civil war (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2001, 2002; Elbadawi and Sambanis 2000; Hegre and Sambanis 2006). Low income is theorized to make countries more susceptible to civil war as it reduces the opportunity cost for citizens to take up weapons (Collier and Hoeffler 2001) and reduces the capacity of the state to respond to violent political challengers (Fearon and Laitin 2003). As Fearon and Laitin (2003, 80) write, “We believe that the strong results for per capita income reported below are due largely to its acting as a proxy for state military and police strength relative to potential insurgents” (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 80). The data on GDP per capita comes from Fearon and Laitin’s dataset (2003).

H7: Low income increases the likelihood of civil war.

Another potential economic factor is African governments’ dependence on primary commodity exports. Initially, natural resource dependence was hypothesized to increase the likelihood of civil war as diamonds, timber, and other natural resources were viewed as providing dissidents with a critical source of financing to start up their rebellions (Collier and Hoeffler 2002). Subsequent studies, however, questioned the validity of this mechanism. In

a review of 13 most-likely cases of civil war onset due to natural resource dependence, Ross (2004) finds that in fact natural resources played no role in financing the initial insurgency, but did seem to help the insurgents sustain their rebellion after the war had already begun.

In subsequent work Collier and Hoeffler (2005) suggest that resource dependence is still relevant in the way it fosters the development of authoritarian regimes based on the distribution of patronage rather than democratic forms of governance. Similarly, Leonard and Straus (2003) argue that African countries based on enclave production—“the export of primary products (usually extractive) that are generated in a small area” (Leonard and Straus 2003, 12)—are more susceptible to civil conflict because rulers have few incentives to generate broad-based economic growth and political rule tends to be personalized and corrupt. Additional empirical studies (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Fearon 2005), however, have questioned whether there is any significant relationship between civil war and primary commodity dependence, except for among oil exporters.

H8a: Primary commodity dependence increases the likelihood of civil war.

H8b: Oil exporters are at greater risk of civil war.

To measure commodity dependence, I use the variable from the World Bank of primary commodity exports as proportion of GDP. The variable on oil exporters is from Fearon (2005).

Political Instability

In addition to coups and regime crises another form of political instability is the degree to which there are major institutional changes in the authority structures of the country, either in a more democratic or authoritarian direction. These institutional changes have been shown to increase the risk of civil war as they affect the expectations of the

opposition, either raising or dashing their hopes for greater levels of liberalization, and triggering political mobilization (Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates, and Gleditsch 2001).

H9: Political instability over the previous three years increases the likelihood of civil war onset.

Political instability is measured by a 3-point change in the Polity score over the past three years.

New State

A control included in many civil war analyses is an indicator for a new state (whether a country is in the first two years of its existence). It is hypothesized that new states are more conflict prone as political institutions have not been fully developed and competition is fierce for controlling the inaugural government and avoid being dominated by other groups (Horowitz 1985, 189).

H10: The risk of civil war is higher in new states.

Democracy

A measure of regime type is often included in studies of civil war. Democracies are often associated with a decreased risk of civil war onset as they have institutions which facilitate regime-dissident bargaining (Gurr 1993), provide incentives for non-violent political activities (Lichbach 1987) and overall tend to be less repressive than non-democracies (Davenport 2004). On the other hand, anocracies (neither fully consolidated democracies or autocracies) have been found to be at greater risk of civil war as their institutions “are partly open yet somewhat repressive, a combination that invites protest, rebellion, and other forms of civil violence” (Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates, and Gleditsch 2001, 33).

H11: Democracy decreases the risk of civil war onset.

H12: Anocracy increases the risk of civil war onset.

Population and Country Size

Other important controls reflect demographic characteristics. A consistent finding in the civil war literature is that more populous countries are at greater risk of civil war onset because of larger pools of potential recruits and increased costs for the regime to monitor them all. Hegre and Sambanis (2006) find the log of population to be one of the most robust variables in the civil war literature.

H13a: Population size increases the likelihood of civil war onset.

Herbst (2000) suggests the opposite might be at play in Africa. He argues “that the fundamental problem confronting leaders of almost all African states: how to broadcast power over sparsely settled lands” (Herbst 2000, 3). Following this hypothesis, we would expect civil war to be more likely in larger countries with low population densities.

H13b: Population density decreases the risk of civil war onset.

H13c: Country size increases the risk of civil war onset.

Ethnic diversity

There is also reason to believe that it is not the population size but its societal composition that affects the likelihood of civil war. Initially Africa’s ethnic diversity was commonly thought to be a key cause of civil war onset. But subsequent studies by Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000), Collier and Hoeffler (2002), and Fearon and Laitin (2003) have found no statistically significant link between ethnic diversity (reflecting the number of ethnic divisions and the relative size of the ethnic groups) and civil war onset. In fact, Collier and Hoeffler (2002) find some evidence that ethnic diversity reduces the likelihood of civil war

onset, possibly because it raises the costs to collective action for the rebels. The measure of ethnic fractionalization is from Fearon (2003).

H14: Ethnic diversity affects the likelihood of civil war onset.

Terrain

A final variable to control for is the terrain of a country. More mountainous countries are hypothesized to provide favorable environments for the technology of insurgency (Fearon and Laitin 2003) and increase the risk of civil war. I employ Fearon and Laitin's (2003) measure of the proportion of a country that is mountainous.

H15: Mountainous terrain increases the risk of civil war.

Empirical Analysis

In this section I test the hypotheses generated above. Before describing the results of the multivariate analysis, I graphically illustrate the bivariate effect of current and past regime crises on government policies of coercion and exclusion, subsequent coup attempts and coup success rates, and civil war onset.

The Effect of Regime Crises on Repression, Purges, and Political Exclusion

One of the central claims to be tested is that African regimes are more at risk for civil war onset in the years after a near fatal challenge to the ruler's hold on power via a coup attempt or other regime crisis. In the aftermath of these crises, rulers, fearful of future threats and obsessed about potential disloyal agents inside the government, work to narrow their ruling networks to try to minimize principal-agent problems and increase spoils for the army and other crucial elites in a bid to insulate the regime from future coups d'état. One observable implication of this hypothesis is that in the year of and years after a failed coup or

other regime crisis, we would expect an increase in repression, purges, and political exclusion.

Figures 4.1a and 4.1b illustrate the effect of previous regime crises (operationalized as the LFCOUPCRISIS variable defined above) on state repression (measured by the Political Terror Scale).³⁵ Figure 4.1a shows that in sub-Saharan Africa between 1980 and 1999 there is a significant increase in the mean level of state repression in the five years after a regime crisis compared to country-years not preceded by regime crises. Figure 4.1b provides a more fine-grained look at the data by disaggregating various time periods before and after the regime crisis to control for the fact that repression might be causing the regime crises in the first place and to examine how long the repression endures after the initial crisis. t_0 represents country-years in which there have been no crises in the current year or in the preceding five years; $t-1$ represents the year immediately preceding a regime crisis; t is the year of the crisis; $t+1$ through $t+5$ are the number of years since the crisis, respectively.³⁶ To control for the fact that regime crises cluster together and sometimes occur in successive years, making it difficult to isolate which regime crisis is affecting government behavior (the current crisis or the one in a previous year), the solid bars indicate all country-years for the given period, irrespective of whether there were simultaneous new and lagged regime crises

³⁵ Political Terror Scale (measured based on State Department reports) measures the level of state repression in a given country year with 1 indicating low levels of repression and 5 indicating extreme human rights abuses. For a description of scores 1 through 5, see

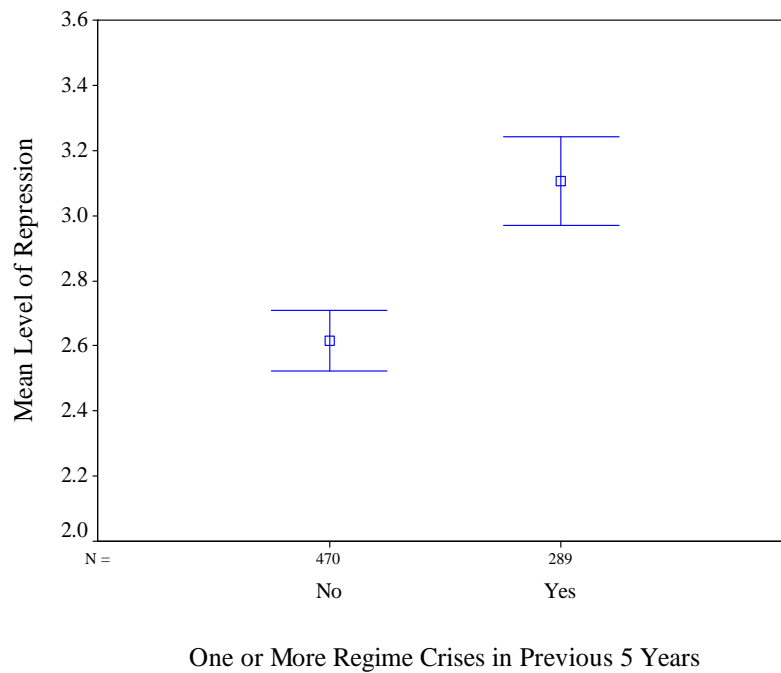
http://www.humansecurityreport.info/background/Cornett-Gibney_Political_Terror_Scale_1980-2001.pdf

³⁶ For example, if a country experiences a regime crisis in 1990, but none in any other year between independence and 1999, it is easy to isolate the effect of the regime crisis. Period t_0 would be all years for that country in which there was not a regime crisis in the current year or the five following years (thus the years 1990 through 1995 would be excluded from period t_0). $t-1$ would be the year before the regime crisis (1989). t would be the year of the crisis (1990), while $t+1$ through $t+5$ would be the years 1991 through 1995, respectively.

coded in a given year, while the striped bars exclude incidences of simultaneous new and lagged regime crises during a given period.³⁷

Figure 4.1b illustrates that regime crises do increase the mean level of state repression and that this effect endures two years after the original crisis (even if there are no new crises) and then starts to decline.³⁸ Even five years after the original regime crisis, the level of repression is higher than before the crisis. Incidences of overlapping lagged and current regime crises magnify a state’s level of repression.

Figure 4.1a: Previous Regime Crises and State Repression, 1980-1999³⁹

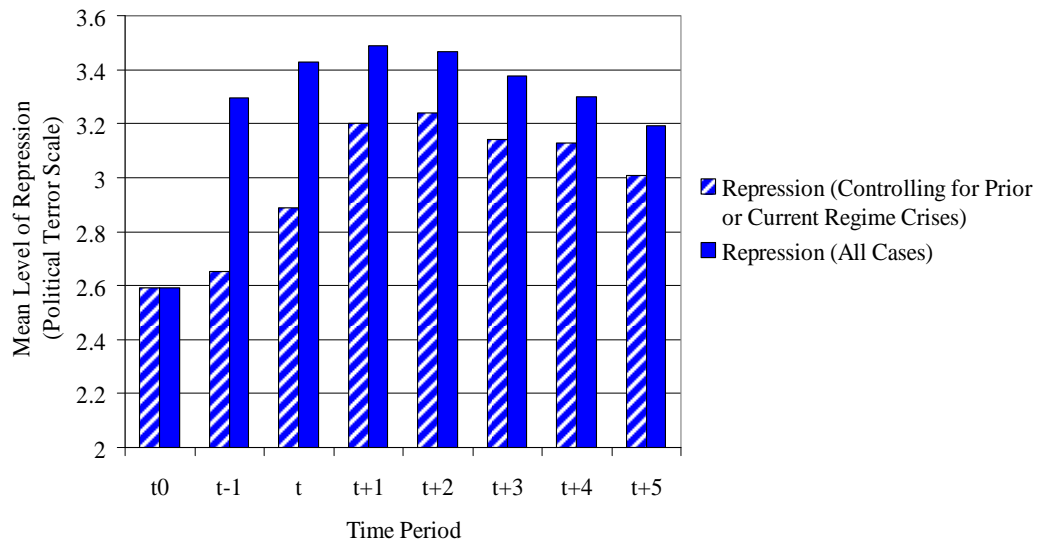


³⁷ For example, if a country experiences a regime crisis in 1990 and 1991, then for the country-year, 1990, we would score that as an incidence of a regime crisis at period t and also score it as a year before a regime crisis (t-1). The country-year 1991 would then be cases of both t and t+1 and so forth. In 1991 this makes it difficult to tell whether the level of repression is caused by the 1990 crisis or the crisis in the current year, or both. The solid bars reflect both incidences, while the striped bar excludes these double-counts to try to isolate current and legacy effects of regime crises in isolation and without the confounding effects of new or past crises. Thus, data for the striped bar excludes incidences at periods, t-1 and t, in which there has been a regime crisis in the previous years, while it excludes incidences at t+1 through t+5 in which a new regime crisis occurs for that year.

³⁸ A nearly identical pattern results if Freedom House’s civil liberties data (covering 1972-1999) is used instead of the Political Terror Scale.

³⁹ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 4.1b: Regime Crises and State Repression Disaggregated by Time Periods, 1980-1999



Figures 4.2a and 4.2b examine the association between regime crises and purges, in which purges are defined as “any systematic elimination by jailing or execution of political opposition within the ranks of the regime or the opposition” (Banks 2000).⁴⁰ Figure 4.2a shows that the mean level of government purges increase significantly in the five years succeeding a regime crisis compared to years in which there are no recent or current crises. Figure 4.2b illustrates the effect across the time periods, t0 through t+5 and controls for simultaneous effects (i.e., overlapping lagged and current regime crises). In contrast to state repression, the greatest increase in government purges occurs the year of the regime crisis and steadily declines to levels below immediately before the failed coup or other internal threat. The data also suggests that the year before regime crises (t-1), there is a higher mean level of purges compared to the control time period (t0), suggesting purges may also be provoking coup attempts and other internal challengers.

⁴⁰ Data on purges is from Banks (2000).

Figure 4.2a: Previous Regime Crises and Government Purges, Independence-1999⁴¹

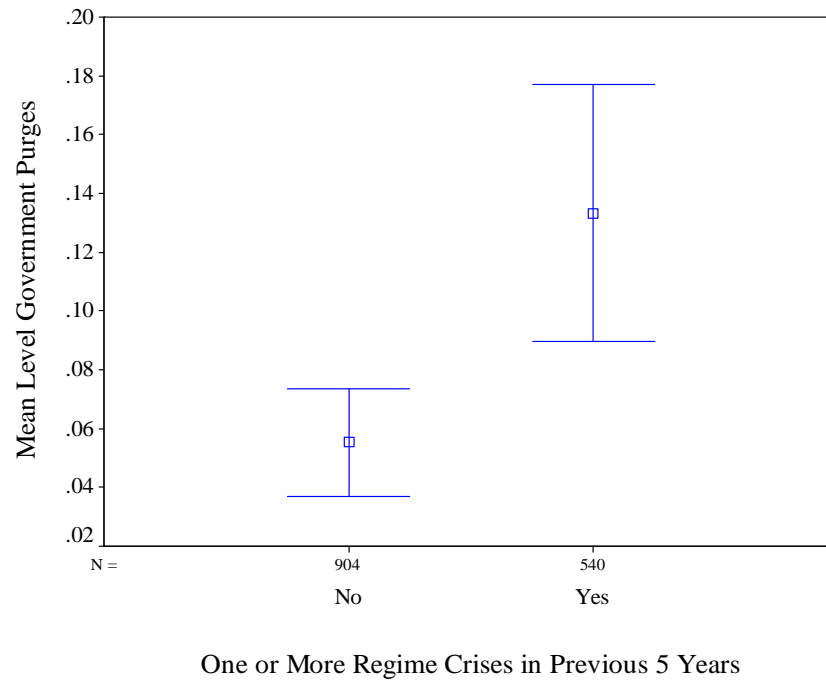
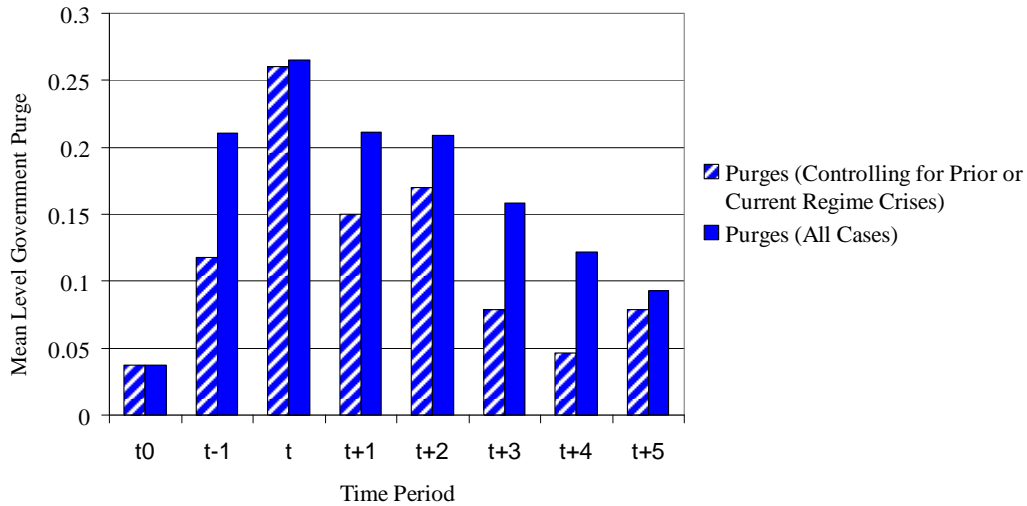


Figure 4.2b: Regime Crises and Government Purges Disaggregated by Time Periods, Independence-1999

⁴¹ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.



It is hypothesized that regime crises not only lead to an increase in general levels of repression and purges, but also, in those countries in which ethnicity is politicized, to political exclusion along ethnic lines. To measure ethnic exclusion I use data from the Minorities at Risk (MAR) dataset.⁴² In MAR, the most relevant variable (POLDIS) measures the level of official state discrimination against any politically-active communal groups. I am concerned with the highest levels of political discrimination (a score of 4 on POLDIS), in which “[p]ublic policies (formal exclusion or recurring repression or both) substantially restrict the group's political participation in comparison with other groups” (MAR Project 2005). Using this data, I create a dichotomous variable (EXCLUDE) which reflects whether one or more MAR groups face high levels of political discrimination for the given year.

Figures 4.3a and 4.3b examine the effect regime crises have on the mean level of discrimination of MAR groups. (Those countries that do not have any MAR groups⁴³ are

⁴² MAR is a database maintained by the Center for International Development and Conflict Management at the University of Maryland that “monitors and analyzes the status and conflicts of politically-active communal groups in all countries with a current population of at least 500,000.”⁴²

⁴³ There are nine countries in my dataset (Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, and Mozambique) which do not have any politically-active communal groups and are excluded from the MAR dataset.

excluded from the analysis). As illustrated in Figure 4.3a, one or more regime crises in the previous five years has a significant increase on the mean level of formal exclusion of one or more MAR groups compared to regimes that do not face such crises. Figure 4.3b illustrates the effect of regime crises on ethnic exclusion during the different time periods and controlling for simultaneous effects. Similar to the purges data, it appears that ethnic exclusion is also contributing to regime crises in the first place (mean exclusion at t-1 is higher than t0). In contrast to repression and purges, however, the maximal effect of regime crises on discrimination and repression of politically-active ethnic groups is felt in the fifth year after a regime crisis. This justifies the importance of examining the lagged effect of regime crises beyond one or two years and suggests an interactive effect between regimes and politically-active ethnic groups. Regimes may begin to violate their commitment to proportional inclusion and begin to favor members of their ethnic group at the expense of one or two groups, which prompts a coup d'état or other internal challenge. In the wake of this crisis, regimes rely more heavily on exclusion against other groups perceived as disloyal. Over time the excluded groups begin to mobilize, which prompts the regime to increase its repressive activities against the group.

Figure 4.3a: Previous Regime Crises and Exclusion of Politically-Active Ethnic Groups Disaggregated by Time Periods, Independence-1999⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

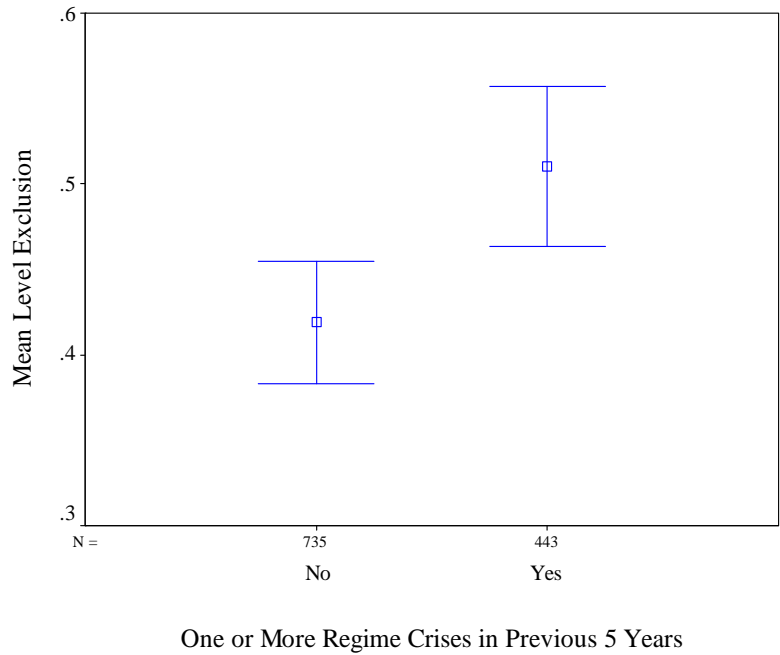
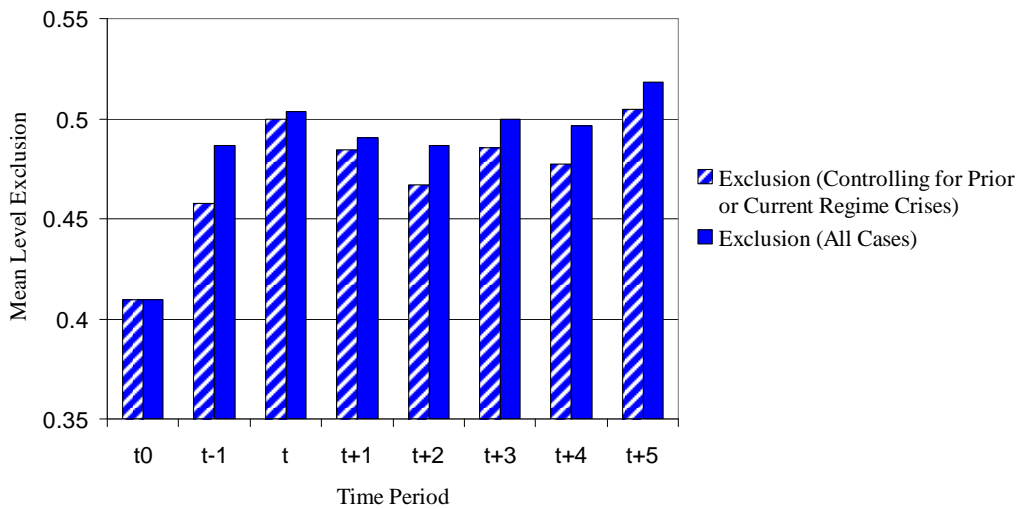


Figure 4.3b: Previous Regime Crises and Exclusion of Politically-Active Ethnic Groups, Independence-1999



In sum, Figures 4.1 through 4.3 illustrate the effects regime crises have on government coercion. Consistent with the argument developed in chapter three, it suggests after regime crises African governments carry out purges, increase repression, and exclude politically-active communal groups.

The Effect of Regime Crises on Future Coups and Civil Wars

What are the consequences of increased repression, purges, and exclusion in the wake of regime crises? Do they increase the risk of civil war onset as hypothesized? Do they buffer the regime against future coups d'état as the ruler hopes?

Figure 4.4a illustrates that regime crises (measured as the LFCOUPCRISIS variable defined above) do initiate subsequent challenges against the central government. One or more regime crises in the previous five years increases the mean number of total coup attempts (either failed or successful coups) in the current year by 75%. Most of the subsequent coup attempts occur in the first year after the initial regime crisis. (See Figure 4.4b). What is interesting is that there is no real change in the coup success rate after the initial regime crises, in fact it decreases on average by 10 per cent over the next five years (though this change is not statistically significant), as shown in Figure 4.5a. Figure 4.5b indicates the drop in the coup rate is most dramatic in the first year after a regime crisis, suggesting that purges, increased repression, and exclusion do provide a degree of insulation from losing power even as these policies incite more political challenges.

Figure 4.4a: Previous Regime Crises and Total Coup Attempts (Successful and Failed Coup Attempts), Independence-1999⁴⁵

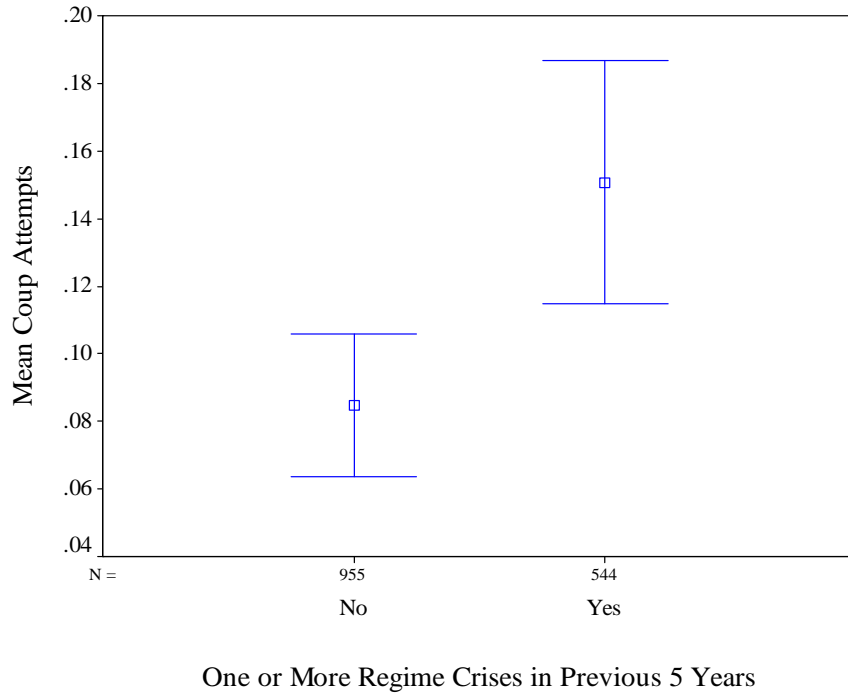
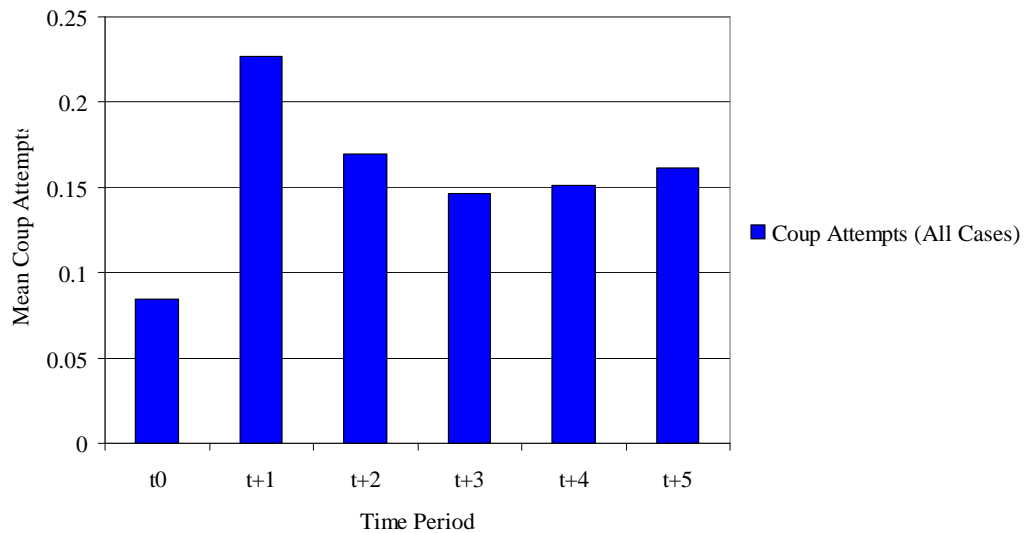


Figure 4.4b: Previous Regime Crises and Total Coup Attempts Disaggregated by Time Periods, Independence-1999



⁴⁵ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 4.5a: Previous Regime Crises and Coup Rate (Successful Coups/Total Coups), Independence-1999⁴⁶

