Educational Study Guide

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Thematic Essays

The Dinka

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The Dinka belong to a larger group known as the Nilotics. Dinkaland lies in the province of Bahr el-Ghazal and extends east into the savanna and swamplands around Lake No and Bahr el-Jebel in Upper Nile province, approximately 500 miles south of Khartoum, the capital of Sudan.

The government whose center is located in the North is in the hands of Arabicized Muslims while the Dinka and the other South Sudanese view themselves as African. Sudan has experienced a long history of alien intrusion; first the Arabs, then the Turks, then the British colonial occupation, and finally the Arabs again after independence from Britain. All of them had their own interests at heart in controlling Dinkaland rather than the interest of the Dinka, and all have concentrated education, development and other services in the North to the total neglect of the South. This pattern of concentration of services in the North has continued since independence in 1956, resulting in southern rebellions and two North-South civil wars.

Over the twenty years of civil war, close to one million Dinka have died. Their current population is approximately three million out of Sudan's total estimated population of twenty-six million. The Dinka are the largest ethnic group in Sudan.

Cultural Relations: Cattle dominate almost all sectors of the Dinka economy, as they are also essential in acquiring and maintaining prestige, influence and political power in the community. The Dinka see their lives and those of their cattle inextricably intertwined. The centrality of cattle to Dinka culture has resulted in the cow serving as the most important element in their religious beliefs and practices as well as their social organization.

Shared economic resources, similarities in language and cultural norms, and myths of genealogical connection among all the different Dinka tribal groups create a sense of collective identity. This identity is built on the self-identification as "blacks" and "Africans" who are marginalized by "Arab" and "Muslims." Their collective identity also depends on the cultural patterns that distinguish them from other "Africans."

Settlements: Because much of Dinkaland is flat and susceptible to flooding, the Dinka tend to pack their villages to the few elevated areas, and therefore there is no particular order to the settlements. The elevated dirt roads

that were built during the colonial times, and which have historically connected the villages to the towns, have now given way to disrepair due to the war. Over the last two decades, movement of villages has also been prompted by war and population displacement. Large number of Dinka currently live in refugee camps inside Sudan as well as in the neighboring countries.

Subsistence: The Dinka economy can be characterized as standing on four main pillars. These are, in the order of their perceived importance: livestock (especially cattle), agriculture, trading, and wild foods (including fishing, fruits, and wild nuts).

Commercial Activity: Apart from forming the staple foods for the rural folk, crops such as sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, and millet, which are grown in most areas of western Dinkaland, provide a medium of exchange for livestock, as well as for the acquisition of town items such as cloths, medicine, salt, and sugar.

Division of Labor: Division of labor among the Dinka is not very different from that of many other East African peoples. In general, women's work tends to occur around the homestead, i.e. managing the household, farming, and food production; while men's labor takes them farther away from home since much of it involves herding and feeding cattle. Women, in addition to sharing food production with men (they both grow crops and women do the weeding), are responsible for child care, preparing and serving the family meals, cleaning the homestead, and milking the cows. Men take primary responsibility for harvesting the sorghum.

Land Tenure: All the land in Dinka country is under communal ownership. It is free and individuals only own it through continual use. Hardly any disputes arise over land use as the territory is expansive and the population is distributed sparsely.

Kin Groups and Descent: The Dinka are patrilineal. The term *dhieth*, in its most general sense, refers to all kinds of relationships that can be established through blood lines. People establish blood relations by reference to clan names. Those who belong to the same clan are considered relatives no matter how distant from each other.

Marriage and Family: Marriage in Dinka is exogamic to any individuals with whom a blood relationship can be established on both male and female lines going back several generations. Traditionally, marriage is everyone's goal and having a family is regarded as the fulfillment of life. Dinka marriages are quite stable; the only ones that are terminated result from the failure of the woman to conceive.

Sociopolitical Organization: Dinka society is generally organized around sub-section (*wut*), clans (*dhieth*), family, or patrilineage (*mac thok*). While the clan is used to recognize blood relatives throughout Dinkaland, patrilineage dictates village structure. Although people who belong to different clans may share a village, the most common structure for people of a shared lineage is to

occupy their own village. Every clan has a headman known as *nhomgol*. These men are expected to exercise leadership roles in support of the sub-chief who oversees a section of Dinka.

Political Organization: The traditional Dinka political system is structured around the concept of clan headman. A collection of clans headed by clan leaders form a higher political body known as the sub-chief, and several sub-chiefs fall under the position of executive chief, who is the liaison between the government and the people.

Religion: The majority of Dinka practice traditional religions whose central theme is the worship of a high god through the totem, ancestral spirits, and a number of deities. The high god is called *nhialic* and he is the source of sustenance followed by *Deng* who is the most noteworthy of the lower gods and *Abuk* who is a female god. Dinka religious practice involve the sacrifices of animals at designated times of year such as the beginning of the rainy season, and blessing of the crops at the harvest.

Christianity now plays a vital role in the lives of many people, including the non-believers. The Dinka Christians currently number about 20%. This is because of the Islamic extremism in the North, and because of the increased church-related aid over the past decade.

Cultural Roots and the Invisible Bridge:
A Perspective from the Dinka

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Two concepts have always guided me in my works on the Sudan and in my message to the Sudanese in the Diaspora: they are the metaphor of a tree with deep roots and the notion of an invisible bridge. A tree with deep roots, I argue, will withstand even a hurricane, while a tree with shallow roots can easily be knocked down, even by a light wind. Likewise, a person who moves away from home or country, and loses contact, whether physically, emotionally, or intellectually, is a person gone adrift, while the one who remains connected through the invisible bridge, albeit a state of mind, that allows a to and fro movement between the homebase and any destination away from home, maintains a degree of continuity and security.

Roots are where a person comes from: family, lineage, community, tribe, region and country. The invisible bridge means knowing one's identity and background: who you are, where you come from what in substantive terms that means, and how that reinforces and strengthens your efforts toward self-fulfillment, wherever you are and whatever you do. It is with these principles in mind that I offer a cultural heritage of the Dinka, with its values and institutions, as an example for our people, wherever they happen to be. It is my firm belief that all of the peoples of the South have a proud cultural heritage from which we can learn. I use the Dinka only as an example of what I believe is widely shared among the peoples of the South, if not the Sudan in general and because I know the Dinka culture best. Although Sudanese societies may differ on details, to all of them, the family is the foundation of the culture and its value system. The main objective of the family is the continuity of the ancestral line. With respect to the Animist South, traditional religion does not promise a paradise to come after death. Although people believe in some form of life after death that conceptually projects this world into the hereafter, death for them is an end from which the only salvation is continuity through posterity. Ancestral continuity through the lineage implies a system of values that links the interest of every individual in the line to that of the collective interest of the lineage or the clan. This is a system that emphasizes unity and harmony despite, and perhaps because of, its inherent individualism, competitiveness, tensions and conflicts.

Central to the Dinka value system is a concept known as *cieng*, which literally means "to live together", "to look after" or "to inhabit". At the core of *cieng* are the ideals of human relations, family and community, dignity and integrity,

honor and respect, loyalty and piety and the power of the word. *Cieng* is opposed to coercion, and instead, encourages persuasion and cooperation.

Cieng has the sanctity of a moral order not only inherited from the ancestors, who had in turn received it from God, but is fortified and policed by them. Failure to adhere to its principles is not only disapproved of as antisocial, but more importantly, as a violation of the moral code that may invite a spiritual curse, illness and even death, depending on the gravity of the violation. Conversely, adherence to the ideals of *cieng* is expected to receive material and spiritual rewards.

Although *cieng* is a concept with roots in the heritage of the ancestors, it is largely an aspiration that is only partially adhered to and, indeed, is often negated. Hence, it can be improved upon including through innovation. So vital to the Dinka is *cieng* and the ideals it embodies that even in the modern context, it is always highlighted in discussions, conferences, and congresses to stipulate how people should conduct themselves in human affairs.

A related concept which confers social status on a person based on living up to the principles of *cieng* is *dheeng*, appropriately translateable as dignity. When a young man is initiated and moves from being a boy to being a man, he is said to have become *adheng*, a "gentleman", with the attributes of *dheeng*. But *dheeng* is a word with multiple meanings - all positive and equally applicable to men and women. As a noun, it means nobility, beauty, handsomeness, elegance, charm, grace, gentleness, hospitality, generosity, good manners, discretion, and kindness. The social background of a person, his physical appearance, the way he walks, carries himself, talks, eats, or dresses, and the way he behaves toward fellow human beings, are all factors in determining his *dheeng*. *Ting adheng*, or *nyan adheng* mean respectively a woman or a girl who lives up to the principles of *dheeng*.