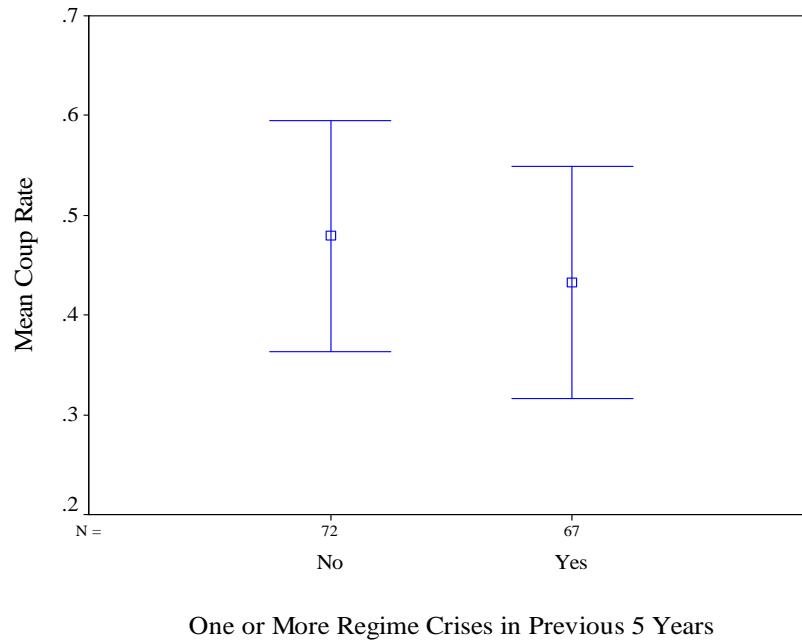
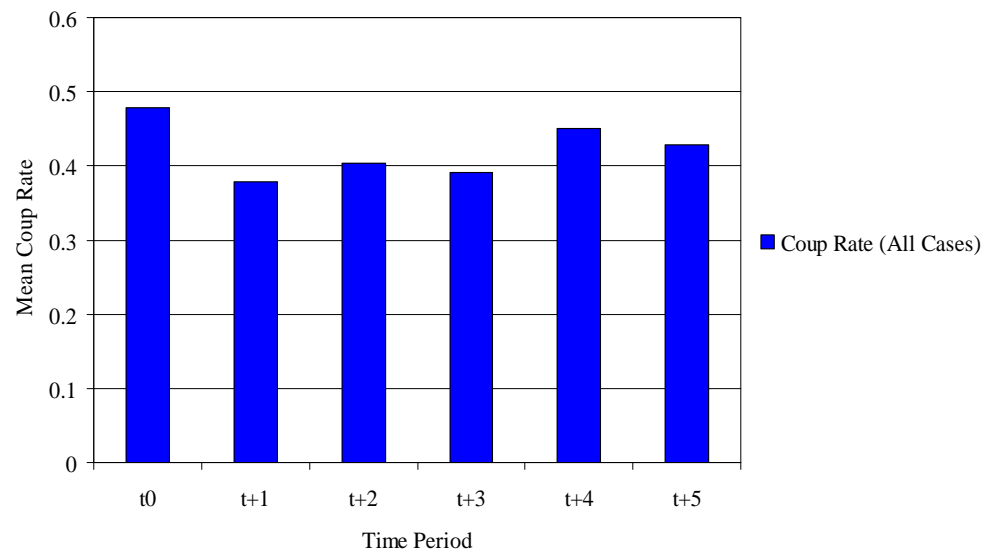


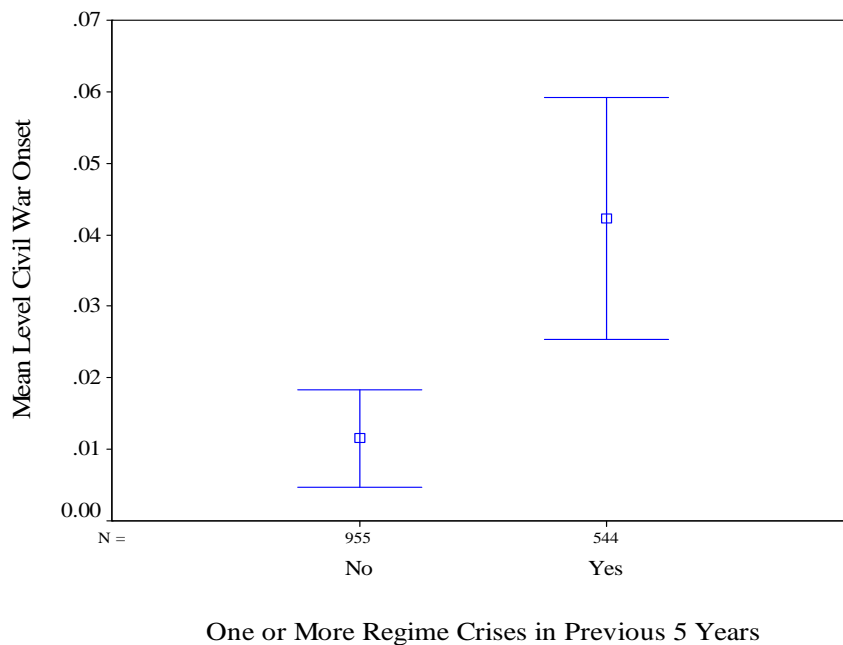
Figure 4.5b: Previous Regime Crises and Coup Rate Disaggregated by Time Periods, Independence-1999



⁴⁶ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

As the coup rate slightly declines, the risk of civil war onset increases significantly in the five years after a regime crisis. Figure 4.6a shows that one or more regime crises in the previous five years increase the mean number of new civil wars almost four times. Disaggregating the data over time (see Figure 4.6b) suggests that the increase in mean number of new civil wars is mostly caused by previous regime increases not by current ones⁴⁷ and that the effect is most pronounced in the second, third, and fourth years after the original regime crisis.

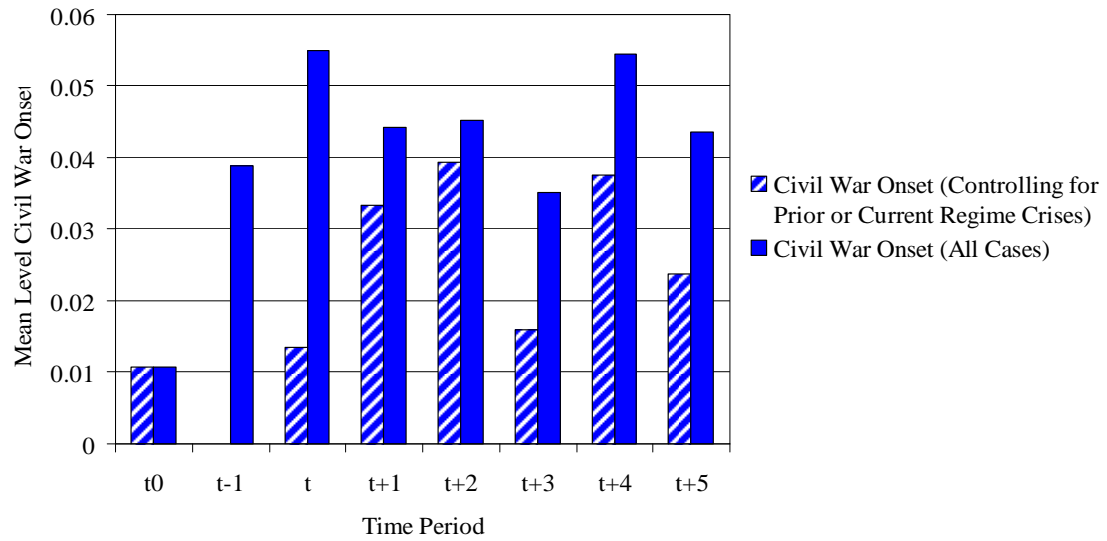
Figure 4.6a: Previous Regime Crises and Civil War Onset, Independence-1999⁴⁸



⁴⁷ For example, at period t the mean number of civil war onsets is 0.0549, which is significantly higher than the control period, t0, (0.0114). But when we exclude incidences of previous regime crises, the effect of current crises drops to 0.0135, barely above the control period.

⁴⁸ Civil war onset data from Fearon and Laitin (2003). Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 4.6b: Previous Regime Crises and Civil War Onset⁴⁹ Disaggregated by Time Period, Independence-1999



⁴⁹ Civil war onset data from Fearon and Laitin (2003).

Multivariate Analysis

Having shown the strong bivariate relationship between previous regime crises, repression, purges and ethnic exclusion and previous regime crises and civil war onset, in this section I describe the results of a logit analysis in which civil war onset is the dependent variable (it is a dichotomous variable coded 1 for the onset of any new civil war and 0 for all other years, including those with ongoing civil wars). The dataset has a total of 1499 observations. Data is missing on 32 observations, which are dropped from the analysis.⁵⁰

As discussed above, I employ two different measures of civil war onset (Fearon and Laitin [2003] and Sambanis [2004]) to ensure robustness of the analyses. Models 1-7 run all of the controls (Hypotheses 7-15) as a baseline model. In models 1 and 2, using Fearon and Laitin's counts of civil war onset as the dependent variable, few of the control variables are statistically significant, except the log of population,⁵¹ anocracy, and new states. When oil is included in the analysis (model 3), low income becomes weakly significant ($p < 0.1$). See Figure 4.7a. This suggests Africa's rich oil economies, which have experienced civil wars (e.g., Angola, Nigeria, and the Republic of Congo), are partially offsetting the relationship between poverty and civil war in the region.

Models 4-7 employ Sambanis' counts of civil war onset. There is little consistency in the results. The only variable significant across all models is the measure of a new state. Two of the most robust variables in models 4-6 are prior instability and mountainous terrain, but the significance of these variables does not hold if the nine onsets that Fearon and Laitin consider part of an ongoing war are changed to 0 (Model 7). In sum, the baseline analyses

⁵⁰ Data on GDP per capita is missing for Eritrea (1993 to 1999), Liberia (1993-1999), and Somalia (1992-1999), and on Polity for Ghana (1957-1961) and Zimbabwe (1965-1970).

⁵¹ Population density and country size were both insignificant when inserted for log of population.

suggest that global models of civil war onset are not particularly robust when applied to post-colonial Africa.

In Models 8-11, the analysis is rerun with the variables measuring hypotheses 1-4 and 6 added to the model, while the least robust variables from Models 1-7 (ethnic diversity, primary commodity dependence, and Polity index) are dropped. Models 8-10, which employ the Fearon and Laitin measure of civil war onset, are identical except for using alternative measures of current and lagged regime crises: FCOUP/LFCOUP (one or more failed coup attempts in the current year/in the previous five years), GCRISIS/LGCRISIS (one or more significant government crises, excluding revolts, in the current year/in the previous five years), or FCOUPCRISIS/ LFCOUPCRISIS (a composite variable of FCOUP and GCRISIS for the current year/covering the previous five years). In each regression, a control was included for prior war, whether a distinct civil war was ongoing in the country in the previous year. Also each model was rerun controlling for peace years (number of years since last civil war onset) to control for the effect of time dependence.

The results from Models 8-10 show that the lagged measures of regime crisis are statistically significant, with the composite variable, LFCOUPCRISIS, being the most robust ($p < 0.001$). There also is a significant relationship between civil war onsets and current regime crises. One or more successful coups in the past 5 years has a negative effect on civil war onset, but is statistically insignificant. There is no significant association between successful coups and civil war onsets in the same year. The regional wars measure is significant across all models.

These results hold when including decade dummy variables. To check the robustness of the core results, the analysis is rerun (with the LFCOUPCRISIS variable) using Sambanis' full coding of civil war onsets. The results (Model 11) are similar as those in Models 8-10, but

with current regime crises more robust than lagged crises. Political instability and oil become significant again as in the baseline model.

In sum, the multivariate results suggest that variables found to be robust on global models of civil war (especially GDP per capita, log population, and political instability) (see Fearon and Laitin 2003; Hegre and Sambanis 2006) are not particularly robust when applied to the sub-Saharan Africa sample. GDP per capita is consistently insignificant, while log population, instability, and mountainous terrain depend on the variables entered into the analysis and the coding of civil war onset. The one significant control across all models is a variable indicating a new state.

Instead, the results provide evidence to support the argument that civil war onset is often triggered by internal threats to the regime's hold on power. A proxy for regime crises is significant (at least at the $p < 0.1$ level) using two different measures and irrespective of whether the scoring of civil war onset is from Fearon and Laitin (2003) or Sambanis (2004). Also significant across the different models is a proxy variable for the availability of regional support (the number of regional states at war). Successful coups do not appear to have an effect on civil war either way.

Figure 4.7a: Baseline Model: Determinants of Civil War Onset in Sub-Saharan Africa, Independence–1999⁵²

		Model		
		1 (FandL)	2 (FandL)	3 (FandL)
Control	Prior War	-0.988 [^] (0.567)	-1.108 [^] (0.570)	-1.170* (0.576)
H7:	Log GDP per capita	-0.445 (0.397)	-0.545 (0.372)	-0.699 [^] (0.399)
H8A:	Primary Commodity Dependence	-0.033 (1.929)	-0.069 (1.878)	
H8B:	Oil			0.837 (0.643)
H9:	Political Instability	0.570 (0.445)	0.257 (0.573)	0.200 (0.460)
H10:	New State	1.273* (0.600)	1.084 [^] (0.591)	1.045 [^] (0.593)
H11:	Polity Index	0.003 (0.036)		
H12:	Anocracy		0.879* (0.396)	0.929* (0.399)
H13:	Log Population	0.418* (0.193)	0.372 [^] (0.201)	0.287 (0.201)
H14:	Ethnic Diversity	-1.331 (1.045)	-1.243 (1.043)	-1.155 (1.035)
H15:	Terrain	0.109 (0.145)	0.099 (0.141)	0.119 (0.394)
	Constant	-3.790 (3.250)	-2.940 (3.051)	-1.349 (3.384)
	N	1467	1467	1467

⁵² Time variant variables are lagged to reduce endogeneity effects. Coefficients and standard errors are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. [^] = p < 0.10; * = p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

Figure 4.7b: Baseline Model: Determinants of Civil War Onset in Sub-Saharan Africa, Independence–1999⁵³

		4 (Sambanis)	5 (Sambanis)	6 (Sambanis)	7 (Sambanis Modified)
Control	Prior War	-0.339 (0.383)	-0.387 (0.384)	-0.462 (0.390)	-1.104* (0.516)
H7:	GDP per capita	-0.241 (0.328)	-0.276 (0.313)	-0.387 (0.328)	-0.324 (0.359)
H8A:	Primary Commodity Dependence	1.689 (1.480)	1.592 (1.463)		
H8B:	Oil			0.910^ (0.489)	1.026^ (0.541)
H9:	Political Instability	1.221** (0.357)	1.059** (0.360)	0.995** (0.362)	0.497 (0.421)
H10:	New State	1.408** (0.541)	1.300* (0.531)	1.260* (0.531)	1.304* (0.537)
H11:	Polity Index	-0.002 (0.031)			
H12:	Anocracy		0.441 (0.340)	0.488 (0.341)	0.509 (0.376)
H13:	Log Population	0.318^ (0.167)	0.295^ (0.169)	0.214 (0.167)	0.400^ (0.178)
H14:	Ethnic Diversity	-0.419 (0.906)	-0.380 (0.904)	-0.235 (0.898)	-0.572 (0.950)
H15:	Terrain	0.283* (0.132)	0.275* (0.131)	0.259* (0.126)	0.215 (0.132)
	Constant	-5.488^ (2.803)	-5.104^ (2.665)	-3.553 (0.211)	-4.340* (3.104)
	N	1467	1467	1467	1467

⁵³ Time variant variables are lagged to reduce endogeneity effects. Coefficients and standard errors are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. ^ = p < 0.10; * = p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

Figure 4.8 Logit Analyses of Determinants of Civil War Onset in Sub-Saharan Africa, Independence–1999⁵⁴

		8 (FandL)	9 (FandL)	10 (FandL)	11 (Sambanis)
Control	Prior War	-1.379* (0.587)	-1.384* (0.589)	-1.411* (0.593)	-0.804* (0.402)
H1a:	LFCOUP	1.033** (0.393)			
H1b:	LGCRISIS		0.739^ (0.423)		
H1c:	LFCOUPCRISIS			1.620*** (0.451)	0.675^ (0.347)
H2a:	FCOUP	0.895 (0.579)			
H2b:	GCRISIS		0.921^ (0.423)		
H2c:	FCOUPCRISIS			0.936* (0.427)	0.953** (0.352)
H3	Lag Successful Coup	-0.621 (0.574)	-0.426 (0.574)	-0.672 (0.569)	0.245 (0.392)
H4:	Successful Coup	0.424 (0.791)	0.320 (0.802)	0.149 (0.832)	0.652 (0.590)
H6:	Regional Conflicts	0.241* (0.096)	0.280** (0.092)	0.259** (0.094)	0.272** (0.080)
H7:	GDP per capita	-0.621 (0.444)	-0.639 (0.419)	-0.706^ (0.424)	-0.333 (0.371)
H8b:	Oil	0.741 (0.670)	0.813 (0.664)	0.860 (0.673)	1.007^ (0.532)
H9:	Political Instability	0.075 (0.499)	-0.101 (0.515)	-0.322 (0.518)	0.663^ (0.396)
H10:	New State	1.552* (0.637)	1.500* (0.640)	1.986** (0.675)	1.950** (0.579)
H12:	Anocracy	0.730 (0.448)	0.597 (0.440)	0.698 (0.445)	0.278 (0.374)
H13:	Log Population	0.129 (0.178)	0.030 (0.178)	-0.033 (0.179)	0.075 (0.150)
H15:	Terrain	0.231^ (0.136)	0.212^ (0.130)	0.238^ (0.134)	0.331** (0.114)
	Constant	-2.682 (3.745)	-1.756 (3.220)	-1.372 (3.632)	-4.530* (3.220)
	N	1467	1467	1467	1467

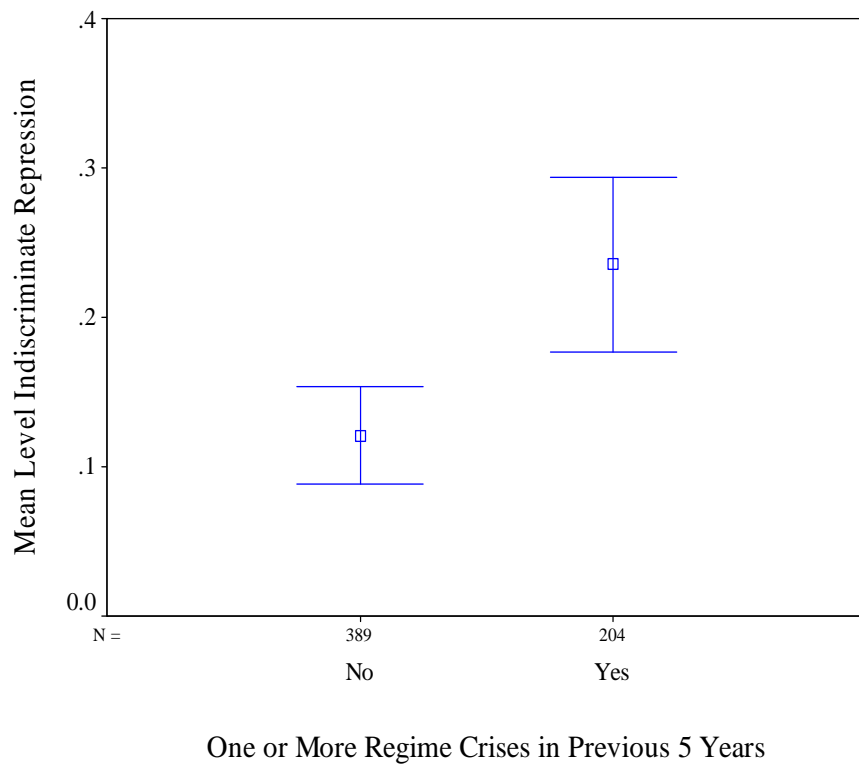
Moving from Low-Scale Conflict to Civil War: The Role of Repression

Indiscriminate violence is hypothesized to be one of the key triggers of civil war onset as it drives local populations to support and participate in insurgency as a survival

⁵⁴ Time variant variables are lagged to reduce endogeneity effects. Coefficients and standard errors are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. ^ = p < 0.10; * = p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

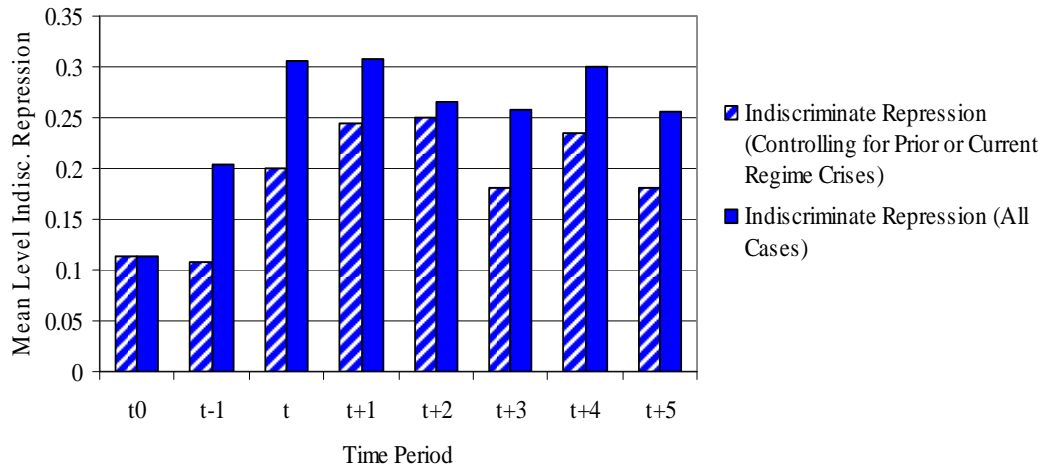
strategy (Goodwin 2001). Regime crises often increase a government's use of indiscriminate violence as a form of collective punishment against groups perceived as disloyal and as a means to weaken the support base of those recently cut out of the ruling network. Figure 4.9a illustrates the effect of one or more regime crises in the previous five years on the mean level of indiscriminate violence, while Figure 4.9b disaggregates this effect over time.

Figure 4.9a: Previous Regime Crises and Indiscriminate Repression, 1980-1999⁵⁵



⁵⁵ Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 4.9b: Previous Regime Crises and Indiscriminate Repression Disaggregated by Time Period, 1980-1999



In the multivariate analysis, I test to see if there is any discernible difference between the effect of the severity of repression versus the type of repression (whether indiscriminate or not) on the likelihood of civil war onset. This regression analysis is limited to the years between 1980 and 1999 and drops cases of ongoing war because of the difficulty of coding information on type of repression during civil wars. There are 613 observations during this time period and 19 incidences of civil war onset. Model 12 regresses civil war onset (Fearon and Laitin measure) on a control for prior war, the lag of the severity of repression based on the Political Terror Scale (PTS), LFCOUPCRISIS variable, FCOUPCRISIS variable, number of regional countries with major armed conflict, and log of GDP per capita lagged one-year. As illustrated in Figure 4.10, only the lagged regime crisis variable is statistically significant. The level of repression variable is positive, but not significant. Model 13 includes the lag indiscriminate violence variable, which is positive and significant as is the LFCOUPCRISIS variable. Interestingly, the level of repression variable now becomes negative, suggesting selective but severe repression may reduce the risk of civil war onset, but is still insignificant.

Figure 4.10: Logit Analyses of Determinants of Civil War Onset in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1981–1999 (excludes years with on-going civil wars)⁵⁶

		12	13
Control	Prior War	0.780 (1.156)	-5.118 (24.661)
H1c	LFCOUPCRISIS	1.686** (0.588)	1.666** (0.599)
H2c	FCOUPCRISIS	0.872 (0.583)	1.050^ (0.613)
H5a	Political Terror Scale (lagged one- year)	0.413 (0.283)	-0.135 (0.377)
H5b	Indiscriminate Violence (lagged one- year)		1.744* (0.710)
H6	Regional Conflicts	0.242^ (0.144)	0.164 (0.152)
H7	Log GDP per capita (lagged one- year)	0.044 (0.511)	0.122 (0.496)
	Constant	-7.040^ (3.886)	-6.235 (3.858)
	N	534	515

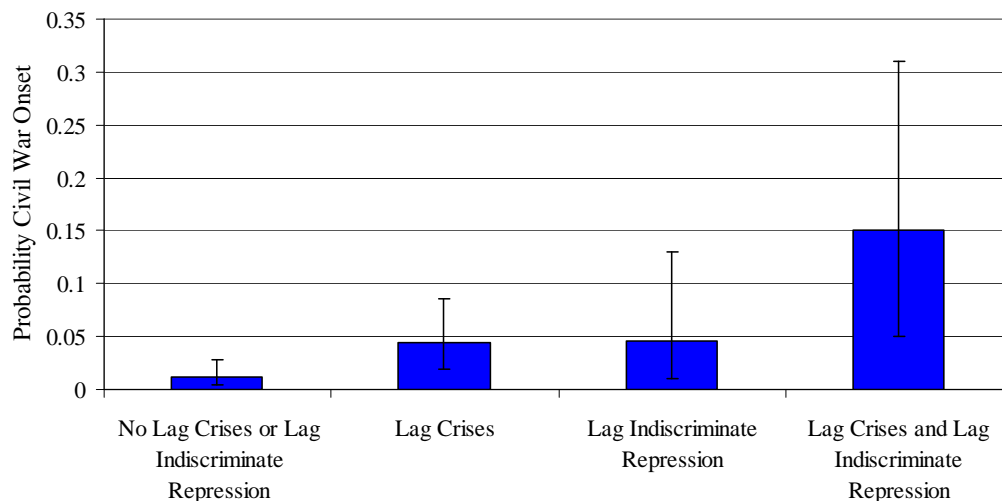
Substantive Significance of Regime Crises and Indiscriminate Repression

The multivariate analyses provides support for the hypotheses that civil war onset often in sub-Saharan Africa is more likely after regime crises and failed coups (though not successful ones), when the government uses indiscriminate violence, and in countries with neighbors at war, while controlling for other factors commonly associated with civil war onset. Figure 4.11 illustrates the substantive significance of two of the most robust variables

⁵⁶ Time variant variables are lagged to reduce endogeneity effects. Coefficients and standard errors are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. ^ = p < 0.10; * = p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

in the model: previous regime crises and lag indiscriminate repression. Holding all other variables at their mean in model 13, we are able to identify the degree to which these two factors affect the probability of civil war onset between 1981 and 1999 (the years in which there is data for indiscriminate repression).⁵⁷ With no regime crises in the previous five years and no use of indiscriminate repression by the government, the probability of civil war onset is about 1 percent, *ceteris paribus*. One or more regime crises in the previous five years *or* indiscriminate repression in the previous year increase the probability to almost 5 percent. It is the interaction between the two variables that has the most profound effect, increasing the probability to roughly 15 percent.

Figure 4.11: Effect of Regime Crises and Indiscriminate Repression on Civil War Onset in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1981–1999⁵⁸



⁵⁷ Predicted probabilities derived from Model 13 using CLARIFY program. Michael Tomz, Jason Wittenberg, and Gary King (2001). CLARIFY: Software for Interpreting and Presenting Statistical Results. Version 2.0 Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, June 1. <http://gking.harvard.edu>

⁵⁸ Predicted probabilities derived from Model 13 using CLARIFY program. All variables are kept at their means, except LFCOUPCRISIS and lag indiscriminate repression. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Conclusion

The cross-national evidence presented in chapter four suggests that African rulers increase purges, repression (including indiscriminate violence), and exclusion of politically-active communal groups in the year of regime crises and this effect persists in the years after the regime crises (even without subsequent internal challenges). It also found that there is a statistically significant relationship between failed coups or other regime crises and an increased likelihood of civil war onset over the next five years across sub-Saharan Africa, controlling for other variables linked to civil war. The risk of civil war appears to be particularly high when a government employs indiscriminate violence against civilians following a regime crisis.

Chapter 5: Sudan: The Rise of the National Islamic Front

The statistical analysis in chapter four has demonstrated an empirical association between previous regime crises and civil war onset. To establish a causal effect requires a different methodology, however. In the next three chapters I undertake a “structured, focused comparison” (George and Bennett 2005, 67) of two different cases of political rule and regime-dissident interactions within the country of Sudan. The second Darfur case study (see chapter 7) allows me to analyze whether there is evidence that regime crises initiate the set of mechanisms theorized to cause civil war. To review, the key mechanisms include:

- after a failed coup or other internal threat the ruler is consumed about the possibility of future coups and the risk to his political survival and undertakes policies to try to mitigate this risk;
- because of the nature of clientelist rule, these policies include purging perceived disloyal agents from the ruling network and replacing them with more ‘trusted’ clients, collectively punishing supporters of the initial threat to try to deter future challenges, and increasing spoils to members of the military, security and one’s own ethnic group to ensure these key constituents do not defect during future challenges;
- these policies tend to improve internal regime control, but increase the pool of dissidents, undermine the government’s external control over targeted ethnic groups, reduce its willingness to bargain with dissidents from the groups, and increase the risk of violent conflict escalating to civil war.

By comparing the second Darfur case study to the period between 1989 and 1992, I am able to analyze the obverse conditions: the presence of an extensive clientelist network that is unaffected by a failed coup. An extensive network is predicted to enhance the regime’s local leverage and information, reducing the likelihood of bargaining failure and

escalation. The next section describes the structure of the comparison of the cases and how they differ, allowing us to isolate causal effects.

Qualitative Research Design and Methodology

Structure of Case Comparison

The Sudan case studies compare political rule (i.e., the structure of clientelism and the nature of repression) during two different time periods in the Darfur region of western Sudan⁵⁹ and these institutions' effects on regime-dissident interactions. The first case covers the years 1989, when the National Islamic Front (NIF) came to power in a coup d'état, until 1992, the year the government was able to defeat an expeditionary force sent by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to open a new military front in Darfur. The second case covers the years 1999, when a split in the Islamic movement rocked the ruling regime, until 2003, when full-scale civil war erupted in Darfur. The case studies seek to isolate the causal mechanisms which led to the different conflict outcomes: insurgency defeated in Darfur in 1991 and 1992 and ineffective counterinsurgency and full-scale civil war in Darfur in 2002 and 2003. Table 5.1 summarizes the similarities and differences between the two cases and illustrates what components of the central argument they test.

Both cases involve regime crises. In April 1990 the NIF government faced a purported coup d'état by Baathists inside and outside the army, led by Mohamed Osman Karrar, a Beja from eastern Sudan.⁶⁰ This led the NIF to accelerate its purges of non-Islamists and target members of the Beja ethnic group within the army, but it did not lead to

⁵⁹ By comparing the same region of one country, I am able to hold constant geographic, demographic, socioeconomic and other structural factors that change slowly over time and focus more explicitly on political dynamics, which I contend are central to understanding the proximate causes of civil war onset.

⁶⁰ In addition, to blaming Baathists for the coup attempt in April 1990, the NIF also implicated John Garang and the SPLA.

ethnic exclusion of Darfurian groups or otherwise affect the ruling network in Darfur.

Instead, the NIF maintained its extensive network in Darfur, trying to co-opt groups from across different ethnic groups, and launched a disarmament campaign to pacify the region and minimize indiscriminate violence, which flared up after taking power in 1989.

In contrast, in the second case (Darfur 1999-2003), the split in the Islamic movement at the end of 1999 and 2000 did involve agents from Darfur. The president, Omar al-Bashir, and those around him perceived Islamists from certain Darfurian groups supporting Hassan al-Turabi, the former secretary general of the Islamic movement. This regime crisis led the central government to restructure its ruling network in Darfur (e.g., purging or excluding clients from non-Arab groups perceived broadly as sympathetic with Turabi) and to turn a blind eye to communal violence in the region.

While the two cases differ in the structure of the ruling network and the degree of indiscriminate violence in Darfur, they both involve violent dissident mobilization that is supported by an outside actor (the SPLA plays an influential external role in both cases). These similarities help us to isolate the precise causal role the structure of the ruling network and type of state violence play in shaping the outcome of violent dissident mobilization versus regime counter-mobilization.

Table 5.1 Comparison of Regime Crises, Violent Exclusion, and Civil War Outcomes in Two Cases in Darfur, Sudan

Case Period	Regime Crisis	Ruler Links Regime Crisis to Darfurian Ethnic Groups	Restructuring of the Ruling Network	Exclusion along Ethnic Lines in Darfur	Indiscriminate Violence	Violent Dissident Mobilization	Foreign Support for Dissidents	Outcome
Darfur 1989-1992	Yes	No	Yes	No	Decreasing	Yes	Yes	Insurgency Defeated
Darfur 1999-2003	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Increasing	Yes	Yes	Insurgency Prevails

Field Research

To collect evidence to complete the case studies, I spent almost 15 months conducting interviews in Sudan, Chad, Eritrea, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Europe, and the United States between February 2005 and April 2006.⁶¹ While in Sudan (where I conducted most of my field research while living in Khartoum), I carried out hundreds of one-on-one interviews with current and former state and central government officials, army generals and personnel, security officers, rebel leaders, opposition politicians, tribal leaders, civil society and human rights activists, academics, business leaders, refugees and displaced persons, national and international non-governmental organization workers, and foreign observers (e.g., diplomats, other researchers).

The interviews focused on obtaining and corroborating evidence reflecting three crucial elements of these periods. First, what was the structure of the regime's ruling network in Darfur before and after the regime crises? Who were the key agents (in the Islamic movement, in the government, presiding over tribal groups) acting on behalf of the central government in Darfur? How representative were these agents of various societal groups? Second, what was the nature of state violence in the region and its link with the clientelist network and the regime crises? Did the government allow militias and other groups to indiscriminately attack civilians? Third, how did the structure of the ruling network and this state violence affect bargaining between the central government and societal actors, the dissident's ability to organize an insurgency, and the regime's ability to effectively prevent and contain rebellion? How did its network affect the

⁶¹ I am gratefully indebted to the National Security Education Program (NSEP) for funding my field research in Sudan through a David L. Boren Fellowship.

central government's ability to extract local information and mobilize support against armed rebellion? How did state violence affect dissident mobilization?

The rest of the chapter is as follows. I first provide a brief overview of Sudan before describing the rise to power of the National Islamic Front. This history is important to provide a necessary context for the case studies described in chapters six and seven.

Sudan: Background and History

Sudan is the largest country in Africa (2,505,813 square kilometers), occupying the northeastern quadrant of the continent directly south of Egypt. It is contiguous with nine other countries: Egypt to the north; Eritrea and Ethiopia to the east; Kenya, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo to the south; and Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya to the west. Port Sudan, the country's major port on the Red Sea, is only 150 kilometers from Saudi Arabia. The Nile River is the most important waterway in the country and winds up from Uganda northward to Egypt through the eastern part of the country. The heart of the country is located in the central Nile River Valley—from Gezira to Atbara. It houses the capital, Khartoum, which sits at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile; the home of the country's historical ruling elite, the Muslim riverain Arabs; and the giant agricultural schemes that feed the country. Characteristic of the political topography of other African states (see Herbst 2000), power radiates from this region diminishing as it extends into the hinterland, such as the western region of Darfur, which was the last region to be incorporated into the country in 1916, or to the South, which was separated from the North by the British colonial administration.

Demographically the country is comprised of more than 50 major ethnic groups and at least 570 distinct peoples (Lesch 1998, 15). More broadly, scholars have

categorized the Sudanese population into three groups (Wai 1981; Deng 1995; Lesch 1998): non-Muslim African peoples from Southern Sudan, which includes the Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk among others; Muslim Arabs of Northern Sudan, including the Ja'aliyin, Shaigiya, the Baggara; and Muslim non-Arab peoples of Northern Sudan, including the Beja, the Fur, Nubian, Zaghawa.⁶² While ethnicity remains one of the most salient identities, the broader racial and religious identities have become increasingly important because of the continued political hegemony of Sudan's riverain Arabs (primarily the Ja'aliyin, Shaigiya, and Danagla). The central governments' policies of coercive assimilation through Islamization and Arabization have spurred the acculturation of some of Sudan's ethnic groups, such as the Fellata, while leading others, such as the Fur, Beja, Nuba, and southerners, to actively resist (Deng 1995). The emergence of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its calls for a pluralist Sudan as an antidote to the northern assimilationist model has helped to reify a distinctive non-Arab identity for many peoples (Lesch 1998).

Historical Overview

The modern Sudan state has its origin in the 19th century when a Turco-Egyptian invasion sought to pacify the indigenous populations and occupy the territory as an extension of the Egyptian province of the Ottoman Empire. The colonizers employed brute force to quell resistance from the Dinka, Shilluk, Ingessana, Beja, and other indigenous ethnic groups and allowed slavery and forced conscription into the Egyptian

⁶² Racially it is sometimes impossible to distinguish between non-Arabs and Arabs in northern Sudan. Instead, these groups are differentiated based on language: Arabs have lost their local dialect and speak only Arabic, while non-Arabs have maintained a local language in addition to speaking Arabic. Some group's identity changes from non-Arab to Arab have been spurred by the loss of language. For example, in Darfur the Um Kemelti and the Fallatta once had a local language and considered themselves non-Arabs. After losing their dialect and only speaking Arabic, they now identify themselves as Arabs.

army, especially against southern groups, to flourish. Other groups, such as the Funj Kingdom and the Khatmiyya Sufi sect, chose to cooperate with the foreign rulers and their leaders benefited from their roles as local intermediaries. The primary institutional legacy of the Turkiyyah (as this period of colonization was known) was the introduction of a centralized administration located in Khartoum that incorporated the disparate kingdoms, ethnic groups and stateless societies indigenous to the territory into a single political entity based on clientelism and repression (Woodward 1990).

In the 1880s a nationalist uprising, originating in western Sudan, spread throughout the country, taking the form of an Islamic revolution. The uprising, known as the *Mahdiyya*, was led by Muhammad Ahmad Ibn Abdallah, who proclaimed himself the ‘Mahdi’, meaning “the guided one”, and sought to replace the corrupt and oppressive Turco-Egyptian administration rule with an Islamic state.⁶³ After the fall of Khartoum in January 1885, the Mahdists consolidated their control of the country, establishing an Islamic state. The liberation of Sudan was short-lived, however. In 1896, the British, fearful of French and Italian encroachment in the region, including the prized Nile River, launched a massive expeditionary force to defeat the Mahdists and colonize Sudan. By the end of 1898, the British had destroyed the Mahdist army.

To establish and maintain political control, the British also relied on the twin institutions of clientelism and repression. From Khartoum, where economic activities were overseen and the colony managed, the colonial administrators worked with Northern Arab elites, particularly the leaders of the two dominant Sufi religious sects—the Ansar and the Khatmiyya. These constituencies benefited from educational and

⁶³ For a thorough history of the Mahdi revolution, see Holt 1958.

vocational opportunities offered by the colonial state⁶⁴ and became the natural heirs at independence. In the rural areas, the British ruled through its policies of indirect rule, a British colonial policy invented by Lord Lugard and applied first to Nigeria and subsequently to other British colonies—empowering tribal chiefs (real or constructed) to govern indigenous populations. These policies led to the tribalisation and marginalisation of the rural areas, while resources and political power became concentrated in Khartoum.

Rather than rule the country as one entity, however, the British increasingly separated parts of the hinterland, especially the non-Muslim south, from the rest of the country. In 1922 the Closed District Ordinances was passed which required individuals to obtain permits from the colonial administration to travel to the South and parts of Darfur. In 1930, the British administration formalized a Southern Policy to rule the two regions separately. By isolating the South, the objective, according to Harold MacMichael, the British civil secretary in Sudan in the 1930s, was “to build up a series of self-contained racial and tribal units with structure and organization based, to whatever extent the requirements of equity and good government permit, upon indigenous customs, traditional usage and beliefs” (cited in Collins 1983, 173). Beyond the preservation of local authority (the British justification for the policy), more strategically, the Southern policy was an attempt to create a ‘buffer state,’ checking the influence of Islam and Arabic culture from Egypt and the northern Sudan from penetrating the south and beyond to the British colonies of Kenya and Uganda (Wai 1989). Thus the colonizers encouraged the spread of Christianity and the establishment of English as the lingua

⁶⁴ Nowhere was this more apparent than in Sudanese enrolment for Gordon’s College in Khartoum (the predecessor of modern day, the University of Khartoum), the British-run school for indigenous Sudanese that sought ‘to train loyal servants of the Sudan government’. “The great majority of students were drawn from the northern riverain provinces: in 1929, some 311 of 510 were from Khartoum and Blue Nile Provinces, while Kassala accounted for only ten, the Red Sea Province for one, and Darfur and the entire Southern Sudan were unrepresented” (Daly 1986, 385).

franca at the expense of political and economic modernization, which was ongoing in the North. This colonial legacy of disproportionate development translated into northern political and economic domination of the newly independent Sudanese state.

Exclusive Political Rule and the Onset of Sudan's First Civil War

After the end of World War II, with nationalism on the rise throughout Africa and other colonies, the British, under pressure from the Egyptians (who were keen on reducing the number of states along the Nile River) and northern politicians, unified the two regions and established a single legislative assembly to represent the entire country (Lesch 1998, 34). As the British made further preparations to withdraw, the southerners found themselves more and more politically marginalized. During the Sudanization of the country's civil service, only six southerners were appointed to some 800 positions, while only three southerners participated in the 46-member national constitutional commission, which rejected their calls for a federal constitution (Lesch 1998). For the South, independence merely led to a change of colonial masters, "with the northerners taking over from the British and defining the nation in accordance with the symbols of their Arab-Islamic identity" (Deng 1995, 102.) With southern protests of neo-colonialism falling on deaf ears, an army mutiny in 1955 eventually gave rise to the rebel movement, Anya-Nya, which materialized to force the northern-dominated post-independence governments to address southerners' grievances.

At independence on January 1, 1956, Sudan's government, led by the National Unionist Party (NUP), failed to address the southerner's discontent and was unable to establish a permanent constitution which could unite the fragile and fractured country. Less than six months after independence, the NUP government lost a no-confidence vote and was replaced by a coalition between the Umma Party and the People's Democratic

Party (PDP). Faced with economic crisis and nationwide strikes in 1958, the new government handed over power to the army. The army junta, led by Major General Ibrahim Abboud, accelerated a program of Arabisation and Islamisation in the South, escalating the growing conflict. For the next fifty years, the struggle to resolve the civil war in the South and establish a permanent constitution underwriting a stable central government would dominate Sudanese politics.

The Rise of National Islamic Front

As successive Sudanese governments, both civilian and military, failed to establish a stable central government and bring peace to southern Sudan, an Islamic movement was growing in strength and cultivating a national following. Calling for the establishment of an Islamic order to save the country from sectarianism, conflict and corruption, more and more Sudanese embraced the movement as an alternative to the traditional political parties. Through patient organization, a savvy tactical alliance with the military ruler, Jaafar Nimeiri, shrewd investments in Islamic banks in the 1970s, recruitment in the army and establishment of an elaborate and self-sufficient security apparatus in the 1970s and 1980s, by the late 1980s the Islamists were in a position to seize control of the state. In this section I review the rise of the National Islamic Front.

The Early Years

The National Islamic Front was launched as a political party in 1985, but its roots extend back to the 1940s when Sudanese students studying in Egypt embraced the Islamist teachings of Hassan al-Banna and interacted with members of Banna's Muslim

Brotherhood (MB).⁶⁵ Upon returning to the Sudan, these students disseminated the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood and found a receptive following, particularly among rural students from the west who were excluded from the dominant riverain political class, which was preparing to assume control of the Sudanese state at independence (Woodward 1997, 98). In 1954, the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan) was formed, but which remained autonomous from the MB in Egypt. In its early years, the Ikhwan, limited by its size⁶⁶ and the dominance of the traditional political parties,⁶⁷ served as a pressure group for the adoption of an Islamic order based on an Islamic constitution. Though unsuccessful in its ultimate goal, its influence on the constitutional debate was apparent when the leaders of the two sectarian parties were forced to declare in a joint communiqué on February 20, 1957 that “the state in Sudan should be an Islamic Parliamentary Republic, and that the heavenly Shariah should be the source of legislation in the country’s constitution” (quoted in El-Affendi 1991, 58).

In November 1958 the military, led by Major General Ibrahim Abboud, halted the constitutional debate when it assumed control of the state. The Ikhwan initially supported the junta and called for Abboud to put an end to the corruption, economic stagnation, and factionalism that characterized the inaugural parliamentary governments. As Abboud became increasingly dictatorial, however, the Muslim Brotherhood became active in the opposition. The organization suffered a blow when in 1959 the leader of the Ikhwan, al-Rashid al-Tahir, was arrested and sent to five years in prison for conspiring to

⁶⁵ The history of the Islamic movement in Sudan is drawn from Abdelwahab El-Affendi’s (1991) authoritative account.

⁶⁶ According to Affendi (1991, 57), “Ikhwan was itself a far from well-organized group at the time, and in no position to set up and control a nationwide organization. Its members were mostly students or recent graduates, the oldest being in their mid-twenties, while their numbers did not exceed a few score.”

⁶⁷ The dominant political parties of the day, the Umma Party and the National Unionist Party, each derived support from the two principal Sufi sects and dwarfed the Muslim Brotherhood at independence.

overthrow the military government. Al-Tahir's involvement in the coup attempt caused dissension within the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood over the use of force to achieve objectives and Tahir's secret relations with communist elements (the archrival of the Islamists) when organizing the coup attempt. With its leader in jail and the movement divided, the Ikhwan's activities and influence waned over the next few years

Under the Leadership of Hassan al-Turabi

In 1964, the Ikhwan experienced a resurgence with the return of Dr. Hassan al-Turabi to the Sudan. Turabi had been active in the Islamic movement since his days as a college student in the early 1950s, in which he was a member of the executive committee of the Islamic Liberation Movement, a precursor organization to the Muslim Brotherhood (Warburg 2003, 179). He then left for Europe to study for an M.A. at the University of London (1957) and a Ph.D. in law at the Sorbonne in Paris (1964). Abroad, Turabi became heavily engaged in global Islamic issues (he co-founded and became secretary-general of the Islamic Society for the Support of the Algerian Cause [Hamdi 1998, 1]), while following closely the development of the Islamic movement at home. Turabi returned to Sudan in 1964 and accepted a position in the Faculty of Law at the University of Khartoum. He became an outspoken critic of the Abboud regime and encouraged the student protests that coalesced in October 1964 and would lead to Abboud's fall from power.

In 1964, Turabi was elected secretary general of the Islamic Charter Front (ICF), a political coalition of the Muslim Brotherhood and smaller Sufi groups. The purpose of founding the ICF was to expand the Islamic movement beyond the traditional Ikhwan core and begin to penetrate Sudanese society. As secretary general, Turabi sought to expand the movement beyond its original core and lead it in a new, decidedly political,

direction. This triggered tension between the old guard close to the Egyptian Ikhwan who resisted expansion and the new adherents, led by Turabi, who envisioned the movement's most important activities taking place outside the Ikhwan, whether in the ICF, or the National Youth Organization, or the National Women's Front, (Turabi quoted in Hamdi 1998, 17-18). According to El-Affendi (1991):

The formation of ICF both represented the triumph of Turabi's ideas and marked his emergence as the dominant figure in the movement. Turabi was impatient with the constraints imposed on Ikhwan by the elitist organizational framework inherited from Egypt, and had been pushing for an opening up of the movement, either through transcending the movement itself and turning it into a pressure group with access to all parties, or by joining the other big parties in a united front.

In 1965 the ICF participated in the first parliamentary elections after Abboud's overthrow, but did not fare very well. Though it fielded roughly 100 candidates in the 1965 general elections, the new party won only five seats, including two graduate constituencies, of which one was won by Turabi. One seat taken by an ICF candidate was won by a Zaghawa, Suliman Mustapha, in Darfur, signaling the Islamic movement's early support from part of that ethnic group (see chapter six). In 1968, the ICF only captured three seats. In the two elections, the Umma and NUP (which would become the DUP after the NUP's merger with the PDP in 1967) maintained their political dominance, winning a combined 130 out of 173 parliamentary seats in 1965 and then 173 out of 218 in 1968. Sadiq al-Mahdi, great-grandson of the Mahdi, served as prime minister from July 1966 to May 1967. The Islamists had much political work to do to be on par with the traditional political parties.

In April 1969, Turabi won an internal victory within the Islamic movement when he was re-elected as leader of the Ikhwan despite a bitter challenge from a faction who criticized Turabi for leading the movement astray "from the conventional Muslim Brotherhood school of education and character-building" (Hamdi 1998, 3) and into the

political sphere where he made expedient alliances with non-Islamist forces. Having survived the internal challenge, Turabi was in a position to oversee a mass expansion of the movement and his dream of creating a powerful and universal Islamist movement that could usher in an Islamic state and transform the country. But the Islamic movement faced a new threat, a communist-backed coup in May 1969 led by Jaafar Nimeiri.

The Nimeiri Regime

Modeling himself after Nasser and his secular, socialist and pan-Arab ideology, Nimeiri wanted to transform Sudan by eradicating the sectarian political parties, establishing an omnipresent ruling party that would supplant tribal and religious affiliations in rural areas, and using the state to propel economic development and growth (Lesch 1998, 45). A key element within the RCC was the Sudanese Communist Party and Nimeiri obtained foreign assistance from the Soviet Union. Once again the Islamic movement was forced underground, but not dormant.

In the first years of Nimeiri's rule, the Ikhwan, like other political parties, was banned and its leaders, including Turabi, were imprisoned. In March 1970 the military regime preemptively attacked the Ansar headquarters on Aba Island on grounds the Umma Party (with the assistance of some Islamists) was preparing to launch a coup, and killed the Imam of the Ansar as he was fleeing the country. With the political opposition crushed, the universities emerged as a key focal point of regime resistance. Exploiting its strength within the student unions, especially the Khartoum University Student Union (KUSU), the Islamists frequently organized demonstrations and engaged in fierce battles with the Sudanese police.

In 1971, Nimeiri's relations with the communists soured and then reached a nadir after several SCP members, who had been removed from the cabinet, staged a coup.

Although temporarily ousted from power, Nimeiri escaped from jail, reasserted his control and quickly executed those found responsible. Nimeiri dissolved the RCC and sought to strengthen his political position by building up a single-party system under the Sudan Socialist Union and ending the war in the south. In 1972 a landmark peace agreement was reached in Addis Ababa between the central government and the Anya-Nya rebels, renamed as the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM). Key provisions of the agreement included regional autonomy for the South, representation in the central government, and the incorporation of the rebel forces in the army. In 1973 Sudan's first permanent constitution was adopted which enshrined federalism and southern autonomy. Signing the peace deal shored up Nimeiri's fragile domestic position and improved his reputation in the West, including with the Americans, who, after the crackdown on the communists, became Sudan's new major foreign patron.

With the Addis Ababa agreement putting an end to the war in the South, Nimeiri sought to strengthen his regime's control over northern Sudan with the reform of local government and the institutionalization of the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU). In 1971 the People's Local Government Act was passed, which abolished the Native Administration established by the British colonial administration. The Nimeiri regime viewed the "native administration, far from being a natural product of social relations, [but] instead the state-sponsored backing of local autocracy, which had been underlined by the tribal leaders' roles as local brokers of the old parties" (Woodward 1990, 146). According to the 1971 law, a pyramidal system of councils, ranging from the provincial level down to the towns and villages, would replace the tribal administrations and administer local services. The new system had limited success in eradicating the influence of the tribal leaders nor did it represent a real devolution of power as decision-making remained concentrated in Nimeiri's hands. Instead, as Mansour Khalid (1985, 35), a former

cabinet minister in the Nimeiri government, assesses, it actually strengthened “the power of the President by placing him at the top of a pyramid with its base in villages and neighbourhoods” in which he could increase “the area of patronage and [use] the system to produce lavish spoils.” The institution of clientelism remained a vital instrument of political domination.

As Nimeiri sought to strengthen his control over the rural areas, he faced persistent threats from the exiled opposition, some of which had formed a coalition known as the National Front. The National Front included members from the DUP, Umma Party, ICF, Ba’ath Party, and several regional organizations, including the Nuba Mountains Group (Lesch 1998, 52). Recognizing the restrictions on political activities and high costs of non-violent demonstrations inside Sudan, the coalition began to prepare for a violent overthrow of the Nimeiri regime from bases within Libya. The plan was to have armed infiltrators, who had trained in Libya and gradually penetrated the Sudan for one year, to rise up and seize army garrisons, at which time a column would invade from Libya and agents would rally public support in Khartoum against the regime (El-Affendi 1991, 109). The operation failed, however, and debilitated the opposition coalition.

Nonetheless, the attack did spur secret negotiations between Sadiq al-Mahdi, the leader of the Umma Party, and Nimeiri. A year after the coup attempt, the two adversaries signed a political agreement, known as the National Reconciliation, in which Nimeiri would agree to liberalize the SSU, lift some repressive restrictions and release political prisoners, and al-Mahdi would return from exile and become a member of the Central Committee of the SSU. Other partners, including the Islamic Charter Front, of the opposition movement were less enthusiastic about the National Reconciliation, particularly the dominant and secretive role played by al-Mahdi. After some debate,

however, the ICF decided it was in the long-term interest of the movement and its Islamist project to ally with Nimeiri also.

A Critical Alliance: Political, Financial, and Organizational Growth of the Islamic Movement

Turabi appreciated how access to the state could accelerate his quest to transform the Islamic movement. Since his crucial internal victory in 1969, Turabi was overseeing an important organizational restructuring of the Ikhwan. The old guard and the dissidents were replaced, while thousands of well-trained, loyal and devout young Islamists joined. Priority was given to penetrating all walks of Sudan society and building up the movement so it could become self-sufficient and avoid relying on other parties and entities to succeed in implementing its Islamic program. To achieve this required a certain degree of reorganization and shift of tactics. As Turabi described:

Until then, the movement was mainly political and cultural, and for the first time we embarked on a social programme...We looked deeply into the organizational structure which we found to be very basic and, in its existing condition, relations, and approach, hopelessly inadequate for its purpose...All in all, we launched an overall modernization of the movement around the early seventies. Membership was urgently reviewed with a view to widening it, especially among women, where it was clearly absent. We tended to open more to the masses and encourage wider participation in social, sports, and co-operative activities, especially since political work was severely curtailed under the new military regime (quoted in Hamdi 1998, 18-19).

The National Reconciliation granted the Ikhwan an invaluable opportunity to further build up its organization (though, under the terms of the National Reconciliation, as part of the ruling party, the Sudan Socialist Union) without having to worry about persistent security crackdowns and arrests. It also allowed the Islamists to infiltrate the state structures and gain invaluable government experience, which would be indispensable for their ascension to power. Turabi acknowledged the importance of this opportunity:

The decision in favour of participation in government thereafter was only a step in our plan to achieve greater contact with society and interact with its forces, including the official political bodies and the state machinery which were part of that society, no matter what was our assessment and situation. Our participation in the Socialist Union was against all our instincts, and we should not have ventured into it unless it was a necessary part of our plan to reach the wide sectors of society in the countryside, in the south, and in the popular and labour groups...all we hoped for was to secure a certain degree of freedom for the movement to implement its strategy (quoted in Hamdi 1998, 21).

The foundation of the NIF's network was the *tanzeem* (or organization, in Arabic)—the well-structured and underground organization that became pervasive throughout the Sudan in the 1970s. Membership was based on one's loyalty and commitment to the Islamic movement—through years of studying the Koran in small groups, participation in political activities and protests, and intensive training in security, propaganda, and intelligence activities in camps spread throughout the Sudan (interviews; Warburg 2003, 207).

At the height of its organizational success in the 1980s and early 1990s, the *tanzeem* was a tight-knit and well-regulated network. Members were monitored as early as secondary school and the *tanzeem* kept meticulous records of who was an Islamist—and thus trustworthy—and who was not and thus should be treated with suspicion. The NIF then used these records to screen recipients of loans from the Faisal bank and decide which individuals to send into government, especially the “poorly paid professions including the police, education and the civil service” (Verney 1999, 27), as the NIF infiltrated state structures in preparation of taking power. Others on the ‘list’ were appointed after the NIF came to power to replace some 14,000 non-Islamist civil servants (Lesch 1998, 134). Finally other members of the *tanzeem* remained outside the formal state granting them flexibility and a degree of anonymity in their activities. In the first few years after the coup, the *tanzeem* worked as a shadow government. Key members of the *tanzeem* held secret daily meetings with the state-appointed governors and deputy

governors to pass key information gleaned from their surveillance of opposition officials, other identified dissenters, and society in general. According to one influential Islamic banker, “anyone who was in the movement was an informant.”⁶⁸

Though the Ikhwan had started to make inroads in the military in the early 1970s, the National Reconciliation and Nimeiri’s embrace of Islamism allowed them to accelerate their penetration of the security services; it was at this time that the Islamists established their first cell within the military (Sidahmed 1996, 202). Moreover, the Islamic movement began to build up and strengthen its own internal security apparatus and intelligence network. According to one Islamist who would assume a prominent role in the security services after the coup, in the time of Nimeiri’s rule the Islamist security organs became stronger than the government’s⁶⁹ and, in 1984, when Nimeiri sensed the Islamists were becoming too strong, he expelled the Ikhwan from the cabinet and had Turabi arrested.

The Ikhwan also took advantage of the introduction of Islamic banking⁷⁰ in the Sudan in 1978, which favored Islamists in its employment and loan policies, and was initially avoided by the traditional business class (El-Affendi 1991, 116). The most influential Islamic banking institution would be the Faisal Islamic Bank, established under the patronage of Prince Mohammed al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia. According to Burr and Collins (2003, 23-24)

The Faisal Bank became the banker for NIF and Turabi. It supplied funds for the party, loans to its members to establish shops in the suq, a business in the cities and towns, and farms and

⁶⁸ Interview Khartoum, November 24, 2005.

⁶⁹ Interview in Khartoum, August 2005.

⁷⁰ In an interview with Hamdi (1998, 23-24), Turabi stresses the importance of the movement’s involvement in Islamic banking, “We came to realize, perhaps for the first time, what an important and vital part of Islam economic and financial activity was. We were hardly aware, like many other Islamic movements, of the role capital played in our social programmes and in the political struggle in which were engaged. As soon as we opened up to the rest of society, we began to feel the utmost importance of economic issues. These, we realized, were vital routes to the spread of Islam and the spread of education, and to the struggle for power, locally and internationally.”

livestock in the countryside. It provided the school fees for students of NIF members to attend the secondary schools, the military academy, and the university. It became the financial foundation of the Islamists and a source of capital in the Sudan hitherto controlled by banks in the Western tradition.

Turabi and the Islamists ended up benefiting from the National Reconciliation more than Sadiq and the Umma Party. Accusing Nimeiri of renegeing on his commitments, Sadiq resigned from the SSU and the Umma Party boycotted elections in 1980 (Lesch 1998, 53). Meanwhile, Turabi was appointed attorney general at a time when Nimeiri was leaning more towards the application of shariah law. In September 1983 Nimeiri issued his fateful decree to adopt sharia laws. What appeared to be a move at the behest of the Ikhwan, it was in fact done without the knowledge of Turabi and members of the Islamic movement (El-Affendi 1991, 121; Turabi in Hamdi 1998, 25).⁷¹ Recognizing Nimeiri's decision was a desperate act to improve his declining political standing, they also "were aware that official initiatives towards Islam were a response to the growth of Islam towards which we had been working for a long time" (Turabi quoted in Hamdi 1998, 25). Consequently, the Ikhwan "concentrated on using every opportunity to promote and give prominence to Islamic demands and ideas in order not to allow the regime to renege on its policy, and in order to utilize the opportunity to build a popular momentum for the movement...The wisest course for us was to advance our long-term objective: the full establishment of all aspects of Islamic life" (Turabi quoted in Hamdi 1998, 25-26).

While the Islamists rejoiced, the Southerners watched in disbelief as Nimeiri blatantly abrogated the Addis Ababa agreement. In January 1983 a group of soldiers from the 105th battalion in Bor, Southern Sudan refused orders to be transferred to the North. When the army moved against the intransigent unit, the Bor soldiers fled to

⁷¹ In fact, Nimeiri was advised by several religious clerics from Sufi families.