A final set of concepts crucial to the values of leadership and good governance includes: *dom*, establishing authoritative or legitimate control over a group, *muk*, maintaining and sustaining the group in accordance with the ideals of a good leader, and *guier,* improving the lot of the group by enhancing unity, harmony and prosperity. It is obvious that each of these concepts connotes the observance of the principles of *cieng* and *dheeng*. A chief establishes control and "holds" the land or the group, *dom* not only by the mere fact of wielding power and authority, but also by using his position wisely to ensure peace, security, and prosperity. The continuity or stability of that state of affairs is maintained through *muk*, which literally means "keeping," a word also applied to child rearing, including handling, feeding, looking after, protecting, and raising. *Guier* goes a step further to imply improvement of the existing situation, whether through reconstruction or reform, the closest to development, in traditional thought, but with implicit cultural and moral values. These normative concepts are mutually reinforcing and cyclical in nature. When a chief has taken over the reins of legitimate and authoritative power (*dom*), has stabilized his benevolent control over the situation (*muk*), and has introduced reforms to ensure a constructive and stable leadership (*guier*), he is described as having

held (*dom*) the land to ensure security, stability and prosperity.

While the overriding value of ancestral continuity primarily through the male line favors men over women and elders over youth, the social norms associated with *cieng* and *dheeng*, apply equally to men and women, and to all age groups. The leadership goals of *dom*, *muk*, and *guier* also apply to women, albeit within the framework of their responsibilities as wives and mothers.

Traditionally, these cultural values were the pillars of a coherent, well integrated social order, whose overriding goals and legitimate means for pursuing them were well defined and accessible to all members of the community. While they represent an ideal towards which society should strive, and therefore provide a constructive tension that should encourage reform, they were adhered to despite their inherent inequities in generational and gender relations. Their coherence, strength and functionality have, however, been deeply affected and remain threatened by their inherent inequities, particularly in the context of modernizing change and threatened by the upheavals of war. They still provide guidelines for behavior in virtually all aspects of life, both private and public. Indeed, the indigenous cultural values and the normative concepts that promote them provide a basis for both building on tradition and reforming, especially with regard to generational and gender roles.

Glossary and Pronunciation Guide

cieng (chee-yeng)	n. or v. to live together in harmony, to look after or to in habit harmoniously
dheeng (th-ang[1])	n. dignity
dom (dome)	v. to establish authoritative or legitimate control over a group
guier (goo-weer)	n. or v. to improve the lot of a group by enhancing unity, harmony and prosperity
muk (mook)	n. or v. to establish authoritative or legitimate control over a group

[1] "Th" in this instance has a hard sound as in the English, "that", "this" or "the."

Understanding Sudan: An Introduction

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People often think that understanding a foreign country requires a detailed knowledge of actors and events. That is not true. Humans everywhere understand the past and present through narratives. Understanding a foreign country requires knowing which narratives apply to a country, and which do not.

Sudan has three narratives. One is a story of how the British colonial rulers cultivated an elite group of urban, educated civil servants, who inherited in 1956 the arrogance of power that the British displayed during colonial rule. This elite wanted to make a Sudan in its own image– urban, Muslim, and Arabic-speaking. Over the almost 50 years since independence they have largely succeeded, despite internecine feuds.

A second narrative is the story of the slow and steady rise of Islamism. This word, "Islamism," is used by many academics to label a variety of social movements in the Muslim world. These movements typically use the vocabulary of Islam to challenge current regimes. They de-legitimize regimes by contrasting their own version of Islam with that of the regime. They appeal to moral values, often regarding the behavior of women and dealings with non-Muslims, and historical grievances, often embracing a view of Western oppression of the Islamic world. The movements encourage a collective remembrance of a golden age of Islam that may be regained through inner spiritual struggle and outward political mobilization. In Sudan, the Islamist movement has been led by Hasan al-Turabi, and he shared power with Islamist military leaders following a coup d'état of 1989, until a falling out in 2000. In this narrative, the rise to power of the Islamists changed the once-hopeful course of Sudanese history. The Islamists summarily executed opponents and used secret torture chambers in "ghost houses" to ensure political survival. Before this, the story goes, political conflict in Sudan was a polite game played among members of the same family (see narrative number one), always with the probability of becoming a 'civilized' nation where violence was not part of the political process. After this, the political game became more typical of Africa and the Middle East: losers died, so maintaining power or acquiescing to power was the only way to stay alive. That fiction of a special Sudanese politeness was shattered, and warlordism was no longer inconceivable. In fact, by 2004 it was easy to identify a number of warlords, in the North and South of the country.