Ethiopia, taking their vehicles and weapons with them. They also inspired a series of other desertions, mutinies, and revolts in the South throughout the year (Johnson and Prunier 1993, 124-125.) The mutinous groups found sanctuary in Ethiopia, where they united to form the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). War had once again erupted in the South.

With the conflict in the South growing, Nimeiri tried to regain the political upper-hand. In 1984 Nimeiri moved against the ICF after the Islamists exhibited their political strength by organizing a march of nearly one million people on the first anniversary of the shari'a decrees (Lesch 1998, 57) and immediately after a visit by U.S. Vice-President George Bush. Nimeiri had Turabi arrested and the ICF members were expelled from the SSU. Nimeiri's political life, however, was on its last leg. In 1985 Nimeiri was overthrown in April in a mass uprising in Khartoum.

After Nimeiri's demise, a Transitional Military Council (TMC) assumed control of the government and multi-party parliamentary elections were held in 1986. In 1985 the Ikhwan launched the National Islamic Front to represent the movement in the political arena. Having benefited tremendously from operating as part of the state and the revolution of Islamic finance (and their fortuitous departure from the Nimeiri regime prior to its overthrow, by which they were able to distance themselves from the reviled dictator), the Islamic movement was in a position to be more competitive than ever in its history in national elections.

The NIF won 51 seats (of which 23 were in graduates' constituencies), establishing it as the third-largest political party behind the Umma and the DUP and forcing the two traditional parties to pay it notice. Nonetheless, the NIF only won 28 out of 236 geographical constituencies, more than half of which were from Khartoum. While pleased by the election results, the NIF also was forced to acknowledge the degree to

which the traditional parties were deeply entrenched in rural Sudan and that to accede power democratically would require decades more of political work.

With the Umma Party winning the election, Sadiq al-Mahdi once again was selected as prime minister. At first the NIF was excluded from the coalition government, but after a brutal political campaign which criticized the Umma-led government's adoption of IMF-instructed economic reforms and al-Mahdi's ambiguity on the shariah laws, in 1988 the Umma Party leader, in an effort to quiet the opposition, invited the NIF into the government. Turabi again became attorney general and then foreign minister. Al-Mahdi's concessions to the NIF irritated the DUP, the other major coalition partner, and some conservative Arab governments who feared the growing Islamist movements in their own countries. The DUP withdrew from the government and signed a remarkable agreement with the SPLM on November 16, 1988, which called for the "freezing" of shariah and the convening of an inclusive constitutional conference as a step toward resolving the civil war (Lesch 1998, 79-80). Pressure further mounted on Al-Mahdi to negotiate with the SPLM when the Minister of Defense, General Abd al-Majid Khalil, resigned in December 1989 amid frustration at Al-Mahdi's continued reliance and support for tribal militias from Kordofan and Darfur at the expense of the official armed forces. Moreover, Khalil was upset by the increasing influence of the NIF in the coalition government (Lesch 1998, 83) and the negative effects this was having on acquiring military support from friendly Middle Eastern countries (El-Affendi 1991, 189). In early February 1989 Khalil's demands were echoed in an ultimatum sent to Al-Mahdi by three hundred senior officers, in which the army brass argued for Al-Mahdi to negotiate with the SPLA if he was not going to support the military. This and subsequent ultimatums forced Al-Mahdi to reshuffle his cabinet, replace the NIF, and initiate negotiations with the SPLM. On the cusp of revoking sharia and signing a political

settlement to end the second civil war, Sadiq al-Mahdi was overthrown in a coup d'état by Brigadier Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir. After more than 35 years of preparation, the Islamic movement had acceded power.

After the Coup: Clientelism, Repression, and the Failure of the Islamist Project

The coup d'état on June 30, 1989 ushered in the National Salvation regime (known as the Inqaz in Arabic). The Islamic movement orchestrated the revolution, but to mask its influence the coup plotters banned the NIF along with all other political parties and jailed Turabi. The public face of the new government was the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which was composed entirely of military officers, and a civilian Council of Ministers. Real power, however, rested in the *majils al shura* (Islamic Consultative Council), the supreme shura council of the Islamic movement. To implement its policies, the regime relied heavily on the Islamic tanzem.

Led by Turabi, the regime's overriding goal was to implement its Islamic project: to create an Islamic state based on Islamic principles and jurisprudence. The movement strongly believed that the Muslim majority supported such a goal. In the Sudan Charter it published in 1987 it declared:

The Muslims are unitarian in their religious approach to life. As matter of faith, they do not espouse secularism. Neither do they accept it politically. They see it as a doctrine that is neither neutral nor fair, being prejudicial to them in particular: it deprives them of the full expression of their legal and other values in the area of public life, without such detriment to those non-muslim believers whose creed is exclusively relevant to private and moral life... The Muslims, therefore, have a legitimate right, by virtue of their religious choice, of their democratic weight and of natural justice, to practice the values and rules of their religion to their full range - in personal, familial, social or political affairs.⁷²

For the NIF, the Islamic state would stand on a legal pillar—*shariah*—and a political one—*shura*.

⁷² Available at <http://www.fou.uib.no/fd/1996/f/712001/annex3.htm>

The Ingaz regime lifted the suspension of the shariah laws imposed by Al-Mahdi's government and in 1991 passed the Islamic Penal Code, which included *hudud* punishments for apostasy, adultery, and other social crimes. To Turabi, the Islamic principle of *shura* (or consultation) was the basis of democracy. To put it in practice, the regime sought mass political participation through a pyramidal system of popular committees which would allow society to converse with and influence the government. Some 9,000 local popular committees were established, which "would select representatives for district-level committees and town assemblies, who would then form a regional parliament. At the apex, two people from each region would comprise the central Peoples' Parliament" (Lesch 1998, 120). In addition, the regime heavily emphasized the importance of decentralization and federalization and divided Sudan's nine provinces into 26 states in 1994. Ultimately, the NIF believed its authority and legitimacy would derive from its role in establishing Sudan's first genuine Islamic state based on shariah and shura.

While the regime sought to transform the Sudanese state, it also worked to consolidate its hold on power, recognizing its dreams of an Islamic state would be destroyed if overthrown. Having come to power in a coup d'état, the regime lacked broad-based support, however. The heart of the Islamic movement, the tanzeem, was diverse, well-regulated and efficient, but it represented only a small percentage of the population. The NIF as a political movement (i.e., including those who supported the NIF politically, but who could not be trusted as committed Islamists) was similarly limited. In 1986, the party only captured 18.46 percent of the national vote. Thus, the struggle for the NIF was obvious: how to politically dominate a country of 25 million with a small minority.

The NIF was not unprepared for this challenge. Part of its legitimacy it hoped to derive from Islam itself and its pledges to rule based on Islamic principles. The NIF was not the first Sudanese regime to do so. As Esposito and Voll (1996, 79-80) remind us, “From the time of the establishment of the central government by the Turco-Egyptian conquerors in the 1820s, rulers in Sudan have utilized Islamic themes as a way of appealing to the largest single group within the population. The armies of Muhammad Ali [the Mahdi] included Muslim teachers from the great Islamic university of al-Azhar in Cairo, who urged local peoples to accept the new rulers as representatives of the great sultan-caliphs of Islam.” But it also went step further by portraying its political opponents as enemies of Islam and declaring jihad against Southerners and people from the Nuba Mountains.

Islamic ideology was useful in mobilizing recruits to join the *Defa Shabi* (Popular Defense Forces) to fight against the SPLA in the South and especially as the rebel movement sought to make inroads in northern Sudan in the Nuba Mountains, Darfur, and eastern Sudan. As Sidahmed (1996, 223) describes:

With the growing military operations and rising casualties, the civil war has been increasingly portrayed as a *jihad*, the PDF as *mujahidin*, and those lost in battle as martyrs. Themes of *jihad* and martyrdom have become an essential feature of the official discourse, particularly in mass media organs... ‘We are living in the time of *sahabah* (the Prophets Companions),’ said Umar al-Bashir in an address to a gathering of ‘*mujahidin*,’ ‘these difficulties and tests will only enhance our faith and (vigilance)...we are living today the time of the battle of *Khandaq* when the Prophet Muhammad confronted [and prevailed over] scores of enemies...’

In the first few years of the NIF regime, the Islamic discourse was an effective tool to spur political mobilization and elicit citizen compliance.

The NIF also did not hesitate to employ systematic and brutal repression against anyone it perceived as resisting its rule or not supporting its Islamist agenda. Security forces were granted legally-sanctioned impunity as they hunted down the dissenters

identified by members of the tanzeem or the popular committees. Political opponents, real or perceived, were taken to “ghost houses,” secret prisons that had sprouted up throughout the country, even in the most inappropriate places, such as the former office of the Sudan Bar Association, where the NIF security held and tortured detainees without warrants or court orders, (Rone 1996, 61). The sheer scale and intensity of the state violence far surpassed anything Sudanese society had experienced before, including the military rule by Abboud and Nimeiri.

Consistent with Turabi’s political pragmatism of the past, these institutions were justifiable tools to apply until the Islamic project could be fully consolidated. But the heavy reliance on these institutions from day one created a vicious cycle—the more the regime used patron-client networks and state violence to assert political domination, the more it undermined its Islamist project,⁷³ and caused the regime to fall back on the institutions of clientelism and repression. Before long the Islamist project had nearly collapsed and the regime elites lost sight of the objective altogether. Instead, staying in power became a goal in and of itself.

Summary

Over the course of 35 years, the National Islamic Front (NIF) evolved from an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt with a few student followers to an independent and country-wide political party supported by a tight-knit, diverse and well-disciplined network that penetrated the Sudanese military and security services and gained prodigious financial backing from Sudan’s Islamic banks. After the 1989 coup d’état, the NIF sought to transform Sudanese society based on its interpretation of Islam

⁷³Consequently, the NIF’s brutal application of state violence, as Turabi admitted in an interview, undermined the entire Islamist project. Interview with Turabi, Khartoum, Sudan, March 2006.

and publicly asserted its commitment to governing based on the Islamic principles of shura and sharia. Like so many ideological movements before it, the NIF's obsession with establishing total control over Sudanese society and maintaining its hold on power trumped and, in the end, completely destroyed the credibility of its Islamist project. At the heart of its totalitarian project were the institutions of clientelism and repression. The tanzeem—the underground network of the Islamic movement—served as the core of the clientelist network and aspired to broaden its infiltration of rural areas, while uprooting the old networks supporting the Umma and DUP, with the introduction of the popular committees, the re-institution of the Native Administration, and a further federalization of the state system. The NIF's repressive apparatus was to be just as formidable, with control firmly based in the Islamic movement. New security organs, such as the Popular Defense Forces, were created to check the traditional army and police. Over time Military Intelligence and National Security would play an increasingly important role of spying on Sudanese citizens. Security forces applied physical sanctions, including arrest, torture, murder, displacement, and interrogations, of anyone identified as a 'threat' to national security. Frequently repression was applied indiscriminately to entire villages or ethnic groups who were perceived as supporting the SPLA or other dissident groups.

While the NIF aspired to establish total control through a ubiquitous security and resource network and the overwhelming application of coercion, the reality on the ground would be far different. Sudan's heterogeneous society, the entrenched nature of old networks, and, most importantly, the NIF's Arabist bias and ubiquitous divide-and-rule policies significantly affected the nature of its repressive and clientelist institutions and its ability to employ them to effectively contain and prevent dissident activities.

In the following two chapters, I illustrate how the institutions of repression and clientelism manifested themselves in Darfur during two periods: immediately after the

coup and then again after a major split in the Islamic movement in 1999. I then examine how, if at all, the institutions changed and how they mediated the interaction between the regime and dissidents during the two periods.

Chapter 6. Darfur I (1989-1992): Insurgency Defeated

In October 1991 a 1000-man⁷⁴ military contingent from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) entered southwestern Darfur on foot from southern Sudan. The expeditionary force was another attempt by John Garang, the forward-thinking leader of the SPLA, to extend a rebellion that had been ongoing since 1983 into northern Sudan and shatter the north-south, Arab-African, Muslim-non-Muslim construction of the civil war. The region appeared ripe to become the next front in the SPLA's war against the central government in Khartoum. In the late 1980s a devastating conflict erupted in Darfur between the Fur, the largest non-Arab tribe in the region,⁷⁵ and a coalition of Arab tribes due to a volatile mix of ecological pressures, institutional collapse, polarization between the central and local governments, and spillover of a proxy war between Sudan's western neighbors, Libya and Chad. The Fur received support from Hissene Habre's government in Chad, while the Arab tribal militias received weapons from Libya and some, such as the *murahaliin*⁷⁶ from southern Darfur, were directly supported by the central government in Khartoum as part of its counterinsurgency operations against the SPLA. With common enemies and mutual opposition to the growing Arabist discourse emanating from Khartoum and regional Arab groups, the Fur and the SPLA made natural allies and rumors had circulated for years of a link between the SPLA and the Fur militias.

⁷⁴ Estimates of the number of troops varied from 1000 to 3000. One official Sudanese government military source estimated the forces to include 1075 soldiers and some 40 officers. Interview Khartoum.

⁷⁵ The Muslim, non-Arab Fur are predominantly sedentary farmers and concentrated in central Darfur around Jebel Marra—the historical center of the Fur Sultanate.

⁷⁶ The *murahaliin* is the name of the militias from the Baggara, the cattle-herding tribes of southern Darfur and southern Kordofan.

The genesis of the Fur-SPLA military campaign originated not from Garang or local Fur in Darfur, but from Daud Yahya Bolad, a Fur Islamist and prominent member of the National Islamic Front (NIF). Shortly after the NIF coup d'état in 1989, Bolad defected from the regime when he received a marginal position in the new administration and as violence continued in Darfur despite the signing of a reconciliation agreement between tribal leaders of the Fur and Arabs in July 1989. Bolad left Sudan for Egypt, where he met other Fur elites and where the idea of launching a political and military campaign to protect their kinsmen in Darfur germinated. Their search for support brought them into an alliance with the SPLA.

When Bolad and the SPLA forces entered Darfur in October 1991, their goal was to reach Jebel Marra, a mountain in the center of Darfur and historical center of the Fur people. With the mountain providing natural protection and with the Fur already organized and armed due to the pre-existing communal conflict with the Arabs, Bolad believed they could sustain an insurgency against the government. Bolad and his forces never made it to Jebel Marra, however. On the foothills of the Marra mountain, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) allied with Arab tribal militias (known as the *Fursan*) defeated the insurgency. Bolad was captured, shown on state television, and then executed. The western front would remain closed to the SPLA for the next decade.

Why did Bolad's rebellion fail? How was the government able to defeat the insurgency? Why did local communities not rise up and join the rebellion as Bolad and other rebel leaders anticipated? In this chapter, I address these questions and illustrate that the NIF's extensive ruling network in Darfur facilitated the government to defeat the rebellion. The regime's ties with local Darfurian Islamists, including from the Fur tribe, and efforts, as a new government, to cultivate ties with many local societal groups provided channels for the regime to acquire local information about grievances and

conditions in Darfur. These ties were maintained and even intensified despite a failed coup d'état in April 1990, which the regime identified with the Baathists and army officers from the Beja ethnic group. Though the NIF purged non-Islamists from the army (who were disproportionately from the Beja ethnic group), it did not lead to violent ethnic exclusion or otherwise affect the regime's network in Darfur.

While Bolad was training with the SPLA, in southern Sudan in the first part of 1991, President Bashir made an important administrative change in Darfur by appointing Al-Tayib Ibrahim Muhammad Kheir as governor in 1991, which some of the Fur perceived was made in response to their grievances about the previous governor. Though Al-Tayib was a northerner, he established relations with local Fur leaders and oversaw a disarmament campaign to restore order to Darfur only a few months before Bolad entered the region. Consequently, when Bolad and the SPLA launched their offensive, the local enthusiasm and recruits that they anticipated never materialized. Instead, Al-Tayib relied on Fur interlocutors, in addition to the army, Arab tribal militias, and other groups in Darfur, who supported the Ingaz, to counter-mobilize. The Fur intermediaries persuaded Fur communities not to support the SPLA and Bolad and, in turn, convinced the government to limit indiscriminate violence against the Fur in order to avoid inflaming the conflict. Lacking a surge of local support, the SPLA forces—99 percent of whom were southerners—were easily identified and captured. Moreover, the SPLA involvement made it easy for the government to use religion as a mobilizing frame.

A massive infusion of external resources may have helped the insurgents overcome these unfavorable conditions and over time buy community support and resurrect an indigenous military force, but the SPLA failed to provide logistical support to the expeditionary force due to an internal coup against John Garang in August 1991

and the SPLA's expulsion from Ethiopia. Consequently, the regime's counterinsurgency operations easily prevailed.

The rest of the chapter is as follows. I begin by providing the historical context of the Fur-Arab conflict and the regional conflagration involving Sudan, Chad, and Libya. I then discuss the NIF's attempts to establish political control in Darfur after the June 30th coup, building on its extensive Islamist network in the region. Next I explain Bolad's defection from the NIF, the emergence of the dissident Fur group, and its alliance with the SPLA. Finally I describe the outcome of the conflict and analyze how the structure of the ruling network facilitated an effective counterinsurgency campaign.

Precursor to the Bolad Insurgency: The Arab-Fur Conflict

Darfur, an area slightly smaller than the size of France, occupies the western region of Sudan, which is bordered by Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya to the west and the Sudanese provinces of Bahr al-Ghazal, Kordofan, and Northern Sudan to the east. (See map in Appendix I). Historically much of Darfur was ruled by the Islamic political kingdom of the Fur Sultanate from the 17th century up until 1916. In 1916 British-led forces killed the Fur Sultan, Ali Dinar, and forcibly incorporated the region into its colony of Sudan. Darfur has a diverse ethnic composition with a central belt of non-Arab sedentary farmers, surrounded by Arab cattle and camel herding nomads.

Ecological and Institutional Crises

In the 1970s and 1980s drought and desertification were disrupting traditional livelihoods and migration patterns for nomadic communities in Darfur and across the Sahel. Chadian Arabs from the Abbala Rizeigat, Beni Halba, Misiriya, Mahadi, and Salamat tribes were moving en masse to Darfur, where they had extended kinship

networks (Flint and de Waal 2005, 25). Abbala nomads and the Zaghawa (a non-Arab ethnic group whose homeland straddles the Sudan and Chad border) of northern Darfur were migrating southward. Zaghawa settled around Nyala and as far as Ed-Daein in South Darfur, where some prospered as traders (Ibrahim 1998), while the Sudanese Abbala Rizeigat encroached into the farming land of the Fur and other tribes who live on the most fertile territory around Jebel Marra. Like during previous droughts, these ecological pressures intensified conflict over grazing space and access to water. Yet, unlike in the past, the institutions managing land tenure and migration—the *hawakir*⁷⁷ and native administration—had been significantly undermined by post-independence governments, particularly the Nimeiri regime.

In 1970 Nimeiri declared all unregistered land as government property and abolished the native administration, transferring its judicial and administrative functions

⁷⁷ Historically, land tenure in Darfur has been organized based on the *hawakir* institution, a legacy of the Fur sultanate that had emerged by the beginning of the 18th century. The Sultan distributed *hakuras* (or estates) to various notables, at first, as a means of attracting religious teachers into Darfur and gradually as a system for extending the authority of the sultanate. The patron-client relationship allowed the estate-holders to administer and tax the land in exchange for a portion of the revenue and loyalty to the sultan. The grantees were not given sole ownership of the land and the taxes, but shared administrative and judicial responsibilities with the local *shartay*, or district chief, of the sultanate (O'fahey 1980, 54-55). How *hawakir* were distributed would have lasting consequences on land 'ownership' in Darfur. In some cases the allocation of land reflected extant tribal concentrations and strength. In an effort to gain the allegiance of large tribes, such as the Baggara in southern Darfur, the Sultan recognized the communal lands of these communities as *hakura* and supported their tribal leaders' rights over the land. Other times, however, the entitlement of a *hakura* would be granted to prominent individuals, not communities, and the process of populating the *hakura* with one's extended family and outsiders would contribute to the construction of a new identity group. As de Waal and Young (2005, 12) comment, in these cases "in North or South-West Darfur, it might be said that ethnic identity follows the *hakura* grant, not the other way round." The *hawakir* proved extremely resilient. Backed by the power of the sultanate, land boundaries were relatively inviolable. They were surveyed and demarcated in the presence of both the district chief and a representative of the sultan (O'Fahey 1980). Then, land grants were issued in the form of "seal-bearing charters (written in Arabic) confirming the authority of the chief over his people and his right to manage the land that falls within the territory of the tribe" (Abdul-Jalil 2005, 60). The title deeds survived the death of the sultan who issued it and were inherited by family members of the original estate-holder. Boundary disputes were often settled in sultanate courts (O'Fahey 1980, 60-61). At the same time, *hakura* were not closed territories. The 'principle of hospitality' allowed strangers and other outsiders to use land within the *hakura* in exchange for paying taxes and abiding by local norms and traditions (de Waal and Young 2005, 12). Often times if these newcomers developed permanent residence within the *hakura*, they would assimilate into the tribe or community group that dominated the territory (Haaland 1969).

to local councils, which formed the base of a pyramidal council system linking the rural areas to the executive. While the goal of Nimeiri's reforms was to modernize the local administration, the central government did not provide the local councils with sufficient resources to function effectively. Moreover, the administrators were appointed by the ruling Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) and lacked local legitimacy. The abolishment of the native administration had the effect of "liquidat[ing] the senior offices that held jurisdiction over the hakuras" (de Waal and Young 2005, 13). While the hakura system persisted informally, land tenure and administration was thrown into disarray. The tribal leaders no longer had the authority to settle disputes over land and settlement. Moreover, how individuals, particularly those disadvantaged by the hawakeer system, viewed land tenure changed after Nimeiri's reforms; they felt they "had inalienable and equal rights to all productive resources available" (Harir 1994, 163).

With the institution of land tenure and regulation in flux, drought and desertification were causing massive population changes in Darfur. As the Abbala encroached onto Fur land and began to settle more permanently, the Fur tribal leaders lacked the authority to enforce the nomads to abide by traditional land tenure rules. At the same time, Fur farmers, facing dwindling arable land, started to cultivate fields in the midst of nomad migration routes and erected barriers to prevent nomadic passage. As conflict intensified between the two sides, the native administration was too weak to settle the disputes and the state too ineffective. With local institutions of conflict mediation in flux, the system would become further overwhelmed by the spillover of a proxy war between Chad and Libya which brought with it racial polarization and a flood of modern weapons.

In this environment of institutional weakness, low-level conflict proliferated. Meanwhile, the spillover of a proxy war between Chad and Libya and the malfeasance of

the central government in Khartoum further enflamed conflict in Darfur, leading to a full-scale civil war between the Fur and a group of Arab tribes.

A Proxy War Plays Out in Darfur

The year 1969 saw Jaafar al-Nimeiri come to power in Sudan and Muammar Qaddafi in Libya. Both leaders were of a similar ideological mold—rejecting multi-party politics and espousing socialism, Arab Nationalism and anti-Westernism—and made natural allies. In 1971 Qaddafi intervened and rescued Nimeiri when the Sudanese leader was nearly deposed by the Communists in a coup d'état (Burr and Collins 1999, 81). The close relationship between the two leaders was short-lived, however. Nimeiri alienated Qaddafi after rejecting his proposal that Sudan and Libya unify their states (Prunier 2005, 45). Moreover, Qaddafi disapproved of Nimeiri's decision to grant autonomy to the non-Muslim, African south in the Addis Ababa agreement and Khartoum's improved relations with the United States after the failed Communist coup.⁷⁸

With the souring of Sudan-Libya relations, Qaddafi provided support and sanctuary to Sadiq al-Mahdi, the Islamists and other opposition leaders as they organized to invade Sudan and overthrow Nimeiri (see Chapter five). After being nearly toppled by the Libyan-backed Ansar insurrection in 1976, Nimeiri “denounced Qaddafi as a split personality, ‘both evil’” (Burr and Collins 1999, 114) and began to support Chadian leaders, particularly Hissene Habre, to counter Qaddafi's campaign to annex Chad “in his quest for the Greater Islamic State of the Sahel” (Ogunbadejo 1983,161). Nimeiri allowed Habre to establish bases in Darfur, where military assistance from the U.S. and

⁷⁸ The United States would support Sudan as a key counter-balance to Libya, which had claimed control of the Azzozou strip in northern Chad and was supporting various insurgents in Niger and around the world.

Egypt started to flow.⁷⁹ In 1982, Habre overthrew Goukouni Oueddei, the Libyan-backed president of Chad, and worked to extricate Chad from Libyan influence. But Qaddafi refused to yield. By the end of 1982, remnants of the Goukoni regime, which had regrouped into a potent rebel force supported by Libyan-purchased weaponry and air cover, were making headway into northern Chad. In August 1983, the French intervened to save the overthrow of the Habre regime, but allowed the Libyan-backed rebel forces to occupy the northern-third of Chad.⁸⁰

With Libya's ambitions checked in northern Chad, Qaddafi turned his attention to eastern Chad and Darfur. After Nimeiri was overthrown in the April 1985 uprising, Qaddafi saw an opening. The mercurial leader terminated his support to the SPLA⁸¹ and offered military assistance to Sudan's new government, the Transitional Military Council (TMC), led by General Swar al-Dahab. As the rebellion in southern Sudan intensified, al-Dahab welcomed Qaddafi's support. Al-Dahab responded in kind by ending Sudanese support for Habre and turning a blind eye as Libyan agents infiltrated Darfur in preparation of opening a new eastern front against Chad (Burr and Collins 1999, 198-201). In 1986 the Umma Party, supported financially by Qaddafi, won the parliamentary elections and Sadiq al-Mahdi became prime minister. Indebted to Qaddafi for supporting him in exile and during the elections, al-Mahdi allowed the Libyans to establish military bases in Darfur where they supported the Islamic Legion⁸² and anti-Habre forces, such as the Conseil Democratique Revolutionaire (CDR) of Sheikh Ibn Omer.

⁷⁹ According to Prunier (2005, 48), "The CIA had opened a station in El-Fashir and had its own plane doing monthly trips between Cairo (its rear base for the Darfur operation), Khartoum and El-Fashir."

⁸⁰ Paris was trying to maintain a delicate balancing act: to defend Chad's sovereignty as a country with historical and cultural links to France, but not to jeopardize its economic links with Libya, from where it received significant oil imports (Burr and Collins 1999, Chapter 8).

⁸¹ Qaddafi had supported the SPLA in 1983 and 1984 as a way to weaken Nimeiri.

⁸² Since the early 1970s, Qaddafi had been recruiting Muslims across the Sahel for his Islamic Legion. Though the recruits were predominantly Arabized Africans, it also included such non-Arabs, as the

Dependent upon local Darfurian groups to support their operations out of western Sudan, “Libyan officials described as aid workers...recruit[ed] among the local Arabic-speaking nomads.”⁸³ In particular, the Mahamid, the largest group of Abbala Arabs (camel-herding nomads) in northern Darfur served as the key intermediaries for the Islamic Legion and anti-Habre forces (Flint and de Waal 2005, 48). As arms flowed into Darfur from Libya for the Chadian rebels, many ended up in the hands of the Mahamid and other northern Rezeigat. The arming of the Mahamid coincided with increased conflict between the Abbala and the Fur as desertification pushed the former further south into the fertile farm belt around Jebel Marra. The violence between the nomads and the farmers reached an unprecedented intensity. To reduce the incentives for the Abbala nomads to enter their land, the Fur burned their pasture, blocked access to grazing routes and watering holes and began to form self-defense militias (Harir 1994, 165). The Fur sought financial support from Fur expatriate workers in the Gulf (Prunier 2005, 63) and started to receive weapons from Habre (Flint and de Waal 2005, 55).

As the Abbala-Fur conflict intensified, Darfur became the central battleground of the Chadian civil war. In April 1987 the Chadian army launched an offensive into Darfur destroying much of the Libyan supported forces. A second attack was launched in November targeting camps in Kabkabiya, As-Sireif and Gama, in which 200 rebels and countless civilians were killed (Prunier 2005, 60-61). These operations pushed the Chadian Arabs and Ibn Omer’s forces deeper into Darfur. In March 1988 a major battle erupted between Sheikh Ibn Omer’s forces, which sought to establish a camp in the

Zaghawa and Tuaregs from Mali. Some of the most important foot-soldiers were from Chadian Arab groups who had relatives in northern Darfur among the northern Reizeigat.

⁸³ “Bandit Country,” *The Economist*, May 7, 1988.

natural protection provided by Jebel Marra and Fur militias, which were intent on defending their land.⁸⁴

It was in the mid-1980s that the Sudanese governments, first the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and then Sadiq al-Mahdi's regime, began to support and arm the *murahaliin* militias of the Rizzeigat and Missirya tribes (Baggara Arabs with homelands in southern Darfur and Kordofan) as a counterinsurgency tactic against the SPLA. Reacting to SPLA incursions into northern Darfur, the central governments felt arming the militias strategically located in the transitional zones between northern and southern Sudan and staunch supporters of the Umma Party would be more politically feasible than mass conscription in the North (de Waal 1993, 143). While the *murahaliin*'s primary focus was southern Sudan, as the conflict in Darfur between the Abbala and the Fur escalated and took on racial dimensions between the "Arabs" and the "Blacks" (*zurga*), some of the Baggara militias, especially from the Beni Halba, began to fight with the Abbala and Chadian Arabs against the Fur, the traditional rival of the Baggara in southern Darfur (Harir 1994).

The Fur felt they were under assault from all sides: the Qadaffi-backed Islamic Legion and Chadian rebels organizing in Darfur against Habre; the Abbala Arabs, now armed by Libya, and the Zaghawa migrating south due to drought and desertification; and the Baggara Arabs who had close connections with the al-Mahdi government and were supported by the Sudanese Army. The Fur increasingly perceived the violence perpetrated against them as an "Arab conspiracy" against the black Africans...which extended from the central government in Khartoum to the local Arab tribes in Dar Fur and on the basis of the ideology of Arab nationalism as espoused by Libya, included non-Sudanese Arabs" (Harir 1994, 149). In what appeared to corroborate their suspicions, a

⁸⁴ *Africa Confidential*, May 27, 1988.

public letter emerged in 1987 addressed to Sadiq al Mahdi from a group calling itself the *Tajamu al Arabi*, or “Arab Gathering,” which claimed the superiority of the Arab race in Darfur, called for greater Arab representation in government, and concluded that if “this neglect of the participation of the Arab race continued things will break loose from the hands of the wise men to those of the ignorant, leading to matters of grave consequences” (International Crisis Group 2004, 9-10).

Though their tone and language was exceedingly supremacist, the letter and the political mobilization of the Arab coalition generated from deep-rooted grievances. The Abbala in northern Darfur and the Chadian Arabs who had migrated to Darfur in the early 20th century lacked land rights and found themselves politically marginalized. These groups pinned their blame on the Fur Sultanate, in which political power and the best land were controlled by the Fur and other sedentary tribes in central Darfur at the expense of nomadic tribes in the periphery. Moreover, they claim the Fur who led the regional government in the early 1980s perpetuated this legacy and “excluded the Arabs who should have enjoyed equal rights of access to natural productive resources as citizens of the Sudan” (Harir 1994, 149-150).

By 1988 a full-scale civil war was raging in Darfur between a coalition of 27 Arab tribes and the Fur militias. Some of the hardest hit communities were Fur villages in Wadi Salih, in southwest Darfur, a rich agricultural region. According to an investigation by the Sudanese Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in January 1989, in the last few months of 1988 some 57 villages had been burned, 378 people killed, 108 people wounded and 42,000 driven from their homes during the previous few months (Africa Watch 1990, 5). Racial ideologies served to intensify the violence as both sides

accused the other of genocidal intentions.⁸⁵ As the war spiraled out of control, the Sudanese government should have intervened, but it too was paralyzed by ethnic differences. The central government of Sadiq al-Mahdi was accused of supporting the Arab coalition and the regional government of being sympathetic to the Fur. In May 1989 one of the bloodiest battles of the conflict occurred when a 3000-strong *murahaliin* militia force attacked near Kass, south of Jebel Marra (Africa Watch 1990, 5-6). Despite suffering extensive casualties,⁸⁶ the Fur, strengthened by weapons from Habre and new military techniques (e.g., trenches were dug around susceptible villages) to thwart the effectiveness of the Arab militia raids (Prunier 2005, 69) repulsed the attack. After the pitched battle near Kass, the Arabs learned that the Fur could not be easily defeated and the former opted for negotiations (Prunier 2005, 69). By the time a reconciliation conference opened in El Fasher in May 1989, hundreds of villages had been burned, tens of thousands of livestock had been lost, and over 3,000 Darfurians had been killed, with the Fur suffering more than 80 percent of the deaths.⁸⁷

Arab-Fur Reconciliation Conference

Under the leadership of al-Tijani Sese, a Fur who was appointed governor of Darfur in 1988, a serious effort was made to try to end the devastating communal conflict. In the first part of 1989, a committee of Darfurian tribal leaders toured the region and meet with the various communities involved in order to convince them to

⁸⁵ These perceptions were revealed at the reconciliation conference in which the Fur delegation asserted that “[t]he dirty war that has been imposed upon us [i.e. the Fur], began as an economic war but soon it assumed a genocidal course aiming at driving us out of our ancestral land in order to achieve certain political goals,” while the Arab delegation retorted that “let us not be in doubt about who began this war: it is the Fur who in their quest to extend the so-called ‘African belt’ ... wanted to remove all the Arabs from this soil” (Harir 1994, 146-147).

⁸⁶ According to Africa Watch (1990, 6 fn), the government admitted 460 casualties, with some estimates as high as 1500.

⁸⁷ This information comes from Harir 1994 who gathered it from the proceedings of the tribal reconciliation conference held in El Fasher throughout May, June and July of 1989, which reflects official police records. Prunier (2005, 65) suggests a figure three-times as high.

accept negotiations (Harir 1994, 171). In May the reconciliation meeting, chaired by the Sultan of Dar Masaleet, opened in El Fasher, but made little headway as the violence continued. On June 30th, 1989, the NIF overthrew Sadiq al-Mahdi. The change of government accelerated the negotiations. The NIF cited the Darfur conflict, along with the worsening of the civil war in the South, as key failures of the al-Mahdi government and pledged to restore stability to Darfur. The NIF tasked Mohamed al-Amin Khalifa, a Darfurian who served on the RCC, to push the negotiations forward. On July 8, 1989, nine days after the coup, an agreement was signed by 110 Arab representatives and 110 Fur representatives and ratified by the new government. The main provisions of the agreement included: the demobilization and disarmament of Fur and Arab militias; the opening of nomad migration routes and protection for farmers; the deportation of those who entered the region illegally; the eviction of groups who expropriated land or villages during the conflict; and the establishment of a committee for migration routes, pasture and water (Harir 1994, 172). Having achieved a reconciliation agreement, the NIF was faced with the awesome task of putting an end to the violence and consolidating political control of the “Wild West.”⁸⁸ (AC 1988).

The NIF Network in Darfur, 1989-1991

Despite Darfur’s geographical remoteness from Khartoum and marginal economic importance, the region was not without political significance to the National Islamic Front. Though not as well represented at the movement’s top level as northerners, Darfurians comprised one of the largest bases of support for the new regime. Darfurians, especially Zaghawa, participated throughout the Islamic movement, including in the security organs and the military. Moreover, historically Darfur was home to the

⁸⁸ *Africa Confidential* 1988.

Islamic Fur Sultanate and the Mahdist uprising, which expelled the Turco-Egyptians and instituted an Islamic state in 1885. The NIF viewed themselves rather than the Umma Party as the “legitimate inheritors of the Mahdi legacy.”⁸⁹ Finally, the NIF recognized Darfur and its Muslim population as an important base from where it could spread its Islamist project into the Sahel and crush the secularist SPLA in southern Sudan. After the coup, the NIF underground network in Darfur sought to pacify the region, cultivate allies for its Islamist campaign, undermine the opposition parties, particularly the Umma Party, and consolidate political control.

History of NIF in Darfur

The Islamic movement had made an early entry in Darfur when Suliman Mustapha, a Zaghawa from Um Baru, won a seat in parliament in 1965 as a member of the Islamic Charter Front (one of only five seats the ICF gained in the elections). Mustapha, one of the first Zaghawa to obtain a university degree, inspired many of his kinsmen and other Darfurians to follow his example at a time when Zaghawa communities were undergoing important socio-economic changes. Drought and desertification forced many Zaghawa to migrate from their tribal homeland in northwestern Darfur to southern and central Darfur. These migrants benefited from a hierarchical social structure and tight kinship networks that persisted across long-distances. As Zaghawa migrants settled around Ed Daien, Fasher, or Nyala, they would remain under the authority of the Zaghawa tribal leaders in the North, which guaranteed continued access to patronage, a vital source in establishing themselves as farmers or merchants in their new environs (de Waal 1989, 91-97; Ibrahim 1998).

⁸⁹ Interview with Ghazi Salah al Din Attabani April 2005.

These tribal networks and a strong emphasis on education allowed the Zaghawa to thrive as they spread out across southern Darfur and traveled abroad to Khartoum, Libya, and the Middle East to obtain jobs (Ibrahim 1998, 137-138).

As the Zaghawa prospered financially and became better educated, they developed a greater political consciousness at a time when the Islamic movement was growing across Sudan. Following Mustapha's influence, a wave of Zaghawa joined the Islamic movement abandoning their traditional affiliations with the Umma Party. Over time the Zaghawa became one of the most active groups in the NIF. The Zaghawa gained such prominence in the Islamic movement, including in the tanzeem, the security, and the PDF, that the northern Rezeigat, territorial rivals of the Zaghawa in North Darfur, equated the National Islamic Front with the Zaghawa and would despise the governorship of Al-Tayib Ibrahim Muhammad Kheir between 1991 and 1993 for his close relationship with members from the tribe.⁹⁰ Reflecting on the role of the Zaghawa in the NIF after the coup d'état, a member of the northern Reizigat tribe asserted, "The police were Zaghawa. The judges Zaghawa. The military Zaghawa. When Arabs went to complain, they would ignore them...The Arabs felt unrepresented."⁹¹

The Darfurian presence in the Islamic movement went far beyond just the Zaghawa. In the 1970s as Turabi transformed and broadened the Islamic movement, Darfurians, representing a cross-section of the region's tribes, enlisted. To the

⁹⁰ When I was in Sudan in March 2005 trying to track down Al-Tayib Ibrahim Mohammed Kheir for an interview, I enquired on his whereabouts from some of the elites from northern Reizigat in Khartoum who had developed a close relationship with the government for their role in mobilizing the Abbala tribal militias against the SLA in 2003. They revealingly said, "Why do you ask us? Why don't you inquire among his friends the Zaghawa?"

⁹¹ Interview with Dr. Fedail in Khartoum, February 19, 2006.

Darfurians, the Islamic movement offered them “a route to overcoming their marginalization, becoming full, emancipated citizens of Sudan, and they embraced it” (de Waal 2004). The central recruiting grounds for the movement were intermediate or secondary schools, where Islamist teachers were able to influence impressionable young people. The teachers often also chaired Koran associations, which would meet after school, and serve as a front for the Islamic movement. Intrigued by the secrecy of the organization and the opportunity to travel to other parts of the Sudan, such as Kassala or Shendi, to interact with other members of the tanzeem, many Darfurians joined.⁹² After secondary school, these young devotees would then meet again at the University of Khartoum where they participated in the movement’s underground cells that dominated the university and battled valiantly against Nimeiri in the early years of his rule. These students would go on to become key members of the Islamic tanzeem in Darfur and benefited from the Islamists decision to join the Nimeiri government when they could obtain government jobs and experience.

Turabi’s attention to western Sudan was also highly politically calculated. According to one of his disciples, Ghazi Salah al Din Attabani, “Hassan al Turabi had a prescient vision of Darfur...He learned from history. The Mahdi had faced the elite of northern Sudan who rejected and ridiculed Mahdism. So he turned to the west and stormed the Nile from Kordofan and Darfur” (quoted in Flint and de Waal 2005). The problem for the Islamists, however, was the Umma Party was the political heavyweight in the region. It had built up a large following in the region since the Mahdi Revolution in the 1880s.

⁹² Based on interviews with members of the Islamic movement in Sudan throughout 2005.

The battle for Darfur would come to a head in the 1986 elections. The NIF felt it could exploit the organizational gains it made under Nimeiri and steal some seats from the Umma Party in Darfur, a region in which the “Ikhwan was one of the most fully developed” (Affendi 1991, 141). Many of the Darfurian NIF members who studied at Khartoum University returned home to Darfur in the early 1980s, were instrumental in the intifadha that ousted the non-Darfurian governor appointed by Nimeiri in 1982, and some served in the new regional government subsequently formed (Salih 2005, 7). Despite investing a considerable amount of resources in its Darfur campaign, the NIF was soundly defeated in the geographical constituencies. Relying on its well-oiled Ansar network and foreign support from Egypt and Libya, the Umma Party pumped money, sugar and other patronage to the tribal leaders and other clients in order to mobilize voters.⁹³ The Umma Party won 34 out of 39 seats in the region. The NIF did well among the educated elites, however, capturing all of the graduate constituencies in Darfur.

Nonetheless, the defeat in 1986 would have long-lasting repercussions for the NIF’s political strategy in Darfur. The NIF recognized unless it was able to woo the tribal leaders and other rural Darfurian elites to its side, it would never achieve political dominance in the region. It also decided if the old guard refused to join its network, it would have to create new elites to rival the traditional notables. To further undermine the Umma’s support base it sought to weaken the large tribal groups that were overwhelmingly Ansar (e.g., the Fur, Maasaleit, southern Rizeigat, and Missiriya) and empower smaller tribes and the recent immigrants.

⁹³ Interview with Ali al-Haj, Islamist leader from Darfur, Bonn, Germany.

After the election, the NIF did not waste any time reaching out to some of the Umma's political stalwarts in Kordofan and Darfur—the Baggara Arabs. The movement held a conference in Southern Kordofan in 1986 for all Arab tribes living in the 'transitional zones' between Northern and Southern Sudan and who the central government was beginning to arm to create militias to fight the SPLA. According to the Fund for Peace (July 1995, 19), "[t]he central agenda of the conference was to call for a 'human belt' running across central Sudan...to defend the cultural and religious purity of the North." The NIF also sought to raise money to purchase arms for the Baggara militias through the formation of a committee of prominent persons who toured the Gulf seeking assistance (Rone 1996, 274). At this time, the NIF was advocating for the creation of a "popular defense force" to mobilize society in the fight against the SPLA. In an effort to mobilize support among the Baggara, the NIF explicitly linked Islamism with Arabism as an antidote to the SPLA's secularism and Africanist agenda. To some observers and non-Arab Islamists this exposed a fundamental bias in the NIF's agenda.

Due to the racial polarization gripping Darfur in the late 1980s, this was a risky strategy that threatened to alienate the NIF's non-Arab following. The movement's involvement in the Sadiq al-Mahdi government in 1988 and subsequent silence on the Arab-Fur conflict further confirmed for some a racial bias against non-Arabs. Daud Bolad, a prominent Fur member of the Islamist network and politically active in Darfur in the 1980s, confronted Turabi and other members of the NIF leadership about the increasing violence against the Fur and the central government's failure to stop it. The leaders dismissed his concerns and Bolad defected after the coup. In January 1989 three Darfurian parliamentarians quit the NIF for the party's failure to speak out against the Darfur conflict. To some observers, Turabi and the NIF's silence incriminated the movement as

supportive of the Libyan-agenda of creating an Islamic and Arabic belt across the Sahel at the expense of non-Arab tribes.

While this created strains within the Islamic movement and led to some defections, it did not radically alter the diverse structure of the NIF network at the time of the coup. Taking power invigorated the members of the tanzeem and their enthusiasm for implementing the Islamist project—to create a state in which Islam would unify society and bring stability to all corners of the country including Darfur. The Darfurians in the tanzeem were especially eager to implement Turabi’s program. Moreover, members of the tanzeem were first in line to benefit from the spoils of power. These factors shored up the core of the NIF’s political network in Darfur at a time of incredible tumult in the region.

Consolidating Power after the 1989 Coup

In Darfur in the first years after the coup d’état the NIF benefited from an active and diverse following. The members of the tanzeem represented the region’s varied tribal groupings, with the Zaghawa particularly prominent. The Fur-Arab conflict had polarized Darfur along racial lines and threatened to entangle the NIF as it served in Sadiq al-Mahdi’s government and silently sided with the Arabs and the Libyans. But in the aftermath of the coup and the fortuitous signing of a reconciliation agreement between the Fur and Arabs, the NIF was able to shore up and strengthen its network in Darfur. Moreover, the NIF exploited its ability to dole out jobs and grant access to state resources as a way to win over new allies. In the first few years, it invited almost all of the tribal leaders from Darfur to Khartoum to ensure their support for the Ingaz revolution. While some Fur leaders were arrested and detained due to links with the opposition, others were incorporated into the patronage network.

Failed Coup in April 1990

Upon coming to power, the NIF's coercive strength was based on its own self-built security apparatus and hand-picked army officers rather than the corporate support from the military, who Turabi was wary of (perhaps because of the Egyptian lesson of army officers turning against the Muslim Brotherhood). This meant there existed autonomous groups within the army, one such group being the Baathists. In April 1990, a group of Baathists led by a former governor from eastern Sudan staged a coup and tried to take over the airport. The NIF suppressed the coup bid and accelerated its purges of non-Islamists in the army. Because of the role of a Beja army officer in the failed coup, that ethnic group (located in eastern Sudan) was disproportionately targeted for persecution. While this incident would be remembered by Beja and contribute to their radicalization and joining with the SPLA in 1994,⁹⁴ it did not affect the regime's network in Darfur.

Pacifying Darfur

When the National Islamic Front came to power, it pledged to put an end to violence and restore stability in Darfur. The revival of the Chadian civil war in the second-half of 1989 and the escalation of violence in Darfur between the Chadian army and Deby's forces undermined the reconciliation agreement reached in July 1989. As Harir (1994, 178) describes, "eight months after the peace agreement was signed, the Fur 'militia forces' and the Arab 'knights' were engulfed in a full-scale civil war in which Fur villages were burned and Arab camps were shelled daily." With foreign forces

⁹⁴ "Beja dissidence stems from a number of causes. For one thing, Beja members felt they were special targets of the government's crackdown of the abortive coup d'etat of April 1990, when three-quarters of the army officers subsequently executed were from Beja tribes." See *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, "ERITREA/SUDAN: Tempers fraying again," December 3, 1994.

remaining in Darfur, the Arab and Fur militias refused to disarm. The NIF government was accused of perpetrating the conflict by backing the Arab tribes, in a similar manner as the Sadiq al-Mahdi government (Human Rights Watch 1990; Nhial, Kafi, and Seisi 1993). Arrests of opposition leaders, including prominent Fur, contributed further to this perception (Amnesty International 1990).

In 1990 and 1991, however, the central government moved to reduce the violence in Darfur. First, it signaled to the Chadian rebels operating in Darfur that they could no longer use the region as a staging ground for its rebellion. Second, President Bashir appointed a new governor in Darfur who oversaw an aggressive disarmament campaign in line with the Arab-Fur reconciliation agreement. These two events would help to bring an element of stability the region had not experienced in years.

Deby Takes Power in Chad

The Chadian civil war seemed to be subsiding in late 1988 when Acheikh Ibn Omar reconciled with Habre and Omar was brought into the Chadian government (though many of his forces remained in Darfur). In addition, a détente was reached between Libya and Chad; in September 1988 on the 19th anniversary of his ascension to power, Qaddafi publicly admitted his policies toward Chad had been a mistake (Burr and Collins 1999, 236-237). But when Habre brought Ibn Omar's faction into government, it disrupted the delicate balance within the cabinet and alienated intermediaries from the Zaghawa, especially Hassan Djamous and Idriss Deby. Djamous and Deby and their Zaghawa kinsmen had been instrumental in Habre's capture of Ndjamena in 1982, had led the Chadian army as they repulsed the Libyan invasion in 1986 and 1987, and were holding key ministerial positions in 1989 (Burr and Collins 1999, 242). In April 1989,

they staged a coup attempt to oust Habre, but it was thwarted and the two fled towards Darfur.

Consistent with the central argument of this thesis, the coup attempt set in motion a series of interactions that led to the emergence of a new insurgency against Habre operating out of Darfur. Habre responded to the coup attempt by violently targeting Zaghawa, purging them from his government, and forcing thousands of Zaghawa to flee to Darfur.⁹⁵ Djamous was captured and killed by the Chadian government, but Deby made it into Darfur where he established military camps in Dar Zaghawa in northern Darfur.

Darfur once again became the central battleground of Chad's civil war. Libya started to back the Zaghawa dissidents and communal violence resumed in Darfur. In March 1990, a group of Zaghawa was accused of attacking Fur villages in Wadi Salih and killing 69 people and burning 14 villages.⁹⁶ In October and November 1989 the Chadian army entered Darfur in an attempt to wipe out Deby's forces in northern Darfur, which were estimated at 7,000 strong (Burr and Collins 1999, 254). Though inflicting heavy losses on Deby's forces, Habre was unable to destroy them. With support from Libya, Deby regrouped his forces, the Mouvement Patriotique du Salut (MPS), and invaded Chad in March 1990. Habre responded with a massive counter-offensive and "[b]y mid-April Habre had 4,200 well-equipped troops roaming through western Darfur in their Toyotas and driving the MPS eastward in search of sanctuary" (Burr and Collins 1999, 257). As Habre intensified his military activities inside Sudan, the NIF started to

⁹⁵ Amnesty International, "Chad: The Habré Legacy," October 16, 2001. Accessed at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engAFR200042001?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES%5CCHAD>

⁹⁶ (BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 1990)

put pressure on Deby that his forces could not stay in Darfur indefinitely, instructing him to either invade Chad or leave the region.

After surviving another attack by the Chadian army in September, Deby prepared for an offensive to try to penetrate deep into Chad and put Habre on the defensive. In November 1990 Deby was able to defeat the Chadian army in the border towns of Tine, Guereda, and Kulbus and shortly after captured the strategic eastern town of Abeche. With these defenses broken, the path was clear to Ndjamenana and the “advancing columns of the MPS raced 600 miles across the Sahel and the savanna to the outskirts of Ndjamenana in two days” (Burr and Collins 1999, 262). On 2 December 1990 Deby captured Ndjamenana and announced the formation of a new government.

With Deby’s military victory and Habre’s escape to Cameroon, for the first time in a decade Darfur no longer served as the frontlines for the battle over the Chadian state. The Zaghawa within the NIF had supported Deby and the Sudanese government would ensure Darfur remained free of Chadian dissidents. Over the next decade the priority for Sudanese security in Darfur would be providing intelligence for Deby about dissident activities in the region.⁹⁷

A New Governor Disarms Darfur

Deby’s victory in Chad helped to reduce some of the violence in Darfur, but the region remained insecure due to an abundance of weapons, continued armed robbery and the recurrence of ethnic conflict after the coup d’état despite the Arab-Fur reconciliation agreement. Some Darfurians, particularly from the Fur tribe, held the governor, Abul Ghassim Mohammed Ibrahim, a military officer from the Shaigiya tribe in northern Sudan, accountable for not addressing the instability in the

⁹⁷ Interview with former member of Sudanese security, Khartoum, 2006.

province. They felt “he was supporting the Arab militias,” actively recruiting the Arab immigrants from Chad into the NIF’s popular committees and granting them other privileges, such as allowing them to stay on Fur lands.⁹⁸ Other Sudanese, Darfurians and non-Darfurians, claimed this was more of a systematic policy originating from Turabi himself as part of his effort to spread Islamism throughout the region. Arabs were seen as more reliable vanguards in the spread of Islamism than non-Arabs.⁹⁹

Importantly, however, the NIF network in Darfur and the interactions between the central government and Darfurian intermediaries ensured the top decision makers in the NIF learned of the local grievances with the governor. One particular meeting, held in Khartoum in May 1991 between President Bashir, Abul Ghassim, and a group of Darfurian leaders to discuss how the Ingaz government could support the region, proved to be a key turning point. At the meeting Abul Ghassim and his allies presented a rosy picture of the situation in Darfur and described to Bashir how the Ingaz government was succeeding in bringing peace to the region. But these statements infuriated the Fur present at the meeting. Sultan Fadul stood up and declared, “This man is not telling the truth about the conditions on the ground” and went on to describe to Bashir how armed robbery was continuing, especially in Fur areas, and how the Fur-Arab reconciliation agreement was not being implemented.¹⁰⁰

According to the Fur present, Bashir reacted angrily upon learning he was deceived.

⁹⁸ Interview with Fur Islamist in Khartoum.

⁹⁹ As one Darfurian intellectual observed: “When [the NIF] came to power, it came to give the Arabs the upper-hand. The machinery it used to do this was political Islam...the Fur are the first group that established an Islamic state in Sudan and helped spread it in West Africa, but the NIF felt it cannot trust them in spreading its civilization project. Instead they depended on Arabs who are less religious but more loyal” Interview July 19, 2005, Khartoum.

¹⁰⁰ Interviews with various Fur leaders who attended the meeting.

Not long after the meeting, Bashir replaced Abul Ghassim as governor and appointed Dr. Al-Tayib Ibrahim Mohamed Kheir, a high-ranking Islamist and member of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC).

While there is no conclusive evidence to confirm that Abul Ghassim was replaced because of this meeting,¹⁰¹ the Fur who attended believed this to be the case and perceived Dr. Al-Tayib as more favorable than the previous governor. To most Fur leaders interviewed, they perceived this change as Bashir responding to their grievances and viewed Al-Tayib as “an acceptable choice”¹⁰² and “very serious and a fair man”¹⁰³ Al-Tayib impressed the Fur by beginning to learn the Fur language and showing respect for Fur culture and the Sultanate.¹⁰⁴

At the time Al-Tayib became governor, the government was trying to disarm the Darfur region. In April 1991 the minister of interior, General Faisal Ali Abu-Salih, toured Darfur and announced all ‘unauthorized weapons’ were to be collected. After his appointment in August 1991, Al-Tayib was tasked with accelerating the disarmament process. Over the next several months Kheir would collect tens of thousands of weapons. According to Fur interviewed, “Al-Tayib was more serious than Abul Ghassim. He would visit the tribes, calling on people to put down their weapons at a time when violence prevented the Fur from moving outside their villages.”¹⁰⁵ The government was seen as implementing policies to protect the Fur.

Throughout this period, the NIF employed members of the tanzeem, civilian ministers and the army to try to reduce the number of weapons in the region. As one

¹⁰¹ Some also suggest that Deby did not have good relations with Abul Ghassim and after ousting Habre asked Bashir to replace Abul Ghassim as governor of Darfur. Interview Khartoum.

¹⁰² Interview Khartoum.

¹⁰³ Interview Khartoum.

¹⁰⁴ Interview Khartoum.

¹⁰⁵ Interview in Khartoum.

Zaghawa minister in Darfur described it, he traveled throughout North Darfur and collected thousands of weapons in exchange for the promise of compensation (though which never came).¹⁰⁶ The army, led by General Samir, was also used and in a heavy-handed fashion disarmed groups, leading to several massacres.

By November 1991 Darfurian government officials were celebrating the ‘demilitarization of the region’ and the reduction in tribal conflict. In hindsight, non-Arab Darfurians would look back and complain that the weapons collection program disproportionately targeted them, but not the Arab nomads,¹⁰⁷ who were allowed to keep their weapons on grounds that their vocation as nomads required having weapons to protect their animals.¹⁰⁸

Summary of Neopatrimonial Institutions in Darfur, 1989--1991

In Darfur in the first years after the coup d’ état the NIF benefited from an active and diverse following. The members of the tanzem represented the region’s varied tribal groupings, with the Zaghawa particularly prominent. The Fur-Arab conflict had polarized Darfur along racial lines and threatened to entangle the NIF as it served in Sadiq al-Mahdi’s government. But in the aftermath of the coup and the fortuitous signing of a reconciliation agreement between the Fur and Arabs, the NIF was able to shore up and strengthen its network in Darfur. Moreover, the NIF exploited its ability to dole out jobs and grant access to state resources as a way to win over new allies. In the first few

¹⁰⁶ Interview in Khartoum, August 2005.

¹⁰⁷ As the time, some commentators In November 1991 the Sudan Democratic Gazette, a newsletter published in London by Bona Malwal, a southerner, commented, the African tribes “are being officially described as armed robbers. This description has provided a justification for the campaign to forcibly disarm the African tribes whilst ignoring the weaponry in the hands of the Arab tribal militias,” whose arms are not considered illegal “because they were originally supplied by Khartoum” (SDG 1991, 6).

¹⁰⁸ Interviews, Khartoum, November 13, 2005.

years, it invited almost all of the tribal leaders from Darfur to Khartoum to ensure their support for the Ingaz revolution. Those who opposed the regime were arrested and tortured. The government used a level of repression to consolidate control after the coup that was unprecedented in Sudan.

After Deby defeated Habre and put an end to the Chadian civil war, the NIF swept Darfur clean of anti-Deby dissidents and provided intelligence on future political threats to the new Chadian leader. With the end of the Chadian civil war, the NIF sought to restore security in Darfur. The appointment of Al Tayib as governor kick started a disarmament program that would collect tens of thousands of weapons and put an end to the free standing militias of the Fur. By October 1991, the level of violence in Darfur was the lowest it had been in over a decade.

A Disaffected Islamist and the Coalescence of a Dissident Group

In 1989 and 1990 as Darfur once again erupted in ethnic violence (and before the disarmament program was initiated), an exiled group of Fur was in the planning stages of forming an armed insurgency with the goal of entering Darfur to both protect and mobilize the Fur against the Arab militias which continued to operate in spite of the reconciliation agreement. The exiled group was led by Daoud Yahya Bolad, an Islamist from the Fur tribe who gained prominence within the National Islamic Front as a university student and would go on to be one of the NIF leaders in Darfur.

Bolad was born near Nyala in southern Darfur in 1952. He grew up in a family belonging to the Mahdist Ansar sect (Harir 1993, 297), which historically is linked to the Umma Party. In primary school, he learned Arabic by studying the Quran and in intermediate school he was recruited into the Muslim Brotherhood by one of his school teachers (Harir 1993, 299). Bolad joined the Ikhwan at a time when the organization was

growing into a national movement and fighting an ideological battle with the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) for the support of the country's educated elite and a political battle against the regime of Jaafar Nimeiri who came to power in a coup d'état in 1969 initially supported by the SCP.

In 1971 Bolad entered the University of Khartoum to study engineering and impressed his brothers in the Muslim Brotherhood with his activism and devotion to the Islamist cause.¹⁰⁹ That same year he was jailed and tortured by police for his political activities (Prunier 2005, 73). After his release from jail, he remained active with the Islamic movement and in 1975 Bolad became the first non-riverain northerner to be president of the Khartoum University Student Union (KUSU), an extremely influential position among the Islamists, whose support base rested with the students, and among the political class in general which often led to “an accelerated track to national political leadership” (Flint and de Waal 2005, 20-21).