Southern Sudan is completely absent from the first two narratives, which treat the South as an afterthought, an inconvenient problem that had to be dealt with by both regimes. Southerners were not considered Sudanese. They were not part of the original elite, the British-appointed inheritors of power, nor were they Islamists, the Allah-anointed rightful rulers.

The third narrative takes the perspective of the South. Colonial and pre-colonial rule in the South was not the peaceful, benevolent period imagined by international aid workers and donors. Southerners were hunted, killed and enslaved by successions of northern potentates, and then were hunted and killed by British patrols as the region was "pacified". The British then calmly returned Southerners to their place: subservient to the Arabs of Northern Sudan. Before and after independence, every promise made to the South was broken and – every resource they had of value was taken. The water of southern swamps was to be channeled away by the monstrous Jonglei canal, and the oil of southern savannahs was to be siphoned away by a pipeline to Port Sudan. There was no Sudanese state actor who thought, "Leave the South alone in a social environment of peace and justice, and let Southerners decide their own economic and political future, at a pace of their own choosing." Force has been a constant in the South, and force has generated resistance. From the first barracks mutiny of 1955, through the Nuer-Dinka slaughters of 1998, to the warlord militias of the present, the people of Southern Sudan have been struggling to attain political freedom.

One of the interesting things about these three narratives is that foreigners and foreign powers have little role. It is a curious feature of modern Sudanese history that the dynamics are all narrated as internal. Of course, there have been foreign actors. One thinks of Rolf Steiner, a German mercenary who fought for the South. He was captured and condemned in a very public trial in Khartoum in 1971. Another notable foreigner involved in Sudan was Osama bin Laden. He operated his network form a base in Khartoum for many years during the 1990s. Foreign powers have also mattered. Libya helped organize an ill-fated coup attempt in 1971. The United States was best pals with the Sudanese military dictator Gaafar Nimeiri, who ruled from 1969 to 1985. That chumminess led to a major miscalculation on Nimeiri's part. His ouster by his second-in-command, following a wave of massive popular demonstrations, was prompted in part by Nimeiri's agreeing to help the United States (and line his pocket, quite probably) by allowing the transport of Falasha Jews out of Ethiopia to Israel, via Sudan. Each of these events merits a documentary film of its own, but they do not negate the absence of foreign involvement in the major dynamics of Sudanese history.

Another notable absence in the narratives is the Marxist dynamic of the spread of industrial capitalism and exploitation of a property-less proletariat. Industrial enterprises in Sudan have always been small. Sudan has never come close to the Satanic Mills of the European industrial revolution, where oppression and class consciousness were forged in the same crucible. A 'labor aristocracy' of railroad workers did at one time wield considerable influence, but their power and cohesion was crushed by the military. Moreover, the bulk of the population continues to farm as their forefathers did. While vast

areas of land were delimited for "mechanized" farming, this usually involved no more than a tractor to initially till the soil. The remainder of operations still had to be carried out by hand. A memorable shot from an earlier documentary entitled *Kafi's Story*, about a young man from the Nuba Mountains seeking money to buy a dress for his bride, has Kafi walk away from his employer, down a lonely evening road as fields of sorghum sway in the wind, unharvested. Sometimes the wars of Sudan are interpreted as inevitable conflicts over scarce resources, in the Marxist vein. But there is little evidence to support this view. The violence that shattered the peace of the Nuba Mountains, of Southern Sudan, and of Darfur, was incited and directed by urban elites.

For many years, Sudanese secondary school students read *Cry the Beloved Country*, Alan Paton's beautiful novel of redemption set in his native South Africa. The students imagined themselves to be closer to South Africa, brutalized by apartheid, than to their own country. When academics speak of nationalism and nation-building, they point to the shared personal narratives, often fictionalized in novels, that make a people an "imagined community." These tales of exodus, triumph, virtue and vice worm their way into the minds of children. An inability to collectively share the tales fuels anxiety and even rage. The meeting of strangers is marked by the absence of common ground, and trust and understanding has to be forged anew. Three narratives, I have suggested, are competing for the imaginations of the Sudanese. Whether Northerners will ever embrace a story that puts Southerners at the center of the stage remains to be seen; the history of the United States, though, offers food for thought: gradual acceptance of the centrality of slavery and the uniqueness of the African-American experience in forging the country, yet little progress in bringing the Native American experience into the common heritage.