At a time when the Islamists were forced underground, the KUSU played an integral role in their political program. As Harir (1993, 300) explains:

KUSU, *de facto*, was the executive body of the Islamic movement above the ground. On a more general level, it coordinated, activated and led the widely spread national opposition against Nimeiri's regime. Hence, the chairman of the Khartoum University Students' Union mediated between the interned leadership of the Islamic movement and the Brotherhood on the one hand and the leadership of the national opposition abroad and its cells on the other—but more importantly carried out street actions such as rioting, demonstrations and general protest activities between 1971 and 1978... On another level, the chairman of KUSU worked closely with Turabi, Ali Osman Taha and the presently prominent leaders of the Khartoum regime. Besides ideological affinities, which are basic, the chairman also developed personal and friendly relations with prominent personalities in the Islamic movement in a manner befitting a top leader.

Bolad excelled as KUSU president. Moreover, his impressive oratory skills, tough character and knowledge of the Quran earned him the deep respect from his

¹⁰⁹ Many northern Islamists I met in Khartoum often remember Bolad as a friend and devoted brother in the movement. When I ask them, why he left the movement and took up arms, they often shake their heads not understanding what lead him 'astray.'

brothers in the movement (Harir 1993, 301). After university Bolad returned to South Darfur where he served as the NIF's secretary general of the region and also started a carpentry and iron business financed by an Islamic bank (interviews; Harir 1993, 301). He ran for parliament from the South Nyala constituency in the 1986 election, but lost and some in the NIF blamed him for the party's poor showing in the region.¹¹⁰

After the 1986 election, as the Fur-Arab conflict erupted, Bolad became increasingly concerned by the communal violence, especially as some of his Fur relatives were killed in the fighting. He voiced his concerns within the Islamic movement, but to no avail.¹¹¹ When Turabi entered the cabinet in 1988 and "silenced all criticism of the Libyan-sponsored mayhem in Darfur" (Prunier 2005, 73), Bolad became critical of the Islamist leader and accused him of complicity in the violence.¹¹² Bolad increasingly questioned the movement's claim to equality. In a letter to a friend, Bolad revealed his frustration: "even when I go the mosque to pray, even there, in the presence of God, for them I am still a slave [abd] and they will assign me a place related to my race" (quoted in Prunier 2005, 73).

Exacerbating Bolad's growing disenchantment with the Islamic movement was a bitter power struggle with Ali al-Haj, another Darfurian Islamist who was close to Turabi, over leadership of the *tanzeem* in western Sudan. As a senior member of the Islamic movement, Bolad expected to be leader of the NIF in the Darfur but Turabi selected Ali al Haj. As the power struggle mounted, Bolad was accused of corruption and funneling funds from the NIF to support the Fur.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Interview with member of the NIF from Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan, March 29, 2006.

¹¹¹ Correspondence with former member of *tanzeem* from Darfur, April 17, 2006.

¹¹² Interview with Diraige, March 2006, London, UK.

¹¹³ Correspondence with former member of *tanzeem* from Darfur, April 17, 2006.

After the coup d'état, however, Bolad increased his activities on behalf of the movement, perhaps in hopes of receiving a high-level position in the new government. He traveled throughout Darfur, holding meetings, and calling for citizens to support the new regime. He was also working towards Fur-Arab reconciliation, collecting blood money among the Fur to pay the Arabs and calling on Arabs to put down their weapons.¹¹⁴ As jobs were handed out to Islamists after the coup, Bolad was appointed as an engineer in a power station in Khartoum, a very lowly position for a former member of the KUSU. Meanwhile, the violence resumed in Darfur and Bolad left the country for Egypt.

In November 1989 Bolad convened a meeting in Cairo with other Fur elites, including Diraige, the former governor of Darfur and leader of the Darfur Development Front, Mahmoud Suliman Jumaa, head of Fur militias in Darfur, Yusef Bakheit Idriss, and Karim El Din, a financial consultant in Riyadh, who was representing a Fur organization based in Saudi Arabia. At the top of their agenda was what to do about the persistent and devastating violence against the Fur by the Arab militias, even in spite of the reconciliation agreement. It was at this meeting that they decided to create a movement with both a political and military wing, which would serve to protect the Fur. They recognized that they needed financial and military support and identified Hassein Habre of Chad, who had been supplying weapons to the Fur militia in the 1980s (Burr and Collins 1993; Harir 1994) and had been secretly assisting the SPLM through Ethiopia,¹¹⁵ as a suitable patron. They were hoping Habre would allow them to build training camps in Chad from where they could launch an invasion into Darfur.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Fur and member of the Islamic movement, Khartoum.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Yassir Arman, Khartoum, Sudan, March 29, 2006.

After the Cairo meeting, they met again in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from where Bolad along with Diraige, Suliman Jamaa, and Ibrahim Suliman Bashim went to N'djamena to try to solicit support from Habre. Yet when they met Habre in 1990 he was preoccupied with the growing insurgency led by Deby coming from Dar Zaghawa. Focused predominantly on defending eastern Chad from Deby's forces, Habre was not in a position to help the Fur movement. The group flew back to Addis Ababa where its members were trying to figure out their next move.

While waiting in Addis, two fateful events changed the course of the dissident activities. First, Deby, supported by the NIF, overthrew Habre, ending any hopes they had of launching an insurgency from Chad into Darfur. Second, they met representatives of the SPLM, which had been working out of Ethiopia since the rebel movement was founded in 1983. In Addis they met Mansour Khalid, Yassir Arman and other members of the SPLM who were eager to introduce the Fur group to Dr. John Garang, the leader of the SPLM/A who was in Meridi, Western Equatoria commanding military operations.¹¹⁶ After trekking for more than a month from Ethiopia to Equatoria, they met Garang, who received them very well. Garang convinced Bolad to think beyond their parochial concern about the Fur, but to work to change the whole political system which since independence had been dominated by northern riverain Arabs to a New Sudan. The group decided to join the SPLM/A and open a new front in Garang's war against the central government, following the model of the Nuba Mountains.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Yassir Arman, Khartoum, Sudan, March 29, 2006.

Insurgency versus Counterinsurgency in Darfur 1991-1992

Over the next three months, the group of Fur (15 in total) remained in the SPLA bases in southern Sudan where they received military training. Garang assigned Commander Abdel Aziz al-Hilu from the Nuba Mountains but whose father is from the Massaleit, a tribal group based in West Darfur, to lead the Bolad contingent. The group of Fur was to be accompanied by 1000 Dinka soldiers. The goal was to reach Jebel Marra, establish a military base, and launch attacks throughout Darfur with the support of anti-government militias and other Fur, who Bolad expected to rise up and support the insurgents. Bolad had sent several agents to the Jebel Marra region to mobilize local support.

In July 1991 the contingent of SPLM members led by Bolad and al-Hailu made their move from the South into Darfur. They trekked by foot through western Bahr al-Ghazal into southwestern Darfur in an area with few paved roads and rugged terrain. Shortly after they left for Darfur, Garang was challenged in an internal coup by the Nasir group. Despite the disruption and weakened logistical support, Bolad and al-Hailu went forward with the operation. To try to avoid Arab tribal homelands, they crossed as close to Central African Republic as possible.

After more than three months, they crossed into Darfur in early November. Catching the government forces unprepared, they defeated the first government forces they faced around the town of Bendisi in southwestern Darfur in early November, killing an estimated 166 government soldiers. As they pushed forward to Mukjar, the government army mobilized two army battalions, which again the SPLA forces overwhelmed. After this victory, they had reached the foothills of Jebel Marra.

According to Bolad's estimates, he believed there were 15,000 Fur recruits willing to join once they secured themselves in the mountain.¹¹⁷

But Bolad was unaware the government had disarmed the Fur militias only months before.¹¹⁸ With the Fur militias disarmed and the insurgents lacking the capacity to protect local forces as they organized, many Fur hesitated to join the rebellion for fear of being vulnerable to government reprisals. In fact, one Fur in the Islamic movement felt compelled to warn Bolad about the local sentiment: "I succeeded in sending a letter to Bolad, in which I told him, the security situation had changed; it was better than when he left. We fear that the people will not join him. We asked him if it is possible to go back. If he were arrested, we are not sure if we would be able to help or not."

As the SPLA advance stalled, the government accelerated its counter-mobilization efforts. With the SAF troops proving ineffective, the government, led by General Samir, mobilized tribal militias from several Arab tribes in the region, most notably from the Beni Halba. The Fursan, as the Beni Halba militia was known, supported by the government army, beat back Bolad and his forces into Wadi Salih, a Fur area.

In addition to the Arab militias, Al-Tayib called several Fur Islamists to Nyala to discuss how to counter the rebellion. As one Fur in the tanzeem explains,

I went to Nyala and met [Al-Tayib] there. I was informed Bolad entered Darfur. They already started to arrest some leaders of the Fur. I told them to stop arresting these people and give me a chance to go to the field... When I went to Wadi Salih [in southwestern Darfur], I found the army and Beni Halba militia. We asked the [Fur] people, for their own safety, not to join the rebels and they listened...

The Fur Islamists also informed Dr. Al-Tayib that the Fur people did not support Bolad, mainly because the rebellion was seen as a SPLA movement, but if the arrests continued

¹¹⁷ Interview with Yassir Arman, Khartoum, Sudan, March 29, 2006.

¹¹⁸ According to Fur informants who met Bolad after he was captured, he admitted he did not realize the situation had changed.

it would drive local Fur to support the rebellion. After hearing this, Dr. Al-Tayib instructed the Sudanese security said to stop arresting the Fur. During other instances in which the Arab militias looted animals from the Fur, Al-Tayib ordered them to return the looted animals to ensure the local communities did not support the rebels.¹¹⁹

After the expeditionary force was pushed back by the Fursan into Wadi Salih, the SPLA was running low on ammunition, having a difficult time finding a safe place to leave their injured soldiers, and unable to push forward into Jebel Marra. Demoralized, soldiers started to defect. Bolad refused to yield, however, and sought to hide and regroup in a Fur area in Deleig village in Wadi Salih. When another Fur Islamist, Jaafar Abdel Hakim Ishag, learned from local Fur where Bolad was in Wadi Salih, he relayed this information to the NIF security. In fact, it was a group of Fur who captured Bolad and handed him over to the security.

After his capture, Bolad was shown on television, “in which he appeared battered and exhausted but composed...and promised a trial for his ‘treasonable act’ ...[but he] was too embarrassing a phenomenon to live to defend himself in a court of law” (Harir 1993, 302). Instead, the former top Islamist was executed by a security officer.

Analysis: Extensive Clientelism and an Effective Counterinsurgency Campaign

What explains the outcome of the conflict in Darfur in 1991? Why was the government able to effectively crush the SPLA’s expeditionary force? What role did the regime’s clientelist network play as opposed to other factors that may have facilitated the government to defeat the SPLA?

Depending on its structure, clientelism is hypothesized to affect the outcome of regime-dissident interactions by shaping the regime’s control of society and access to

¹¹⁹ Interview with Fur Islamist.

local information. In Darfur in 1990 and 1991 the regime's extensive clientelist network proved decisive in granting the regime the upper hand when faced with an insurgency coming out of southern Sudan.

Extensive Clientelism and Local Leverage

When Bolad and the SPLA entered Darfur they expected the Fur communities and militias to join the insurrection and facilitate the rebels' march to the safe haven of Jebel Marra where rebel operations would be organized. Yet, when the SPLA force reached the foothills of Jebel Marra, they discovered the Fur had little information about the insurgency and almost no one had been mobilized. Instead, when the Fur leaders discovered Bolad's intentions, they sided with the government more than the insurgency. This was the crucial turning point of the insurgency. The rebellion's early momentum stalled and the government was able to counter-mobilize and regain the upper-hand.

A key reason for this was the NIF's extensive network in Darfur that had been built up in the 1970s and 1980s as the Islamists prepared to come to power. This ensured that local clients existed who could mediate between the government and the local communities. The Fur Islamists recognized that government security was willing to use extreme measures to crush the insurgency, including wiping out Fur villages. To protect the Fur, they had the impossible task of serving as credible interlocutors to both the regime and the Fur people. It had to convince the Fur people that if they stayed out of the rebellion, they would be safe from any repercussions from the government or Arab tribal militias. This was not an easy sell in the aftermath of the devastating Fur-Arab violence in the late 1980s and the central government's complicity. But as the NIF was a new regime and had publicly supported the reconciliation agreement, promising to disarm all militias, it was not impossible to believe. Moreover, Al Tayib's sympathetic posture to

the Fur and his public attempts to learn the Fur language helped to convince them of the government's commitment to protect the Fur. Moreover, Al Tayib's relations with intermediaries from the Fur, Zaghawa and other communities in Darfur aided his disarmament campaign and the dismantling of Fur militias, which Bolad was depending upon when the SPLA force entered Jebel Marra.

Another factor that greatly helped the Fur Islamists to convince the Fur communities not to support the rebellion was Bolad had come as part of the SPLA from the south rather than as a local movement. During the late 1980s the violence against the Fur was justified by the Arabs because the Fur were rumored to have links with the SPLA. Being seen as supporting Bolad and the SPLA would once again bring the wrath of the Arab militias and government security at a time when then Fur lacked local protection from their self-defense militias.

Even if the Fur Islamists could convince the Fur communities not to support the rebellion, these communities may still be vulnerable to violence if the Islamists could not credibly show to the NIF that the Fur supported the regime. Thus as the one Fur Islamist described, he felt compelled to travel to the field and convince Fur communities to publicly support the regime. One way for the Fur community to demonstrate its support for the regime was to reveal Bolad's location and hand him over to NIF security. With the Fur Islamists working to prevent Fur support for the rebellion, the security operations could focus on Bolad's forces and avoid indiscriminate reprisals which may have inflamed the rebellion as happened in the Nuba Mountains in 1990 (Africa Rights 1995).

In interviews Darfurians made note of the government's leverage in Darfur during this time and how it affected the outcome of the conflict. As Khalil Ibrahim, a key Zaghawa in the tanzim at the time, reflected on the incident, "Before going to the SPLA, Bolad talked with Fur tribal leaders and they divided responsibilities [for the

rebellion]. They said when he comes the Fur would support him with 10,000 troops. When he entered Darfur [two years later], the conditions had changed. The war between the Fur and Arabs had been settled. The government paid money to the Fur tribal leaders for the reconciliation and bought them Land Rovers.” He goes on to say, “Fur leaders had been enrolled in the governing system. They were less cooperative with the rebels...[because] they did not want to lose [their place] in the system.”¹²⁰

The leaders of the SLA and Fur tribal leaders themselves reiterated Ibrahim’s assessment. Abdelwahid Mohamed Nour, the original chairman of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), remarked, “[The SPLA] had a long journey from the South and they had to pass through Arab areas, which were sympathetic to the government...[In addition], communications with the Fur chiefs were reported to the government...the Fur chiefs did not cooperate with the Bolad movement.”¹²¹ In the absence of active support from the Fur community leaders, Bolad’s insurgency stalled outside Jebel Marra.

Extensive Clientelism and Local Information

The regime’s extensive clientelist network also enhanced its access to local information, which improved its ability to effectively reduce rebellion in two ways. First, its efforts to communicate with local representatives from Darfur in the wake of the 1989 coup d’état to cultivate support for the new regime led the government to learn of the Fur’s opposition to Abul Ghassim as governor and the continued violence in the region. While this meeting between Darfurian representatives and the president may not have been the deciding factor in the replacement of Abul Ghassim, it gave the impression to the Fur that the regime was responding to their grievances. Second, local clients helped

¹²⁰ Interview with Khalil Ibrahim, Asmara, Eritrea, February 2005.

¹²¹ Interview in Asmara, Eritrea, February 22, 2005.

the regime to capture Bolad. Famously it was a Fur Islamist who turned Bolad over to the NIF security.

Summary

The Darfur case in 1989-1991 illustrates how the structure of the ruling network can have decisive consequences on the balance of insurgency versus counterinsurgency. The extensive network helped the central government to learn of grievances with the previous governor and have him replaced. Even if Abul Ghassim was replaced for other reasons, the new government was well received by the Fur. Moreover, the extensive network facilitated the disarmament campaign in mid-1991, neutralizing the militias that Bolad was counting on to succeed in Darfur, while Fur Islamists mobilized support on behalf of the government and contributed to limiting the level of indiscriminate violence.

While the NIF crushed the Bolad insurgency in 1991 in part due to its extensive network in Darfur, over the next decade the regime's network would undergo significant changes. It would be torn apart by a devastating split in the Islamic movement in 1999. Moreover, by the late 1990s the regime had allowed tribal violence to become pervasive again in the region. Local communities from the Zaghawa and Fur perceived the government had a hand in the violence and was done intentional as an indirect means of state repression. In the next chapter, I explore why the neopatrimonial institutions changed and how it contributed to a new rebellion, but one which the government could not defeat.

Chapter 7. Darfur II (2001-2003): Full-Scale Civil War

The Bolad insurgency would have significant consequences on the National Islamic Front's ruling strategy in Darfur. It would cement an alliance between the NIF and the Baggara Arab groups of southern Darfur,¹²² traditionally supporters of the Umma Party. Militias from the Baggara groups (known as the *murahaliin*) would become stalwarts in the NIF's Popular Defense Forces (PDF), a national paramilitary group to serve as the vanguard in implementing its Islamist project and waging jihad against the SPLA in southern Sudan. On the other hand, the Fur were deemed untrustworthy and feeble supporters of the Islamic project, despite the key role that some Fur Islamists played in thwarting the SPLA's bid to bring the war to Darfur and the Fur people's reluctance to join the rebellion. Unlike members from the Baggara and the Zaghawa, the Fur were less active in joining the PDF and fighting in southern Sudan.

As the largest tribe in Darfur, the NIF was determined to neutralize Fur's political clout. Thus, they started to parcel out Fur land to recent Arab immigrants and made other administrative changes to increase patronage opportunities and cultivate new allies at the expense of the Fur. The regime's manipulation of administrative boundaries and cultivation of a new group of elites (targeting other large ethnic groups, in addition to the Fur) would lead to important changes in the structure of the clientelist network in Darfur and create friction within the movement between committed Islamists and the opportunistic newcomers. In the mid-1990s these policies would provoke a devastating

¹²² The Baggara Arabs (including the Beni Halba, Southern Reizigat, Missiriya, and Habnea tribes) are the cattle-herding groups who live in South Darfur. Militias from the Beni Halba and Habnea were crucial in defeating the SPLA's expeditionary force into Darfur in 1991.

conflict between a group of Arab tribes, backed by the central government, and the Maasaleit, a non-Arab group whose homeland is in West Darfur.

While the NIF divide-and-rule policies disrupted old patron-client networks and expanded its clients beyond the members of the Islamic tanzeem, the regime's ruling network in Darfur would be most dramatically affected by a split in the government at the highest levels between the president, Omar al-Bashir, and the secretary general of the Islamic movement, Hassan al-Turabi. In 1998 and 1999 the two leaders would become locked in a battle of political cunning to try to undercut the other's power and seize sole control of the National Congress Party.¹²³ Bashir, supported by the army and security, used coercion as a trump card to block the National Assembly from passing constitutional amendments, pushed through by Turabi, which would have severely diluted the powers of the president. The power struggle split the Islamic movement in two.

After being replaced as secretary general of the National Congress in April 2000, Turabi formed a new political party, the Popular National Congress (PNC). Many Islamists followed Turabi to the PNC, including several prominent Zaghawa members and other Darfurians. With the division in the Islamic movement, the Bashir group began to purge the government of Turabi supporters and rely more exclusively on ethnic northerners in the security and top levels of the government. In Darfur, clients from the Abbala Arab groups¹²⁴ and other Arab ethnic groups became prominent in key government positions, while members of the Zaghawa were sidelined. A surge of tribal violence in 2000 and 2001 triggered the formation of self-defense forces from Zaghawa and Fur groups. As these militias adopted a political agenda and coalesced into an

¹²³ The NIF became the National Congress Party (NCP) in 1998 with the introduction of the new constitution.

¹²⁴ The Abbala Arabs (including the northern Reizigat tribes) are camel-herding groups who live mainly in North Darfur and West Darfur.

insurgency, the split in the Islamic movement and the restructuring of the clientelist network in Darfur would severely weaken the central government's ability to respond effectively to the nascent rebellion.

Fearing Turabi was using Darfur to make a comeback to power, the government was reluctant to negotiate with the dissidents on a political basis, but sought to divide the rebels along tribal lines. As negotiations failed and violence intensified, the regime had little information on the real strength of the rebellion or its precise location. The information it did receive came from northern security officials and the Darfurian Arab intermediaries, who were eager to receive weapons and state resources from the government and weaken the Zaghawa. These agents indicated to Khartoum the rebels could be crushed in weeks if they were armed and appropriate force was used, while information and suggestions from the few non-Arab individuals remaining in the regime were systematically ignored. This contributed to the central government's underestimation of the rebels and utter shock when the rebels launched their spectacular surprise attack on the airport in El Fasher in April 2003. Desperate to stall the rebellion and prevent the rebels from racing to Khartoum, the government unleashed a massive scorched-earth counterinsurgency campaign that would devastate the Darfur region.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows. First, I describe the NIF political strategy in Darfur after the Bolad insurgency and its ramifications on the regime's clientelist network. Then I explain the origins of the power struggle at the highest levels of the Islamic movement and describe how this regime crisis led the Bashir group to rely on purges, repression, and ethnic exclusion, including against non-Arab Darfurians, as a means to try to buttress internal regime security. Part three explains the origin of violent mobilization in Darfur and how the recent regime crisis and structure of the clientelist

network affected the government's counter-mobilization capabilities, undermining political bargaining and escalating the conflict. I conclude by summarizing the case.

The NIF Political Strategy in Darfur after Bolad

A few years after the Bolad insurgency, the NIF introduced administrative reforms to federalize political power, which divided the Darfur region into three states,¹²⁵ and re-introduced the tribal administration that had been abolished in 1971 by Nimeiri. Though these new administrative arrangements were ostensibly to devolve political power from the central government in Khartoum to the state and local levels, they did little to lessen the regime's firm grip on state resources and political power.¹²⁶ They did, however, function to create new patronage opportunities (e.g., two more state governments and all of the jobs necessary to run the state governments) which the regime exploited to try to increase its control of Darfur. According to the International Crisis Group (2004, fn 34.):

Instead of devolving power to the grassroots as the government proclaimed, this reformed federal system stretched the state's meagre resources thinly over a much inflated public sector and failed to deliver the anticipated basic social services. A major aim of the increase in public positions, as several prominent researchers convincingly argued, was to tighten the nationwide grip of the National Islamic Front by placing its members and co-opted clients in position of influence.

Moreover, the new state boundaries conspicuously divided the Fur tribal homeland into three states, causing the Fur to lose their plurality status. Though NIF officials denied this was the intention, Fur leaders interviewed were convinced of it. Moreover, the regime allowed other administrative changes to take place which had the effect of weakening the Fur tribe. In South Darfur the government gave the Tarjem (a

¹²⁵ In 1994, the NIF adopted a federal political system which divided the country's nine regions into twenty-six states with a total of 72 provinces.

¹²⁶ A 2003 report by the World Bank finds that "almost all revenue, about 98 percent, was *collected* by the federal government." World Bank, *Sudan Stabilization and Reconstruction Country Economic Memorandum*, Volume II: Statistical Appendices (Washington: World Bank, 2001), pp. 71-74

small Arab ethnic group), a nazir¹²⁷ an implicit recognition of the Tarjem's right to land, which was traditionally part of the Fur magdumate.¹²⁸ The consequence was the nazir, Mohammed Yacoub al Omda, was no longer under the magdumate, but a separate administrative entity with rights to collect taxes. The government also gave land to Mustapha Abu Nouba from the northern Reizigat (an Arab tribe in northern Darfur). These two leaders responded most enthusiastically to the government's call to fight the rebellion in the war after 2003.¹²⁹

In West Darfur, the government divided up land belonging to the Maasaleit tribe (a non-Arab tribe) to emirs from Arab groups (mainly recent migrants from Chad). Though the groups were not appointed as nazirs (which would have implied a right to land ownership), it did grant them important administrative powers at the expense of the powers of the Sultan of the Maasaleit. These changes destabilized the region and increased tensions between the Maasaleit and the Arab nomadic groups who felt empowered. As communal tension descended into violence, the Sudanese army intervened backing the Arab militias, which the Maasaleit governor at the time Ibrahim Yahya, a committed Islamist, remarked was the "beginning of the organization of the Janjawiid" (cited in Flint and de Waal 2006, 60). Yahya found the army to be under direct orders from Khartoum, completely bypassing the state government. When he confronted Bashir about this policy, Bashir revealingly said, "You Africans are not reliable" (cited in Flint and de Waal 2006, 60). This was a startling admission. In cultivating clients in Darfur, the central government felt intermediaries from Arab tribes

¹²⁷ A nazir is a 'paramount chief' usually recognized as administering a piece of land.

¹²⁸ The magdumate was the administrative entity administered by the Fur magdum in South Darfur.

¹²⁹ See Human Rights Watch. 2005. "Entrenching Impunity: Government Responsibility for International Crimes in Darfur." New York: Human Rights Watch. Accessed at <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/darfur1205/>

were more loyal than non-Arabs, even those who had committed their lives to the Islamic movement.

In North Darfur, the government tried a similar strategy of giving land to the northern Rezeigatt in Ginek in 1992 at the expense of the non-Arab Zaghawa. But when the Zaghawa caught wind of the government's plan, the Zaghawa quickly mobilized and convinced the government to abandon the plan. With the prevalence of the Zaghawa in the Islamic movement, they had more leverage than the Fur or Maasaleit. The northern Reizeigatt would not forget this incident.

The Causes and Consequences of the NIF's Regime Crisis

On December 12, 1999, two days before the Sudanese parliament was to vote on several constitutional amendments¹³⁰ that would dilute the powers of the executive, President Bashir suspended the national assembly and announced a three-month state of emergency. An escalating power-struggle within the Islamic movement between Bashir and his allies in the security and military and Turabi and his loyalists had come to a head.

The regime crisis shook the Sudan and tore the Islamic movement asunder. Negotiations failed to bring the two factions back together. After being replaced in May 2000 as secretary general of the National Congress (NC), Turabi formed a new party, the Popular National Congress (PNC) and many long-time Islamists followed suit. Key players in the NC tried to woo Turabi loyalists to stay in the government with promises of ministerial positions and other generous patronage packages. When these individuals

¹³⁰ The "proposed amendments would have stripped Bashir of his power to appoint provincial governors and required him to give up the post of prime minister that he holds in addition to the presidency, as well as to appoint a vice-president. Turabi's campaign to curtail Bashir's powers did not stop with the constitutional amendment bill: he tried to push new legislation through parliament giving the prime minister wider powers and giving parliament the right to remove the president from office with a two thirds majority." See Mohamed Sid-Ahmed, "The Sudanese Crisis," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 23-29 December 1999. Accessed at <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1999/461/op3.htm>.

refused to be co-opted and the PNC mobilized protests, the Sudanese security started to arrest, jail, and torture Turabi followers and accelerated purges of the ruling network of perceived Turabi followers.

The split also exposed the degree to which ethnicity had become politicized within northern Sudan and within the Islamic movement itself. In May 2000 a document, known as the “al kitab al aswad,” or Black Book, surfaced which exposed the degree to which political power in post-colonial Sudan had been dominated by northern riverain Arabs, particularly members from three ethnic groups, the Shaigiyya, the Ja’alyin, and the Danagla. As the NC started to restructure its ruling network to minimize the influence of the Turabi followers, the security clique followed a crude ethnic calculus, particularly in Darfur: Arabs could be trusted as clients and supporters of the government, but non-Arabs, especially the Zaghawa, were identified as disloyal and supporters of Turabi.

In this section, I explain the origin of the power-struggle between Turabi and Bashir and its consequences for the NC’s ruling network in Darfur.

A Power-Struggle at the Top

When the National Islamic Front came to power in 1989, it had developed an impressive organizational structure and unity of purpose. There was near universal support for the political program they intended to implement after the coup: consolidation of power, demilitarization after a few years and then popularize and civilianize their Islamist program. They had written policy plans for dealing with the war in the South, the economy, federalism, and oil.

As secretary general of the Islamic movement since 1965, Turabi had full control of the movement and was surrounded by a group of loyal adherents. Though the

movement claimed to be based on the Islamic principle of shura (the Arabic word for ‘consultation’), it was Turabi who was making the decisions and delegating responsibilities to his deputies, in whom he had full confidence.

Immediately after the coup, Turabi was imprisoned, along with other Islamist leaders, to try to mask the NIF’s involvement and avoid a counter-coup led by the Egyptians or the Americans. Though Turabi continued to direct the regime’s policies and consult with the secretariat during evening meetings, the day-to-day security and financial operations were in the hands of his deputy, Ali Osman Taha. Working with the military leaders in the RCC, Taha developed strong ties with those in the military, including Bashir. After being released from prison,¹³¹ Turabi became fully engaged in his international Islamist agenda, including organizing the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference (PAIC), and traveling throughout the Muslim world, while Taha maintained the domestic portfolio.

During a trip to Canada in 1992, Turabi was attacked by an exiled Sudanese martial arts expert and spent three weeks in a hospital in Ottawa. The attack and time in the hospital had scared Turabi that he might die before seeing his Islamist project come to fruition. Upon his release, he accelerated his plans to civilianize the government and merge the Islamic movement into the National Congress, moves that concerned some of the military officers who, as the caretakers of the government after the coup, were enjoying the spoils of power.¹³²

Institutional contradictions also stirred tension within the Islamic movement. As Professor Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, a prominent member of the movement’s shura council in the 1980s and secretary general of the National Congress Party in 2000, commented,

¹³¹ Turabi was left in prison longer than originally planned, which looking back he claims was the beginning of the alliance between Bashir and Taha. Interview with Turabi.