For further reading, some of the following are recommended.
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17. A. M. Simone, *In whose image? : political Islam and urban practices in Sudan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) ix, 273.

18. Jay Spaulding and Stephanie Beswick, *White Nile, black blood : war, leadership, and ethnicity from Khartoum to Kampala* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 2000) xxviii, 336.

19. Endre Stiansen and Michael Kevane, *Kordofan invaded : peripheral incorporation and social transformation in Islamic Africa, Social, economic, and political studies of the Middle East and Asia*, v. 63 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 1998) x, 303.

20. Gabriel Warburg, *Islam, sectarianism and politics in Sudan since the Mahdiya* (London: C. Hurst, 2003) xvii, 252.

Genocide

By Jerry Fowler

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U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

I n April 1941, a Jewish refugee named Raphael Lemkin arrived by boat in Washington state. He had fled his native Poland when the Nazis invaded in September 1939, reaching the United States only after stops in Lithuania and Sweden, and a grueling train trip across Siberia's vast reaches. For him, America meant safety. But his parents and most of his family remained behind.

Two months after Lemkin made it to the U.S., Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. Mobile killing squads followed behind the front lines, systematically murdering Jews, Roma (Gypsies) and political enemies. The massacres moved British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to comment, "We are in the presence of a crime without a name."

Already familiar with the Ottoman campaign of murder and deportation against the Armenians that began in 1915, Lemkin understood the murderous implications of Nazi ideology much sooner than most of his contemporaries. He believed that if he could give that crime a name, it would be easier for people to understand what was happening in Nazi-occupied Europe. So he created the word genocide, by combining the Greek word for tribe or race (geno-) with the Latin word for killing (-cide). By genocide, he meant "a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential

foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves."

The United Nations Genocide Convention

After World War II ended, Lemkin returned to Europe and learned the worst – his parents and most of the rest of his family had perished in what we today call the Holocaust. He concluded that one way he could honor their memory was to push tirelessly for an international treaty against genocide. His efforts succeeded in 1948, with the adoption of the United Nations Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The Convention defines genocide as certain acts, when committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such." The specified acts are (a) "killing" group members; (b) "causing serious bodily or mental harm" to group members; (c) "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part"; (d) "imposing measures intended to prevent

births within the group"; and (e) "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

The specified acts go beyond the direct murder of group members, but the focus remains on a group's physical destruction. The destruction of a group's cultural identity, such as by suppression of its religion or language, is not included in the treaty. That type of destruction is sometimes referred to as "cultural genocide" or "ethnocide."

When the former Yugoslavia disintegrated in the early 1990s, the term "ethnic cleansing" gained currency. Popularly understood as the elimination of a targeted group from a specific territory, it does not have a precise legal meaning and it may or may not involve genocide. For example, mass deportation of group members without loss of life might "cleanse" a territory, but it would not be genocide under the Convention. On the other hand, if the campaign of "ethnic cleansing" includes killing group members, deporting them to a location where harsh conditions are calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction or any of the other acts listed in the Convention (committed with the requisite intent), then it would be genocide.

Definitional Issues

The Convention was the product of compromise among sovereign states, and its definition of genocide has been widely criticized for being both too narrow and too broad. For example, political and socio-economic groups are not protected. On the other hand, the Convention's application to the intent to destroy a protected group "in part" begs the question of what constitutes a sufficient part. There is broad agreement that the part must be "substantial," in either quantitative or qualitative terms. But beyond that, what the definition requires is impossible to specify.

Even determining what constitutes "a national, ethnical, racial or religious group" can be difficult. The 1994 campaign by extremist members of Rwanda's Hutu majority to wipe out the Tutsi minority, resulting in the deaths of as much as three-quarters of Rwanda's Tutsi population, is a clear cut case of genocide. But on examination it is not clear what kind of groups, exactly, the Hutu and Tutsi are. Within Rwandan society, they are thought of as "ethnic" groups. Yet they do not differ in characteristics, such as language and culture, generally considered to set one ethnic group apart from another. One approach is that the subjective belief by perpetrators (and/or victims) that the groups are ethnic groups is enough to satisfy the Convention's requirements. An alternative approach is that it is enough that the differentiation of the groups in the society is stable over time, as would be the case with ethnic groups.

Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

The Convention specifies that perpetrators can be tried by courts in the country on whose territory genocide was committed or by an international tribunal. The reference to an international tribunal was theoretical until the 1990s, when the UN Security Council created "ad hoc" tribunals to try geno-

cide and other serious international crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. On 1 July 2002, a permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) was established to have jurisdiction from that date forward over genocide and other serious international crimes. The ICC can only act, however, with regard to crimes committed on the territory or by the nationals of countries that have accepted its jurisdiction, or when requested to act by the United Nations Security Council. In principle, the crime of genocide also is subject to "universal jurisdiction," meaning that any nation's courts can try alleged perpetrators, without regard to connections such as territory or nationality.

Prevention of Genocide

Though the Convention speaks of preventing genocide, the history is largely one of failure. Most notoriously, when the Rwanda genocide began in April 1994, the UN Security Council voted to withdraw most of the UN peacekeeping force that already was on the ground. By way of contrast, the United States government cited "indicators of genocide" against Kosovar Albanians as one of the justifications for launching an air war against Yugoslavia in 1999.

In September 2004, the U.S. government determined that genocide has occurred in Sudan's western region of Darfur, where tens of thousands of civilians have been killed and well over one million driven from their homes. The crisis in Darfur follows on decades of human destruction in the South of the country, which saw some 2 million perish and many millions more displaced, including the "lost boys."

The U.S. determination did not immediately spark a vigorous international response to the Sudanese crisis. Rather, a contest erupted over whether the U.S. had correctly applied the Genocide Convention's problematic definition. Meanwhile, civilians in Darfur continued to die.

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35 Million Displaced People

By Erin Patrick

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The Lost Boys fled their homeland of Southern Sudan more than 15 years ago. That conflict, between the Sudanese government and a rebel groups called the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, is now in the midst of a peace process that many people believe will end the fighting there for good. However, just as the war in the south appears close to resolution, another major conflict has broken out in the far west of Sudan, in a province called Darfur. But even as horrible as the situation in Sudan continues to be, it is by no means the only area of the world where people are forced to flee their homes in search of safety elsewhere. There were approximately 17,000 Lost Boys – but they are only a tiny part of the estimated 35 million displaced people in the world today.

What are "displaced people?"

The majority of people who are displaced fall into one of two categories: refugees or internally displaced people (also called "IDPs").

Refugees are people who, in order to escape conflict or persecution, have fled across an international border (as the Lost Boys fled to Kenya, for example). Once across a border, they seek and generally receive the assistance and protection of the United Nations, through its refugee agency called the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR responds as quickly as possible to new instances of refugees anywhere in the world. It establishes refugee camps in which inhabitants are fed, sheltered, provided with health care and other fundamentals and generally taken care of until they are able to return home or until another permanent solution is found for them – like being resettled in a new country. Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of refugees (including the Lost Boys) end up staying in camps for years, even though the goal of the camp system is to provide emergency protection and assistance and help refugees to safely and voluntarily return home as soon as possible.

Internally displaced people, or IDPs, flee their homes and villages for reasons very similar to refugees – conflict or persecution. Unlike refugees, however, instead of crossing an international border, they stay within their home country. There are many reasons why IDPs may choose to stay in their home country: voluntarily (to remain close to family, to farms, etc.); because

they are too frightened to cross a border; because their own government will not allow them to leave; or because they are prevented from crossing by authorities on the other side of the border. There is no fixed UN agency similar to UNHCR that protects and assists internally displaced people – instead, each IDP crisis is managed in a different way, often causing confusion and generally meaning that IDPs do not benefit from the international system in the same way as refugees.

How do conflicts cause displacement?

Historically, those fighting wars were supposed to do everything they could to avoid harming civilians. More recently, however, this rule has been broken with increasing frequency. And more worryingly, civilians are now often the targets of the wars themselves – because of their race, religion or ancestry, because those fighting want to take over land or resources, because they are thought to support an enemy, or for no reason at all other than pure destruction and evil. Particularly in poor countries with weak governments, civilians that have become the targets of conflict often have little alternative but to flee. Sometimes they go far away and stay for long periods of time – this was the case for many Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, as well as for the Lost Boys. Other times, as in Colombia, people may flee somewhere closer and come home when they think their attackers have left. Too often, they have to repeat the process over and over, as conflicts continue over years or even decades.

How many displaced people are there? Where are the major populations? What are the trends?

In 2004, according to the US Committee for Refugees, there were just under 12 million refugees and 23.6 million internally displaced people throughout the world. The majority of the displaced – both refugees and IDPs – are found in Africa. In fact, Africa hosts more IDPs than all other continents combined. Civilians fleeing violent, long-standing conflicts in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and throughout West Africa account for the majority of Africa's displaced.

But displacement is not limited only to Africa. The war in Colombia has uprooted nearly three million people, and there are still tens of thousands of people displaced from the wars in the Balkans – even almost ten years later. Though more than two million Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan, there are still more than one million left in Iran and Pakistan. And there are smaller – but no less desperate – refugee and IDP populations in almost all regions of the world: Russia, Turkey, Iraq, India, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, and others.

In the last decade, while the number of refugees has been slowly declining, the number of IDPs has greatly increased. There are various reasons for this trend. First of all, the majority of post-Cold War conflicts have tended to be internal conflicts rather than wars between states – the wars in the Balkans, for example, rather than the war between Vietnam and the US. When conflicts

arise within a state, it is much more likely that people fleeing the conflict will stay within that state, though fleeing to a region where they feel safer. But it is also true that countries neighboring conflicts, or countries that have in the past welcomed refugees from far-away wars, are becoming less willing to allow people to cross their borders. This reluctance is tied to a variety of concerns, mostly associated with cost and security issues.

As the number of displaced people continues to increase, how will poor and war-ravaged countries be able to cope? Should the U.S., for example, continue to take in more people like the Lost Boys, or should the displaced stay in camps until there is peace in their home countries? Do the U.S. and other wealthy countries have the responsibility to help those who cannot help themselves, or must the governments or rebel groups fighting the wars be held accountable for the consequences – including displaced civilians? The United States has traditionally resettled more refugees each year than all other countries in the world combined. In recent years, however, resettlement in the U.S. has declined dramatically. As the resettlement program – along with nearly all other immigration programs – is revamped in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks, it is important to keep in mind that refugees like the Lost Boys are not the only people that benefit from refugee resettlement. Because of the program, American citizens themselves benefit enormously from the chance to learn from and work or go to school with people from all over the world, with vastly different life experiences – a key cornerstone of the American story.

Christianity and Southern Sudanese in the United States
By Dianna J. Shandy

This paper explores the socio-political role of Christianity within the refugee resettlement process of Southern Sudanese in the United States. It focuses on how cultural constructions of Christians affect the nature and quality of engagement between Sudanese and American Christians. In addition, it probes the ways secular social scientists (and by extension human services providers) relate to belief systems and matters of faith among the populations with whom they work; in so doing, it highlights the need for more attention to the study of Sudanese Christianity as an indigenized belief system that helps forced migrants cope with extreme and rapid social change.

Since the early 1990s, more than 20,000 Sudanese refugees have been resettled in the United States, with about a fifth of that population constituting the so-called "Lost Boys." One facet of the protracted conflict in Sudan is Muslim-Christian religious strife. It is impossible to disentangle the threads of religion, ethnicity, and control over resources, including oil, which feed the current civil war. Nonetheless, the politicization of religious identity in Sudan is vital to how the crisis and the refugee flows it generates are perceived internationally.

This paper outlines four points of articulation between religion and the experiences of Southern Sudanese forced migrants. First, religious identity feeds the politics of difference in Sudan and legitimates the position of those seeking refugee status in ways that fleeing hunger, destruction of the means of livelihood, and other results of civil war simply do not. Framing asylum claims in the language of religious persecution allows Southern Sudanese to make their experience meaningful to representatives of the international refugee regime.

Second, a Christian religious identity links Southern Sudanese to a wider international community. These ties are significant in their ability to leverage international support for resources directed towards Sudan and Southerners' quest for political autonomy. Persecution of Christians, oil, and allegations of slavery in Sudan are all issues that generate broad-based domestic constituencies in the U.S. (Petterson 1999).

Third, in addition to its bridge-building capacity connecting Southern Sudan to a global community of Christians, constructing a common Christian identity creates an idiom of kinship that has the potential to unite disparate

ethnic groups and sub-groups within and across ethnicities in Sudan. However, the converse may also be true, and the politicization of religious identities within Christianity may fuel social divisions.