¹³² Interview with Dr. Qutbi al-Mahdi in Khartoum, Sudan.

“There was a problem when we took power. The secretary general of the Islamic movement was very powerful, but we also had a state on our hands.”¹³³ Turabi began to step on the toes of some government officials as he tried to orchestrate state policies as leader of the Islamic movement, but without having a position in the government. Moreover, he went on to say that decisions were being taken by only a few individuals with a lack of consultation with the shura. Others accused Turabi of alienating his disciples with tendency to humiliate and berate them if they made mistakes.¹³⁴

The Assassination Attempt on Hosni Mubarak

In 1995 an assassination attempt was made on the life of Hosni Mubarak, president of Egypt, during a meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It soon came to light that Sudanese security had facilitated the plot¹³⁵ by providing the assailants from the militant group, Al- Gama'a-Islamia, with visas and allowing the three who escaped sanctuary and refusing to extradite them to Egypt or Ethiopia. In the wake of the attempt, the United Nations Security Council placed

¹³³ Interview in headquarters of the National Congress Party, Khartoum.

¹³⁴ Interview in Khartoum, March 2006.

¹³⁵ In early 1996, the government of Ethiopia submitted a report to the United Nations Security Council detailing the extent of Sudanese involvement in the assassination attempt. A Security Council press release summarized Ethiopia's findings:

According to Ethiopia's investigation, those involved in the assassination attempt were members of a terrorist organization called Al- Gama'a-Islamia. The two main leaders were based in Khartoum. Of the nine deployed in Addis Ababa, one escaped and three were now in the custody of Ethiopian authorities. Two had been killed during the attack and three others were killed five days later during a shoot-out with security personnel. The terrorists in custody admit that: their leaders live in Khartoum; the plot was hatched in Khartoum; their mission to assassinate President Mubarak was given to them in Khartoum; and the weapons intended to be used in their mission were flown into Addis Ababa by Sudan Airways from Khartoum. Moreover, the passports they possess, in virtually all cases, were prepared for them in Khartoum.

See “Security Council Calls on Sudan to Extradite Suspects in Attempted Assassination of Egyptian President,” SC/6170 press release, 31 January 1996. Accessed at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1996/19960131.sc6170.html>.

economic sanctions on the government Sudan. The Egyptians blamed Turabi for the assassination plot.

The assassination attempt would roil the NIF inner circle. Neither Turabi nor Bashir were aware that a clique in Sudanese security was involved.¹³⁶ Bashir and Turabi were outraged that a group within security would operate without communicating their activities with the regime's two top leaders. It revealed the degree to which a cell within security felt empowered and emboldened enough to act independently. Reportedly, this group included Mutrif Siddiq, Salah Gosh, Nafie ali Nafie, and Awlad Al Jaz. The attack also implicated Taha, who had developed close relations with security since the 1989 coup and was forced to admit his foreknowledge of the plot.¹³⁷

In the aftermath of the attempt, Bashir and Turabi reorganized the security with the goal of trying to break up this shadow security clique. Nafie ali Nafie, the head of external security at the time and who was in Addis Ababa during the attempt, was demoted to secretary of agriculture. Though Bashir was the one who had Nafie transferred out of security, Nafie came to resent Turabi.¹³⁸ This security clique felt they needed to get rid of Turabi before he further moved against them.

The Islamic Movement Splits Apart

After the assassination attempt, Turabi pushed forward with reforms to civilianize the regime and try to weaken the role of the security and military. As one Turabi loyalist said, "Turabi saw it as the only way to make a radical change and get rid of these military and security people."¹³⁹ In a famous shura council meeting in 1997 to discuss a new

¹³⁶ Interview with confidantes to both Turabi and Bashir, Khartoum.

¹³⁷ Interviews with top members of the Islamic movement. See also [Galal Nassar](#), "The Hamza Connection," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 13-19 January 2005.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Interview Bonn, Germany.

constitution that Turabi had been writing, Turabi called for expanding the party and weakening the powers of the presidency in a new constitution. Turabi demanded that the president could not be both head of the military and the president and threatened to resign if the party did not accept these proposals. Supported by members of parliament, Turabi succeeded in getting the 1998 constitution passed, which he saw as a step in liberalizing the country to help the Islamic movement legitimize its hold on power.

Taha publicly supported Turabi's proposed initiatives, but Bashir grew concerned that he as president would be a casualty of Turabi's reforms. According to one NCP member, "Bashir looked at this not as political reforms, but as a threat to his personal power."¹⁴⁰ This had the effect of pushing Bashir into an alliance with the security clique and the president began to build up his support among the army.¹⁴¹ When the vice-president, al-Zubeir Mohammed Saleh, was killed in a plane crash in February 1998, Bashir passed over Turabi's preference for a replacement and selected Taha. In response, Turabi had Taha dismissed as deputy secretary general of the Islamic movement. Taha was embittered and "started to shift openly [in opposition of Turabi] after becoming vice-president."¹⁴²

At the shura council in December 1998, Bashir supporters and members among the security mobilized a political counter-point to Turabi's proposed reforms. A group of ten introduced a series of proposals (known as the Memorandum of 10), which directly challenged Turabi's leadership and the Secretary General's dominance of the National Congress. The Memo of 10 called for reforms of the party to make it more 'democratic and transparent' and to curb Turabi's interference in executive affairs and strengthen the powers of Bashir over the party. Significantly this was signed by Nafie Ali Nafie, among

¹⁴⁰ Interview in Khartoum, 30 March 2006.

¹⁴¹ Interview in Khartoum.

¹⁴² Interview with Turabi, Khartoum.

others. Taha remained quiet and rather than support the memorandum or reject it, in his characteristic style, he disappeared for around ten days.

With his control of the party directly challenged, Turabi did not sit back. In 1999 he toured throughout the country mobilizing support among the rank-and-file in the Islamic movement (now the National Congress) in preparation for the party's general conference in October 1999. He also rallied support for several amendments to the 1998 constitution which would further weaken the presidency and strengthen Turabi's hand, such as the direct elections of governors and the creation of a prime minister accountable to the parliament.¹⁴³ The party conference in October 1999 was an impressive display of Turabi's grassroots support. Some 10,000 delegates cheered Turabi on and voted in favor of the constitutional changes. With support from the party rank-and-file and members of parliament, Turabi tabled the amendments in the national assembly.

With the constitutional amendments about to become law, the president felt he had two choices: step down and give power to Turabi or use force to suspend the constitution. With strong support in the army and the security organizations, Bashir was confident he could quash Turabi's bid to dethrone him. Moreover, the security clique would not let Bashir allow Turabi's amendments to become law. Turabi's reforms threatened their grip on power and represented a potential dramatic change of political power from the center dominated by the Arab riverain elites (of which all these security guys were) to the regions. Unable to commit to these changes, Bashir dissolved the national assembly and declared martial law, even at the risk of dividing the Islamic movement. Turabi immediately lashed out at Bashir, declaring the emergency measures unconstitutional and tantamount to a coup d'état.

¹⁴³ See footnote 12.

Purging the Ruling Network of Real and Perceived Turabi Loyalists

In the weeks and months after Bashir dissolved the national assembly and declared a state of emergency, several reconciliation attempts, including one led by Islamists from Qatar, tried to bring the factions back together but failed. The split was completely beyond repair when Bashir replaced Turabi as secretary-general of the National Congress in May 2000 and Turabi announced the formation of a new political party, the Popular National Congress (PNC).

That same month a publication, which came to be known as the “al kitab al aswad,” or Black Book, was distributed after Friday prayers throughout mosques around Khartoum and, allegedly, placed on the desk of the president and other government officials.¹⁴⁴ The book systematically documented how Sudan’s cabinets since independence had been dominated by northerners, particularly those from three tribes (Shaigiyya, the Ja’alyin, and the Danagla), at the expense of groups from throughout the rest of Sudan. The Black Book revealed the degree to which politics had taken on a tribal dimension and raised the political consciousness of those outside the ruling elite.¹⁴⁵

The Bashir group perceived the Black Book as a coalescence of the threat from Turabi and Darfurians in the Islamic movement.¹⁴⁶ Significantly, the authors of the Black Book dedicated it to the late Daud Bolad. The fact that government officials, including those in the presidential palace, found copies of the book in their offices crystallized their fears: there was a group mobilizing to change the current power structure and they had inside access to the Palace! As Dr. Mutrif Siddiq, a NIF member who sided with Bashir and part of the ruling security clique, said, “A majority of Darfurians, particularly non-

¹⁴⁴ William Wallis, “Darfur’s Darkest Chapter,” *Financial Times* (Weekend Magazine), August 21, 2004.

¹⁴⁵ See Tom for quotes. <http://www.ossrea.net/publications/newsletter/oct02/article9.htm>

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Professor Ibrahim Ahmed Omer headquarters of the National Congress Party, Khartoum.

Arabs, gathered with Turabi. He tried to utilize them, especially those in the army, to consolidate his position against Bashir.”¹⁴⁷

Fearful of their vulnerabilities to future threats from individuals loyal to Turabi who remained in the regime, the Bashir group began to aggressively restructure their ruling network. But information asymmetries made it difficult to determine who was really loyal to Turabi and who was loyal to Bashir. To get around this problem, they resorted to several shortcuts. One was they came to rely even more heavily on their own ethnic cohorts. Northerners replaced Turabi loyalists who were purged from office, especially in the security services and other sensitive positions.¹⁴⁸ They exploited the publication of the Black Book to convince their ethnic brethren of the threat that they faced if they were to lose power and the importance of a united front in face of this threat.

Second, they intensified their use of ethnic identity as a means to identify untrustworthy groups. According to Sayeed al-Khateeb, one of the signatories of the Memorandum of 10 and director of a government-financed think tank, the Institute for Strategic Studies, the government made a crude calculation after the Turabi-Bashir split: “The Arab tribes will be with us and the African tribes will be with Turabi...They overestimated the threat of Turabi, and underestimated what the government could do.”¹⁴⁹ A Zaghawa from the National Congress who sided with the Bashir group reiterated this sentiment, “The first impression of the central government after the split was all Zaghawa were with Turabi.”¹⁵⁰

Exacerbating the Bashir group’s paranoia was the fact that many prominent Islamists from the Zaghawa ethnic group sided with Turabi. They felt very loyal to

¹⁴⁷ Interview Khartoum, March 20, 2006.

¹⁴⁸ Interviews with various PNC officials.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Dr. Sayeed al-Khateeb, Khartoum, May 29, 2005.

¹⁵⁰ Interview in Khartoum, January 23, 2006.

Turabi, arguing it was he who reached out to them and included them in the Islamic movement and believed it was “unfaithful” to side with Bashir. Thus after the split, ninety percent of those who supported NIF went with Turabi.¹⁵¹ The Bashir group tried to use all means to convince these members to return to the ruling fold—offering patronage and then threatening jail or worse. Bashir even implored Idriss Deby, president of Chad (and a Zaghawa) to try to persuade certain members who sided with Turabi to return to the government and support Bashir. For example, Deby called one prominent Zaghawa who went with Turabi as many as five times to try to convince him to leave Turabi for Bashir.¹⁵²

Unable to convince the Zaghawa Islamists to side with Bashir, the government feared that those who defected would coordinate with those remaining within the ruling network and in security to bring Turabi back to power. One extreme position was articulated by a Darfurian Arab who remained with Bashir and in the National Congress: “The plot of the Zaghawa was very clear to the government and the [Bashir group] moved against them. [The Zaghawa] wanted to make Hassan al-Turabi to be chairman of the Republic...and then they would succeed him after Turabi passed away...After this plot has been disclosed by President Bashir, in whole of Sudan they have been treated with suspicion, including in Darfur.”¹⁵³

In the wake of the regime crisis and the Bashir group’s inability to woo back the Zaghawa, the government began cracking down on perceived Turabi loyalists and Darfurians associated with his party, especially after several protests were organized by the Popular National Congress, including several in Darfur in September 2000. One NCP official acknowledged, “They were very suspicious of young followers who support

¹⁵¹ Interview with Mohammed Hassan Al-Amin, Khartoum, April 13, 2005.

¹⁵² Interview in Khartoum, March 5, 2006.

¹⁵³ Interview with Jibril Abdullah, Khartoum, March 7, 2006.

Turabi. [Abdallah Safi Nur, governor of North Darfur from 2000 to 2002] was very harsh on Turabi supporters and probably did target Zaghawa. Some of the bitterness of these groups could go back to these events.”¹⁵⁴ The government began targeting Zaghawa commercial traders in Souq Libya, a large market in electronics in Omdurman, north of Khartoum. The government would provide loans and cut taxes for businessmen who would sell goods to rival the Zaghawa, while increasing taxes against Zaghawa, even those in Port Sudan. Consequently many Zaghawa merchants left Souq Libya.

Because of their paranoia with Zaghawa, they removed them from many sensitive places—army, police and security—or transferred them from Darfur to other parts of the country, especially North Darfur. “No Zaghawa were left in security after the split with Turabi.”¹⁵⁵ One governor of Darfur after the split acknowledged that “security people, such as Salah Gosh, were getting rid of Zaghawa or transferring them out of Darfur.”¹⁵⁶ The security, led by Salah Gosh, was particularly aggressive in its targeting of Zaghawa. Part of the reason may have been a personal struggle between Salah Gosh and Yusef Libiss, a fellow security leader and Zaghawa.

It was this time that the central government of Sudan deepened its alliance with the Zaghawa’s rival in Darfur, members of the northern Reizigat, an Abbala Arab tribe, who tried to earn a hakura (or right to land) in the early 1990s, but were blocked by Zaghawa protests. As one NCP official admitted candidly, “The government lost the best cadres in Darfur after the split; they are Turabi’s people.”¹⁵⁷ Consequently, “senior figures in regional and central government accelerated the mobilization of Darfur’s Abbala Arabs” (Flint and de Waal 2005). In January 2000, Abdullah Safi-al-

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Qutbi al-Mahdi, Khartoum, 22 November 2005.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Sulieman Jammous, Furawiya, Sudan, July 2, 2005.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with General Ibrahim Suleiman, Khartoum, March 7, 2006.

¹⁵⁷ Interview Khartoum, Sudan, August 9, 2005.

Nur, an air force general from the northern Reizigat, was appointed governor of North Darfur.

In summary, after the division in the Islamic movement, the Bashir group not only systematically purged perceived Turabi loyalists from the government, security, militias, and the army, but also employed an ethnic calculus in restructuring its ruling network. The Bashir group relied on its own ethnic members at the top levels of security and political power, while strengthening its relations with Abbala Arabs in Darfur.

Communal Violence in Darfur

As the power-struggle between Bashir and Turabi divided the Islamic movement, communal violence and banditry were on the upswing in Darfur. Communal conflict had been endemic in Darfur for generations between pastoralists and farmers over arable land. In the 1980s and 1990s, the conflicts between the Fur and Arabs in the late 1980s (see chapter 5) and the Massaleit and Arabs in the late 1990s took on a racial dimensions and foreshadowed the devastating role the central government can play when it fails to act as a neutral arbiter, but intervenes on the behalf of one side over the other. Prior to the split in the Islamic movement, Sudanese security was already showing a bias on behalf of some of the Arab militias in Darfur,¹⁵⁸ whom they viewed as more loyal to the central government and more enthusiastic in the fervor for fighting against the SPLA in southern Sudan and along the border between Darfur and South Sudan. With the split in the Islamic movement and the central government's fears Turabi would mobilize non-Arab Darfurians, Sudanese security began to deepen their relations with Arab militias particularly the Abbala Arabs. More dependent upon these groups, it became more costly

¹⁵⁸ Members from the Zaghawa were also very active in fighting in southern Sudan and played a key role as leaders of the Popular Defense Forces and other security organizations.

for the regime to reign in the nomads when camels destroyed crops of the Fur tribe or clashed with the Zaghawa. The regime could not afford a coalition of Darfurian tribes against the central government and needed to provide incentives to the Abbala to convince them to remain loyal to Bashir and not also support Turabi. One incentive the regime could provide was to turn a blind-eye, or in effect grant the nomads impunity, as they looted and grazed their animals on the fertile lands of the Fur around Jebel Marra.

According to interviews with local Arab and non-Arab commissioners in Darfur and other state government officials, after the split in the Islamic movement and with the appointment of Abdullah Safi al-Nur as governor of North Darfur in 2000, the Abbala nomads in North Darfur, particularly a group of the Mahamid led by Sheikh Musa Hilal, became very aggressive in grazing their animals in the farms and outright looting.¹⁵⁹

Sheikh Musa Hilal has been one of the most influential leaders of the Abbala Arabs in North Darfur over the past decade. According to a relative, Hilal joined the Islamic movement in the mid-1980s and campaigned on the NIF's behalf in the 1986 elections.¹⁶⁰ After the 1989 coup, Hilal developed contacts with members of the central government and by the late 1990s was boasting in meetings with state government officials that he was authorized by al-Zubeir Mohammed Saleh, the vice-president, to maintain an army in the region.¹⁶¹

In 2000, Musa Hilal's militia became more brazen in its attacks around Kabkabiyah and Jebel Marra. "For two or three years there were few problems in my

¹⁵⁹ "Government support for Musa Hilal's *Janjawiid* changed qualitatively when Safi al Nur was made governor of North Darfur in January, just as the Bashir-Turabi split gave Khartoum good reason to fear a new opposition front emerging in Darfur" (Flint and de Waal 2006, 63). "During Safi el Nur's tenure as governor of North Darfur, tribal tensions increased dramatically due to perceptions that the Sudanese government was aligning itself with and arming the Arab militias." Human Rights Watch, "Entrenching Impunity: Government Responsibility for International Crimes in Darfur," December 2005, pp. 12-13.

¹⁶⁰ Interview Khartoum, 25 March 2006.

¹⁶¹ Interview with former state government officials of North Darfur, Khartoum, January 24, 2006; February 9, 2006

area, but then when Abdallah Safi al Nur became wali, the attacks by the nomads increased,” one Arab commissioner of North Darfur said. According to one Fur civil society activist, “He threatened anyone who tried to cultivate land without getting the green-light from him.”¹⁶²

One former state government official in North Darfur said he appealed to Musa Hilal and Safi Nur to stop such attacks on the fields, but the state government refused to give him any assistance.¹⁶³ Instead the official was transferred to another part of Sudan. An investigation into the violence was finally made and found that elements of the army and the police were coordinating with Musa Hilal. It suggested that Musa Hilal be removed from the area; yet Safir Nur did not act upon the recommendations.¹⁶⁴

While the central government did not directly orchestrate the attacks in 2000 through 2002 like it would in 2003, they were clearly a direct consequence of a restructuring of local relations in the wake of the Turabi-Bashir split. Strengthening its relations with the Abbala tied its hands when it came to responding to the local grievances of the Zaghawa and Fur, convincing radicals from these groups the Bashir government was intent on destroying them and of the need to take security into their own hands.

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)

“If we stay in our houses we will die, if we fight we may survive.”

-Minni Minawi, SLA leader

¹⁶² Interview in Nyala, May 25, 2005.

¹⁶³ Interview with former local official in North Darfur, Khartoum, March 1, 2006.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with North Darfur state official, Khartoum, March 2006.

The Arab militia attacks in the years after the split in the Islamic movement would serve as a key trigger for dissident mobilization and coordination by disparate groups in Darfur. Initially it provoked groups of Fur and Zaghawa to form self-defense forces to protect themselves and their communities. Perhaps due to an overall increase of political consciousness in Darfur after the split between Turabi and Bashir or as the violence continued and the government made no pretense to intervene, but, in the eyes of local communities, abetted the militias, these self-defense forces became the nuclei of a political insurgency.

At its earliest stages, the leaders discovered a sea of local support for their movement and discovered the government had little information about their activities, even as they started to string together successful hit-and-run attacks on various army and police posts. When the government did grasp the fact that a credible insurgency was growing in Darfur, it was reluctant to negotiate politically for fear it would provide an opportunity for Turabi to make a comeback. Instead, it tried to divide the rebels along tribal lines. As this policy failed, the government intensified its counterinsurgency operations. But the regime's lack of leverage over and information about the rebels and the communities supporting them forced it to rely on two unreliable proxies: the Chadian army and local Arab militias. These forces failed to defeat the insurgents, but merely inflamed the conflict, triggering a full-scale civil war.

From Self-Defense Forces to Rebellion

Since the NIF took power in 1989, there have been several groups of dissidents trying to mobilize people in Darfur with the goal of overthrowing the Islamist government or forcing it to address the region's historical marginalization and low-levels

of economic development. In addition to Daud Bolad, the Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance (SFDA) emerged in 1994 and a group of Massaleit joined the SPLA in the late 1990s. These groups were constantly testing the waters and striving to mount effective resistance against the regime, but found it very difficult to operate from within Darfur and the two groups set up bases in Eritrea.

Another group of dissidents was made up of young Fur who met as students studying in Khartoum in the early 1990s. Shortly after Bolad was killed in Darfur, they first met to discuss how they could pick up the struggle Bolad began. With security very tight and increased scrutiny of the Fur after Bolad's diary was found showing his attempts to build an underground Fur resistance throughout the country, the organization of a new Fur movement was put on hold, but the idea continued. By the mid-1990s, several of these former Fur students, led by Abdelwahid Mohamed Al Nur, met again after working abroad. They traveled throughout Darfur to organize and sought support from Chad, but were spurned by Deby who did not wish to disturb his relations with the Sudanese government.

While the Fur leaders laid the foundation for a political movement in the late 1990s, it was the violent attacks on the Fur that drove people to turn to these dissidents for protection. According to a Fur elder, "The Fur felt that the attacks were not ordinary; the Arabs said they would like to evacuate the Fur from their land. Because there was no response from the government, they decided to depend on themselves...They opened military training camps. Soldiers in the army stopped their contacts with the government. They found Fur tribal leaders receptive to their requests."¹⁶⁵ Ahmed Abdul Shafi, one of the original leaders of the SLA, remarked, "People were receptive because the danger was immediate,"

¹⁶⁵ Interview El Fasher, May 1, 2005.

Similar to the Fur, there had been some Zaghawa in opposition to the central government throughout the NIF's time in power. Two of the most prominent Zaghawa in the opposition were Sharif Harir¹⁶⁶ and Adam Shogar, who were part of the Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance (SFDA), operating out of Asmara. Another group of Zaghawa was living in northern Nigeria and considering how to organize an insurgency and begin to launch attacks in Darfur. One of the members of this group, Minni Minawi, left from Nigeria in mid-2000 to try to recruit small groups of fighters to join their movement.

Minnawi arrived in Dar Zaghawa at a time when communities were becoming increasingly concerned by the militia attacks and the publication of the Black Book was raising questions about northern domination. One incident which led directly to mobilization by Zaghawa from Dar Gala in northwest Darfur was clashes between members of the Aulayd Zeid, an Arab camel-herding tribe in western Darfur, and Zaghawa. The conflict began in late 2000 when a Zaghawa was accused of stealing camels from the Aulayd Zeid and was subsequently confronted by Chief Eissa Abu Rag Sheet. An altercation ensued and the Chief was shot dead. After their chief was shot a group of Aulayd Zeid came together and attacked a group of Zaghawa at a water point in Gergera, killing three persons. This led to a series of clashes in which 11 Zaghawa died and an estimated 20 from the Aulayd Zeid. In May 2001 there was an attack on the Zaghawa in Bir Tawil northern West Darfur by a militia from the Aulayd Zeid tribe killing as many as 56 people and four members of a joint police-army force.¹⁶⁷ At this point, a full-scale tribal war was on the verge of breaking out between the Dar Gala and Aulayd Zeid. Each side retreated to their areas to prepare for more clashes. The Zaghawa

¹⁶⁶ Harir defected from Sudan after several of his family members were killed by security forces in Darfur in 1991.

¹⁶⁷ "Sixty people killed in tribal clashes in Sudan," *Agence France Presse*, 9 May 2001.

organized in self-defense camps around Orching to protect themselves and the local leaders selected people to guard their animals.

To prevent the violence escalating further, a meeting was held in Fasher in July between Nazir Ahmed Khalil Sheet and Shartay Adam Sabi, the tribal leaders of the Aulad Zeid and Zaghawa, respectively, and attended by the governors of West Darfur and North Darfur. The governors requested that the tribal leaders act to keep their people away from the area, dismantle any self-defense camps that had been established and to be patient for a reconciliation meeting that would occur after the rainy season and during which the sides would calculate losses on both sides and decide on whether or not diya should be paid. After the meeting, Shartay Adam Sabi traveled to the self-defense camps in Dar Zaghawa to persuade the militants that “now is the time for peace” and that “the government will deploy police reserves.”¹⁶⁸ The young men, led by Khatir Tor al Kala and Abdallah Abaker, rejected the Shartay’s pleas, stating they could not trust the government and insisting that if they dismantled the camps, it would leave them vulnerable to attacks by the Arab militias.¹⁶⁹ They attacked the Shartay, accusing him of siding with government and pocketing the money to be paid as blood money by the Aulayd Zeid. They attempted to steal his vehicle, but were unsuccessful. According to one Zaghawa tribal leader, “These guys were angry with the Shartay and the government because they think their blood is cheap—no reconciliation meeting, no compensation.”¹⁷⁰ Eventually they stole a vehicle from a citizen and traveled to Abu Gamra, where they attacked a recently reinforced police station and captured a police vehicle and a police lieutenant. According to a leader of the Zaghawa shura council, “It was the feeling of the

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Shartaiy Adam Sabi, Al Fasher, 15 December 2005.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Minni Minawi, Asmara, Eritrea, 23 February 2005.

¹⁷⁰ Interview Darfur, December 2005.

Zaghawa that the government did not put pressure on the Aulad Zeid to pay the diya because of a bias in favor of the Arabs.”¹⁷¹

It was at this juncture that the Zaghawa dissidents were visited by Abdelwahid Mohamed al Nur. Abdelwahid invited the Zaghawa group to join the Fur in Jebel Marra, where the Fur militias were organizing protected by the natural defense of the mountain. After the attack on the police base at Abu Gamra the group of Zaghawa, numbering not more than 17, moved to Jebel Marra to join the Fur self-defense camps.

Over the next 9 months, the Zaghawa, some of whom had fought with the Chadian army and supported Deby’s rise to power,¹⁷² trained the Fur and started to secretly organize an insurgency.¹⁷³ According to Abdel Wahid at the beginning they had roughly 200 regular troops and some 1000 irregular forces.¹⁷⁴ With the militia attacks continuing, the rebels found it easy to recruit soldiers to join the movement. Moreover, local communities willingly supported the movement.

The first joint rebel operations attacks were raids against police posts or poorly defended army garrisons in early 2002 with the goal of testing the waters and obtaining weapons from the government. After an attack on an army outpost in Tur, the rebels distributed a crude manifesto, identifying themselves as the Darfur Liberation Army, faulting the government for siding with Arab militias against the non-Arabs, and demanding diya (blood-money) be paid for the string of recent attacks on Zaghawa and Fur.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Interview Khartoum, March 15, 2006.

¹⁷² Zaghawa in Darfur supported Deby against Habre because of the latter’s reprisals and killings against Zaghawa in 1989. Interview in Khartoum, March 15, 2006.

¹⁷³ “Our success depended on the secrecy of the movement. We created many camps in the mountains of Jebel Marra.” Abdel-Wahid Asmara, Eritrea, 22 February 2005.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with David Mozersky, International Crisis Group, February 2005.

¹⁷⁵ Domenico Polloni, p. 38. See also African Confidential, “Death in Darfur,” Volume 43, Number 23, November 22, 2002.

Initial Government Response

In early 2002 rumors started to reach Khartoum that militants were organizing in Jebel Marra. In response, Hussein Abdullah Jibril, the Chairman of the Defense and Security Committee for the Sudanese National Assembly, traveled throughout Darfur with a 15-person delegation in March to assess the security situation. He reported to the Assembly that an unknown group of some 300 persons from the Fur and Zaghawa were training in the mountainous area.¹⁷⁶ The report provoked debate within the National Assembly and the legislators called the Minister of Interior, Maj-Gen Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Hussein, to appear before them on April 22, 2002 to explain the situation. In his testimony, Abd-al-Rahim testified that there were foreign elements operating in Darfur, implying Chadians, and pledged to increase security in the region.

But the day after the Abd-al-Rahim's testimony, Musa Hilal's militia struck again. On April 23, 2002, an estimated 26 people were killed when his militia burned the three villages of Dabat Nayrah, Umm Haraz al-Umdah, Umm Haraz al-Madrasah.¹⁷⁷ Less than a week later his militia attacked Shoba village, south of Kebkabiyah town, in which it was reported seventeen people were killed in the attack and 22 others injured.¹⁷⁸ Shortly after these attacks, Abd-al-Rahim toured Darfur and promised to deploy extra policemen in the area to protect local communities. But according on one state government official who traveled with him, "He talks too much. He said he would put police in the area to stop the attacks, but didn't do it."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Hussein Abdullah Jibril, Khartoum, March 23, 2006.

¹⁷⁷ "Armed group" burns three villages in Darfur; several people said dead," Republic of Sudan Radio, Omdurman, translated by BBC Worldwide Monitoring, April 25, 2002; "Gunmen kill 26 villagers in fiery rampage in west Sudan," Agence France Presse, April 25, 2002.

¹⁷⁸ "Nineteen killed, huts burned by gunmen in western Sudan," Agence France Presse,

¹⁷⁹ Interview with high-ranking state government official who met the Minister of Interior in Darfur, Khartoum, March 8, 2006.

As the militia attacks mounted, Fur politicians and intellectuals placed the blame squarely on the central government. Two prominent Fur in exile released a statement declaring, “The information we had from our contacts in the area is that the government is collaborating with the militia, supplying them with arms and ammunition as well providing them with protection after they commit their atrocities.”¹⁸⁰ Meanwhile, a group of Fur members of parliament sent a petition to the president detailing a list of villages attacked and called for the government to protect Fur villages and stop the militias.

Reminiscent of the meeting he had with Fur leaders in 1991 (see chapter six), Bashir met the Fur MPs and listened to their concerns. Upon Abd-al-Rahim’s return from Darfur, Bashir announced the creation of a committee for the ‘Restoration of State Authority and Security in Darfur’ to be chaired by the governor of North Darfur, Ibrahim Suleiman. According to one Fur politician who met Bashir, the security committee “didn’t work because the Arabs continued to attack the villages.” And the rebels in Jebel Marra refused to give up their weapons.

With the violence escalating in Darfur, the government strategy at the time was to use the security committee to try to divide the dissidents along tribal lines between the Fur and the Zaghawa and deal with each faction separately through tribal interlocutors. A meeting was held for Fur traditional leaders and other representatives in Nirtiti, on the foothills of Jebel Marra, in August 2002. The premise of the meeting was that these Fur representatives would convince the rebels to stop attacking the police stations and army outposts in exchange for the government protecting Fur villages.¹⁸¹ The meeting also

¹⁸⁰ “Ethnic Cleansing in Darfur Region of the Sudan,” 29 April 2002, <http://www.d-a.org.uk/pages/dmg1.htm>

¹⁸¹ Interview with Fur attendee, April 9, 2006.

appeared to be a government attempt to convince the Fur to persuade the Zaghawa to leave the Jebel Marra.

The rebels in Jebel Marra rejected the Nirtiti conference as a tribal meeting. The rebels “did not want to meet with the government as tribes, but wanted to negotiate with the government to avoid war...if the government agreed to stop supplying and supporting the Arabs and gave them some services—education, health, and water.”¹⁸² The tribal approach to the rebellion merely increased mistrust between the different Darfurian ethnic groups. A meeting in Kass shortly after the Nirtiti meeting between the Arabs and the government was seen by the Fur as a cover for Sudanese security to further coordinate with Arab groups to “depopulate” their areas.

As the Nirtiti and Kass meetings failed to de-escalate the conflict, the Sudanese military was organizing for a massive operation on Jebel Marra. SAF started to build up its forces and surrounded the mountain. In December 2002 and January 2003 the government launched a major offensive in Jebel Marra. Hoping the Fur would support the government as it did against the SPLA in 1991, the Sudanese security armed some Fur tribal militias to aid in the offensive. The government viewed the Fur as passive and easily co-opted (the obsession of Sudanese security and military intelligence was with dissidents from the Zaghawa), but Khartoum’s policies over the decade since Bolad was captured—the division of Darfur into three states, the parceling out of land under the magdumate, and allowing Musa Hilal and other militias to freely attack Fur villages—severely undermined the regime’s credibility in the eyes of the local population and leaders. Consequently, during the battles the Fur militias merely handed over their weapons and ammunition and joined the rebels.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Interview with Ali Tor Al-Kalla, August 14, 2005.

¹⁸³ Interview with SAF general, April 2006; other interviews.

The SLA Moves to North Darfur

As the Sudanese military was concentrating on clearing out Jebel Marra, it did not recognize that the SLA had moved a substantial part of its rebel forces into northern Darfur and created a new base of operations in Dar Zaghawa. The move to northern Darfur occurred after the Nirtiti meeting, in which the rebels became concerned that the government was infiltrating Jebel Marra and the presence of the Zaghawa rebels in Fur territories was creating friction with local communities.¹⁸⁴ By September 2002 Abdallah Abaker, Minni Minawi and some 300 rebels left for Dar Zaghawa. While in North Darfur, the rebels negotiated with Ibrahim Suleiman through tribal interlocutors but the negotiations made little headway.

According to Sharif Harir, a long-time dissident in Darfur and early adviser to the SLA, the opening of new operations in North Darfur was a “critical juncture” as “there was no government of Sudan presence” in the region.”¹⁸⁵ In Dar Zaghawa, the SLA opened several new camps and kept silent for several months. In February 2003 the rebels were able to liberate the town of Golo near Jebel Marra from the Sudanese military, ensuring the government’s attention remain focused on this area. A month later the SLA surprised the government with a series of attacks in North Darfur, including on Um Baru, Kornoi, and the border town of Tina. “Until [the rebels] started attacking in the North,” one SAF general admitted, “we didn’t realize so many were there.”¹⁸⁶

Khartoum’s inability to monitor the rebels in Dar Zaghawa proved crucial to the SLA’s operations. It was around this time that the Sudan People’s Liberation Army

¹⁸⁴ Enmity between the Fur and Zaghawa can be traced back to the Arab-Fur conflict in the late 1980s when the Fur perceived some Zaghawa groups as siding with the Arabs.

¹⁸⁵ Interview, Ndjamen, Chad, June 25, 2005.

¹⁸⁶ Interview, 2006.

(SPLA), which made contact with the Darfurian rebels in late 2002 through Ahmed Abdel Shafi, started regular weapons shipments to the SLA.¹⁸⁷

Part of the reason the government was in the dark about operations in Dar Zaghawa was the SLA had neutralized the few local agents the government had left—Zaghawa tribal leaders. In February 2003, the SLA kidnapped Shartaiy Adam Sabi from Um Baru, whom they accused of working on behalf of the government of Sudan. When a group of Zaghawa came to meet the rebels to win the Shartaiy's release, the SLA displayed their impressive firepower and passed a message to be sent to other tribal leaders: stay out of North Darfur and do not communicate with the government or risk being killed. After this group returned to Fasher, Dar Zaghawa was empty for the rebels. The rebels' threats proved effective. According to a general in the Sudanese military, ““The Zaghawa chiefs refused to deal with the rebels. It limits the information coming from Dar Zaghawa. [Moreover], they never allowed the refugees to go southern Darfur. They succeeded in preventing us from getting information.”¹⁸⁸

The Rebels Anger Idriss Deby

While operating in North Darfur and attacking along the Chad-Sudan border, the SLA made Chad's president, Idriss Deby, nervous. Since his successful insurgency out of Darfur to N'djamena in 1990, Deby, a Zaghawa, had developed a close relationship with President Bashir and both governments worked to ensure dissidents did not find sanctuary in their respective countries. With the emergence of the SLA (and with some of its leaders having fought alongside Deby in 1990 and served in the Chadian army, even though they were Sudanese), Deby was concerned the Darfurian rebellion would

¹⁸⁷ Another advantage of North Darfur over Jebel Marra is the desert is easier to build airstrips.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Sudanese military official.

threaten to disrupt his relations with Bashir and weaken his internal control as weapons and individuals would inevitably filter over to the rebels.

In late 2002 Deby and the SLA leadership would engage in a heated exchange after the rebels ambushed a convoy coming from Libya and kidnapped eight individuals from the Aulayd Zeid tribe, an Arab group whose members live in both Chad and Sudan. This attack would have dramatic repercussions as Khartoum exploited the incident to mobilize Arabs against the rebellion. Moreover, it angered Deby. Feeling pressure from Arab leaders within his country and sensitive to any negative relations between Arabs and Zaghawa in Darfur, Deby sought to end the violence between the Aulayd Zeid and the Zaghawa. When Deby traveled to Tine, Chad for a national festival in December 2002, he called for representatives from the SLA to meet him to discuss the release of the eight Aulayd Zeid. The rebels told Deby they have no problem with the Arabs just with the government of Sudan and pledged to bring the abductees in fifteen days. But the rebels deceived Deby as the nomads had already been killed. When Deby learned this, he phoned the SLA leader, Abdallah Abaker, scolding the rebels and warning them that their rebellion would just bring problems for their people and accomplish nothing. Abaker responded with a clear threat to Deby: “We may not know the way to Khartoum, but surely we know the way to N’djamena.”¹⁸⁹ Infuriated, Deby became just as intent on destroying the rebels as his counterpart Bashir, but his security and military officials would have different ideas.

The View from Khartoum: Underestimating the Rebellion and an Unwillingness to Bargain

¹⁸⁹ Various interviews, including with SLA leader Minni Minawi.

As the rebellion intensified in North Darfur, the central government became impatient with the local negotiations through the tribal interlocutors. In its discussions with regional intermediaries, especially from the Abbala, the government learned the rebellion was weak and could easily be defeated. It also received reports from several Zaghawa members of the NCP, suggesting the rebels were much stronger than the Sudanese military was estimating, but these were ignored.

In February 2003 there was a large meeting in El Fasher in which some 500 Darfurians attended to discuss what the government should do to address the growing crisis. The outcome of the meeting was split between those who supported military action and those who wanted to negotiate with the rebels. Many of the Darfurians called for negotiations, but the hardliners in the government refused, feeling they could defeat the rebellion.

Moreover, the central government saw Turabi looming behind the rebellion in Darfur. According to one Bashir loyalist, the Bashir group from the beginning of the conflict perceived Turabi as coming from Darfur, which affected their willingness to bargain.¹⁹⁰ Another presidential adviser said, “They fear peace will bring back Turabi and he will slaughter the regime. The ultimate irony is the rebels were revolting because of Turabi’s policies.”¹⁹¹

The Operation Against Ain Sirro and the Rebels Surprise Counter-Attack

As the Sudanese military recognized the strength of the insurgents was concentrated in Dar Zaghawa, Bashir turned to his good friend Deby. Deby had an

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Dr. Qutbi al-Mahdi, Khartoum, Sudan.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Ali Hassn Taj al’Din, Khartoum, 31 March 2006.

incredibly prescient vision of the problems the SLA would cause him.¹⁹² He feared that it would weaken his own hold on power, and complicate his relations with the government of Sudan. Deby had pressured the Zaghawa in the Islamic movement to stay with Bashir rather than following Turabi.¹⁹³ Abdallah Abaker's threat against Deby further infuriated him and he had the same mindset as Bashir that the rebels should be destroyed.

In March 2003, the governments of Sudan and Chad decided to close the border. Moreover, lacking troops to fight the rebels in North Darfur, the Sudanese military decided to arm a battalion of Chadians to help in an offensive the government was planning against the rebels who had established bases in the Ain Sirro hills near Kutum. As the Chadian battalion moved toward Ain Sirro, the government was mobilizing the army and Arab militias from different parts of North Darfur to try to wipe out the rebels.

But as the Chadians made their way to Ain Sirro, the SLA established contact with the Chadians, many of whom were Zaghawa, and learned they were not interested in fighting. When the battalion reached Ain Sirro, one vehicle entered the mountains to discuss with the SLA the Sudanese government operation. They told the rebels, "The government is going to attack you from all sides, including using planes in Fasher."¹⁹⁴ After staying only a few days, the Chadians left, reporting to the Sudanese military that they could not find the SLA.

Shortly after the battalion left, SAF launched its offensive, just as the Chadians said, sending in tanks and bombarding from Fasher. As the government focused on Ain Sirro, a mobile SLA force slipped out of the mountains and stealthily made their way to

¹⁹² Unfortunately, this came true and in 2004 the government of Sudan started arming Chadian rebels to overthrow Deby.

¹⁹³ "Deby told us that he is a personal friend of Bashir. The government is very good to you. You shouldn't take any position against the president. I am ready to pick up the phone. Whatever you want he will give it to you." Interview with Zaghawa Islamist, Abuja, April 9, 2006.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with SLA leader, Minni Minawi, who talked with the Chadians, in Abuja, Nigeria, April 2006.

El Fasher. Early the morning on April 25th, the rebels attacked Fasher airport and immobilized the government's air capabilities. This left the government tanks in Ain Sirro vulnerable to counter-attack by the rebels. As the tide turned in the rebels' favor in Ain Sirro, the government soldiers called desperately to Fasher for air cover, which never came. This major victory would be one of many the rebels would achieve over the next several months

Desperate to slow the rebellion and turn the tide of the war over the next several months, the government intensified its aerial bombardment and its use of local militias, primarily those from the camel-herding Arab tribes; Abdallah Safi Nur and Musa Hilal became key players in mobilizing and overseeing local counterinsurgency operations. The regime relied on its "informal networks of ruling party insiders, former military personnel, and leaders of nomadic tribes"¹⁹⁵ to recruit the Janjaweed militias to fight the rebels. For example in South Darfur one of the key leaders of the militia was Mohammed Yacoub al Omda who was granted a position of nazir by the NIF. Others were "leaders of small Arab tribes that migrated to Darfur from Chad in the past few decades and have been involved in local clashes with Fur and other groups over access to land in the past decade."¹⁹⁶

Together the military and militias launched a brutal scorched-earth campaign against villages and civilian populations in Dar Zaghawa and other areas of Northern Darfur as the rebellion spread to South and West Darfur. Over time the government's counterinsurgency policy would succeed in slowing the rebellion and forcing a stalemate, but not before the displacing millions of Darfurians and killing hundreds of thousands.

¹⁹⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Entrenching Impunity: Government Responsibility for International Crimes in Darfur," December 2005.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

Analysis: Regime Crisis, Ethnic Exclusion, and Counterinsurgency Ineffectiveness

In contrast to 1990 and 1991, in 2002 and 2003 the government was unable to effectively defeat a rebellion in Darfur. Why not? What explains the difference in the outcome of insurgency versus counterinsurgency? I argue that one of the fundamental differences between the two cases is that in 2002 and 2003 the government's clientelist network in Darfur was narrower than immediately after the 1989 coup. The regime's more exclusive clientelist network—a consequence of a regime crisis in 1999 and 2000—undermined the regime's leverage over and information about local communities in Darfur.

Regime Crisis and Political Exclusion

Since 1965, Hassan al-Turabi had been the undisputed leader of the Islamic movement in Sudan. By the late 1990s, however, Turabi's influence was waning as a security clique within the movement was ascendant. To re-exert his dominance, Turabi, then speaker of the National Assembly, began to push for a series of radical political reforms that would weaken the powers of the presidency and strengthen parliament. But Bashir and the security clique could not accept these reforms, which they felt were a direct challenge to their hold on power, and moved against Turabi. This led to a split in the regime, but not an end to the conflict between Turabi and Bashir.

The Bashir group was obsessed with future threats from Turabi and his allies within the army and the regime. In particular they feared Turabi would mobilize support from the Darfurians who he had been recruited in large numbers in the 1970s and 1980s. The Bashir group tried to persuade Zaghawa Islamists to remain loyal to the regime during the conflict but they refused and many sided with Turabi. As the division within the movement became irreparable, the Bashir group became paranoid about other Turabi

loyalists who remained within the regime and who may exploit their privileged position to pass information to Turabi and coordinate within the army. Unable to identify exactly who the Turabi loyalists were, the regime used ethnic identity as a shortcut to exclude Turabi supporters from the government and sensitive positions. Non-Arab Darfurians, especially the Zaghawa, were broadly assumed to be working on behalf of Turabi. Thus, the Bashir group began to violently restructure its ruling network and exclude Zaghawa and other non-Arabs from the ruling network. To fill the void left by the exclusion of these Islamists, the regime began to strengthen its ties with clients from the Abbala in Darfur, the traditional rivals of the Zaghawa. These clients would go on to become the leaders of the janjaweed.

Political Exclusion, Bargaining Failure, and Counterinsurgency Ineffectiveness

While political exclusion helped the Bashir group to consolidate internal regime control during a period of great political tumult, it had decisive consequences for the regime's control in Darfur and the structure of its clientelist network, undermining Khartoum's ability to effectively prevent and contain rebellion. What evidence is there that this contributed to the civil war in Darfur in 2002 and 2003?

First, the political exclusion of the Zaghawa and non-Arabs in the ruling network increased the importance of remaining clients in Darfur, particularly those from the Abbala Arabs, to the regime. As the camel-herding nomads violently encroached upon the land of the Fur and clashed with the Zaghawa, the central government turned a blind eye to these activities. This communal violence caused groups from the Fur and Zaghawa to organize self-defense forces, which would become the nucleus of a rebel movement. Moreover, the government's inert response to the violence led these

communities to conclude that Khartoum had a hand in the destruction of their homes and contributed to the politicization of their mobilization.

Second, as the self-defense forces evolved into a rebellion, the exclusive policies adopted after the regime crisis compromised Khartoum's willingness and ability to apply effective military and political policies that would have averted a larger conflict. The restructuring of its clientelist network reduced the level of information the regime had about the strength of the insurgency and their grievances. The Bashir group relied more on Darfurian Arabs to gauge how to respond to the mobilization in Darfur. As rivals of the Fur and Zaghawa communities, the Darfurian Arabs had a vested interest in seeing these groups engage in a violent conflict with the government and pushed the Bashir regime in a militant direction. These local assessments coincided with the Bashir group's paranoia that Turabi was behind the rebellion and any political concessions for Darfur would be exploited by Turabi's party to retake power.

As bargaining broke down and the central government committed to war, its information problems further hindered its ability to execute an effective counterinsurgency campaign. The army had little information about the whereabouts of the rebels, particularly when the rebels were in Dar Zaghawa. The central government tried to use tribal interlocutors to locate the SLA, but these tribal leaders had lost most of their authority in the eyes of the local population and were violently neutralized by the rebels. Instead, the government turned to neighboring Chad to try to provide extra military support and intelligence, but the Chadian battalion merely passed sensitive information to the rebels. The government also relied on the militias from the Arab tribes but these local agents were more concerned about the spoils of war rather than confronting the SLA. In the end, the government's counterinsurgency operations did more to inflame the conflict than to contain it.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to explain the causes of civil war onset in sub-Saharan Africa between independence and 1999. It argues that structural economic explanations, in particular low income, may distinguish civil wars in a global sample, but are less robust in predicting civil war across the Africa region. Instead, I introduce a more dynamic model that focuses principally on strategic interactions within regimes (between the ruler and clients) and between regimes and dissidents. It begins from the assumption that African rulers are primarily concerned about political survival and that clientelism emerged as the dominant institution of political rule in sub-Saharan Africa in the post-colonial period. While clientelism was an expedient mechanism for maintaining external control without building up the formal state apparatus, it contained several inherent deficiencies which could possibly compromise internal control—one of the most important being the principal-agent problem.

The contractual nature of clientelism, in which the ruler appoints the client to a government position in exchange for the promise the client will remain loyal to the ruler and support the regime's survival, ensures that information asymmetries are always a concern for the ruler. Clients may feign support for the ruler to get access to state resources and an inside track to power to one day capture control themselves. With the frequency and ease of coups d'état, African rulers obsessed over client loyalty and minimizing the principal-agent problem.

One shortcut to address this problem is political exclusion: the fewer clients the ruler has in his network, the fewer to monitor and the lower the risk of internal threats. I

argue that in the wake of regime crises or failed coups, when rulers are most concerned about the principal-agent problem and future internal threats, they are most likely to employ violent political exclusion as a quick-fix to try to coup-proof the regime. But exclusion is also costly as it generates more dissidents, while weakening the primary mechanism through which the regime acquires information about political activities in society and exerts political leverage. Forfeiting non-violent control, the regime has to rely on coercion, but lacking leverage and local information, this is bound to be indiscriminate and inflammatory and ineffective in the face of violent mobilization. In short, the institution of clientelism ensures that in the wake of regime crises African rulers' attempts to coup-proof the regime increase the risk of civil war onset.

I presented several sources of evidence to support this theoretical argument. First, I examined cross-national evidence to see if indeed failed coups and other regime crises increase the likelihood of civil war onset, even when controlling for other factors associated with civil war. I found a strong statistical link between one or more regime crises in the previous five years and civil war onset in 40 sub-Saharan African countries between independence and 1999. But recognizing that a statistical association does not confirm there is a causal effect, I also tried to tease out evidence to see how regime crises increase the likelihood of civil war onset. I found regime crises lead to increased levels of repression, purges, political exclusion, and indiscriminate violence, which suggest the ruler is concerned with eradicating and neutralizing disloyal agents in the aftermath of these regime crises. The cross-national evidence also suggests that an interactive effect between regime crises and indiscriminate violence has a dramatic effect on civil war onset.

To further test the causal effect of regime crises on exclusion and clientelism on civil war, I carried out two case studies of Darfur, Sudan. The second Darfur case in

1999-2003 illustrated the effect of a split in the Islamic movement on the regime's clientelist network; how in the wake of this regime crisis, the Bashir group had concerns about the principal-agent problem and Turabi loyalists exploiting their places in security and the ruling network to launch coups and other challenges; how it managed to address this problem, primarily through purges and political exclusion, often along ethnic lines; how this compromised the regime's access to information and control in Darfur, leading to indiscriminate violence and paving the way for dissidents, who had been trying to mobilize in Darfur for years, to finally succeed. In contrast, the first Darfur case illustrated how a more inclusive network in Darfur helped the government to defeat an attempt by the SPLA to open a new front in the region.

Specifying the Pathway to Civil War Onset in Weak States

In their seminal article on civil war onset, Fearon and Laitin (2003) argue that weak, low-income states are more vulnerable to civil war due to their "inept and corrupt counterinsurgency practices," including "a propensity for brutal and indiscriminate retaliation that helps drive noncombatant locals into rebel forces." This dissertation corroborates their analysis: cross-nationally indiscriminate state violence is found to be a key trigger of civil war in sub-Saharan Africa and played a key facilitating role in the formation of the Sudan Liberation Army in Darfur in 2001 and 2002. But my research differs from theirs in that it specifies that these regime policies are often a consequence of how rulers respond to failed coups or other regime crises, rather than merely due to the weakness of formal state structures (e.g., lack of roads, effective police and army, etc.).

Moreover, my research introduces a temporal variable that has often been missing from many civil war analyses. The structural variables commonly associated with civil war onset, such as population size, GDP per capita, or new states, are static measures that

change only very slowly over time and thus are unable to pinpoint when civil war onset will occur in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Future Research

The association between regime crises and civil war onset is a probabilistic one; not all regime crises lead to civil war onset. For example, Ghana, Benin and Burkina Faso have all experienced five or more successful coups since independence and various failed coups, but never have had civil war. Why? Based on the research presented, we would expect rulers of these countries to employ political exclusion to try to reduce the risk of coups and provoke civil wars. In future research I plan to investigate these cases to better understand why the persistent threat of the coup d'état has not caused political exclusion and civil war and what this tells us about the limitations of the central argument.

While analyzing outliers is one way to deepen our understanding of regime crises and civil war onset, another way to do so is to test the argument across a global sample or across other post-colonial countries. A systematic analysis is required to address this question, but in brief we can hypothesize the degree to which the argument would or would not hold.

The primary mechanisms that cause failed coups and other regime crises to lead to civil war are African rulers' attempts to minimize the principal-agent problem by narrowing their clientelist network in order to try to reduce the risk of future coups. But because of the weakness of formal state structures, it is predominantly through the clientelist network that rulers are able to exert leverage and control over society. Thus, when rulers narrow their networks, particularly excluding along ethnic lines, they drive

former clients into the opposition and compromise their ability to effectively prevent and contain insurgency.

We would expect this argument to hold in other countries in which political rule is based on clientelism (and formal state structures are weak) and when these clientelist networks tend to mirror ethnic cleavages rather than cross-cut them. When these conditions hold, we would anticipate rulers to respond to internal threats with similar exclusive policies, leading to a corresponding increase in civil war risk.

One contemporary example is the Iraqi civil war that erupted after the United States-led invasion in 2003. While the roots of the insurgency in Iraq lie in resistance by the former Iraqi army and Baathist elements to the US intervention, the insurgency was fueled by the de-Baathification policy implemented by the Coalitional Provisional Authority, which was installed after the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime. The de-Baathification policy was implemented by the CPA as a blanket mechanism to reduce the influence of former officials and loyalists in the Hussein regime rather than risk retaining these individuals in the government and have to incur the monitoring costs of ensuring they do not exploit their position and sabotage a new Iraqi government. The problem was the de-Baathification policy disproportionately affected Sunnis (who were the staunch supporters and members of the Saddam regime) and thus weakened the new Iraqi government and coalitional authority's leverage and information about the Sunni population. Informed commentators have noted the role the de-Baathification policy has played in undermining the US and CPA's control over Sunni communities and fueling the insurgency (Packer 2005).

Policy Implications

What are the implications of this research for preventing and ending conflict around the world? First, it suggests that in Africa failed coups d'état and other regime crises should serve as early-warning signals about the risk of civil war. In particular foreign governments and international organizations need to closely scrutinize government policies after regime crises for the risk of provoking violent mobilization. Second, longer term policies are needed to address the root causes of coups and civil war in Africa: the state as the predominant source of jobs and material wealth in Africa. Diversified economies and a growing private sector will provide opportunities to gain wealth independent from the state and serve to reduce the high-stakes for grabbing and holding political control. Of course, these changes will be a long-time in the making and in the short-term international organizations and foreign governments need to continue to try to raise the costs of indiscriminate violence and exclusion and deter rulers from risking civil war to stay in power.

Appendix: Civil Wars in Africa

Fearon and Laitin (2003) List of Civil Wars in Africa, 1956-1999

Country	Years	Actors
Angola	1975-	UNITA
Angola	1992-	FLEC (Cabinda)
Burundi	1972-72	Hutu uprising
Burundi	1988-88	Org. massacres on both sides
Burundi	1993-	Hutu groups v. govt
Central African Rep.	1996-97	Factional fighting
Chad	1965-	FROLINAT, various ...
Chad	1994-98	Rebels in South
Congo	1998-99	Factional fighting
Dem. Rep. Congo	1960-65	Katanga, Kasai, CNL
Dem. Rep. Congo	1977-78	FLNC
Dem. Rep. Congo	1996-97	AFDL (Kabila)
Dem. Rep. Congo	1998-	RCD, etc v. govt
Djibouti	1993-94	FRUD
Ethiopia	1974-92	Eritrea, Tigray, etc.
Ethiopia	1997-	ALF, ARDUF (Afars)
Guinea Bissau	1998-99	Mil. faction
Liberia	1989-96	NPFL (Taylor), INPFL (Johnson)
Mali	1989-94	Tuaregs
Mozambique	1976-95	RENAMO
Nigeria	1967-70	Biafra
Rwanda	1962-65	Post-rev strife
Rwanda	1990-	RPF, genocide
Senegal	1989-	MFDC (Casamance)
Sierra Leone	1991-	RUF, AFRC, etc.
Somalia	1981-91	SSDF, SNM (Isaaqs)
Somalia	1991-	post-Barre war
South Africa	1983-94	ANC, PAC, Azapo
Sudan	1963-72	Anyanya
Sudan	1983-	SPLA, etc.
Uganda	1981-87	NRA, etc.
Uganda	1993-	LRA, West Nile, etc.
Zimbabwe	1972-79	ZANU, ZAPU
Zimbabwe	1983-87	Ndebele guer's

Source: Fearon and Laitin (2003b).

Sambanis (2004) List of Civil Wars in Africa, 1956-1999

Country Name	Year Start	Year End	Actors/Description
Angola	1975	1991	UNITA
Angola	1992	1994	UNITA
Angola	1997	2002	UNITA
Angola	1994	1999	Cabinda; FLEC
Burundi	1965	1969	Hutu uprising
Burundi	1972	1972	Hutu uprising
Burundi	1988	1988	Org. massacres on both sides
Burundi	1991	Ongoing	Hutu groups v. govt
Central African Republic	1996	1997	Factional fighting
Chad	1965	1979	FROLINAT, various ...
Chad	1980	1994	FARF; FROLINAT
Chad	1994	1997	FARF; FROLINAT
Congo – Brazzaville	1993	1997	Lissouba v. Sassou-Nguesso
Congo – Brazzaville	1998	1999	Cobras v. Ninjas
Congo-Zaire	1960	1965	Katanga, Kasai, Kwilu, Eastern
Congo-Zaire	1967	1967	Kisangani mutiny
Congo-Zaire	1977	1978	FLNC; Shabba 1 & 2
Congo-Zaire	1996	1997	AFDL (Kabila)
Congo-Zaire	1998	2001	RCD, etc v. govt
Djibouti	1991	1994	FRUD
Ethiopia	1974	1991	Eritrean war of independence
Ethiopia	1978	1991	Ideological; Tigrean
Ethiopia	1976	1988	Ogaden; Somalis
Kenya	1963	1967	Shifita war (Somalis)
Kenya	1991	1993	Rift valley ethnic violence
Liberia	1989	1990	Doe v. rebels
Liberia	1992	1997	NPLF; ULIMO; NPF; LPC; LDF
Liberia	1999	Ongoing	anti-Taylor resistance
Mali	1990	1995	Tuaregs; Maurs
Mozambique	1976	1992	RENAMO; FRELIMO
Namibia	1973	1989	SWAPO; SWANU; SWATF
Nigeria	1967	1970	Biafra
Nigeria	1980	1985	Muslims; Maitatsine rebellion
Rwanda	1963	1964	Tutsi uprising
Rwanda	1990	1993	Hutu vs. Tutsi groups
Rwanda	1994	1994	RPF; genocide
Senegal	1989	1999	MFDC (Casamance)
Sierra Leone	1991	1996	RUF, AFRC, etc.
Sierra Leone	1997	2001	post-Koroma coup violence
Somalia	1988	1991	SSDF, SNM (Isaaqs)

Country Name	Year Start	Year End	Actors/Description
Somalia	1991	Ongoing	post-Barre war
South Africa	1976	1994	ANC, PAC, Azapo
Sudan	1963	1972	Anya Nya
Sudan	1983	2002	SPLM, SPLA, NDA, AnyanyaII
Uganda	1966	1966	Baganda rebellion
Uganda	1978	1979	Tanzanian war
Uganda	1981	1987	NRA/Museveni, etc
Uganda	1990	1992	Kony (pre-LRA)
Uganda	1995	Ongoing	LRA, West Nile, ADF, etc.
Zimbabwe	1972	1979	ZANU, ZAPU
Zimbabwe	1983	1987	Ndebele guerillas

Source: Sambanis (2004)

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