And fourth, among Sudanese refugees in the United States, Christian identity serves as a means of social reconstruction. From the moment refugees are met at the airport by their sponsoring agency, religious institutions manage their integration into the host society. In the U.S. many of the voluntary agencies that contract with the U.S. government to implement its refugee resettlement program are Christian-based, including Lutheran Social Services and the YMCA. While these programs are obliged to and reportedly do operate along secular lines, Christian churches and congregations act as sponsors, and volunteers are often recruited within these bodies to assist in easing refugees' transition to the U.S. These volunteers are vital to the resettlement experience, as they are the ones who familiarize individual refugees with the essentials of daily life.

Constructing Christians

Churches in the United States emerge as a key venue for the incorporation of refugees into U.S. society. Sudanese encounter cultural as well as spiritual Christian norms upon arriving in the U.S. Two key features of American Christianity that Sudanese appear to be tapping into are voluntarism and denominationalism. American church goers can express disappointment over both regular attendance and what I call "denominational drift." One American woman observed, "Sudanese jump ship for promises of aid from somewhere else. And Americans feel burnt when this happens." Another woman described this in poignant detail when she recounted the abrupt departure of a Sudanese family whom she had befriended over several years. One day, without alerting anyone, the family loaded their minivan with some of their belongings and left. The woman later heard through church channels that this family had become involved with a church of a different denomination in another state. One of the factors feeding into denominational drift has been the way Sudanese pastors who ministered to congregations in Africa frequently have found their credentials and achievements devalued in the U.S. Ironically, by virtue of being Christian, they were denied opportunities for education in Sudan. Due to limited education, they are prevented from accessing pastoral training in the U.S.

Secular Study of the Sacred

One final aim of this paper is to broach the ways in which secular social scientists (and others) relate to matters of religion among their "study populations" and to prompt dialogue on this subject.

Taking anthropology as a case in point within the social sciences, one can observe that all religions are not viewed equally. For instance, an anthropologist is more likely to assume a culturally relativistic stance when talking about magic than Mormonism. It is telling that in a recent poll of college faculty in the United States, more than three out of five anthropologists claimed no

religion at all, making them the highest percentage among faculty of non-believers (Wagner 1997:95). These religious views shape research agendas. The research emphasis, particularly on Christianity, remains on religion as an encroaching ideology or tool of oppression rather than on the ways in which formerly colonized peoples have made it their own.

This article interrogates religion as a socio-political category, but has not treated Southern Sudanese Christianity as a belief system that has some relationship to American Christianity, but being culturally based, is not identical with it. Additional research is needed to understand the ways Sudanese populations have made Christianity their own. This relates to a larger research agenda in which spirituality and religion assume a more central role in understanding the experiences of forced migrants and the ways they make sense of their experiences of displacement (Gozdziak and Shandy 2002).

Conclusion

Clearly, Southern Sudanese lives in America intersect with and are constituted in relation to Christianity in multiple ways: from the politicization of religious identity in Sudan; to their religious affiliation that renders their situation noticeable to a U.S. constituency; to the agencies brokering their U.S. resettlement; to the community support offered to support official resettlement initiatives. Religion in both a socio-political and an affective sense, is therefore a thread woven throughout the depth and breadth of Southern Sudanese refugees' experiences.

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Melting in to America's Complex History of Race

By Charles Mudede

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and Adjunct Professor for Pacific Lutheran University

In the early 70s, Mudede and his parents left Rhodesia, which was then in the middle of a war, to live in the U.S. His family lived in predominately black neighborhoods in Nashville, Tennessee and Washington D.C. In 1981, Mudede returned with his family to his newly independent country, now called Zimbabwe, and lived there for 8 years before returning to the U.S., in 1989. Mudede still considers himself to be an African immigrant.

I shall begin by pointing out that what distinguishes whites and blacks from other Americans of color (Asian Americans, Chicanos) is that, culturally, both have relatively weak bonds with their old worlds (Europe, Africa). By the system of the melting pot, ethnic Europeans were thoroughly transformed (without coercion) into one race, white; and by the system of American slavery, ethnic Africans were even more thoroughly transformed (with coercion) into a new race, black. So, Europeans who came into America during the late 19th century encountered what they had to become: white Americans; and black Africans and West Indians who have come to America since the passage of the Immigration Reform Act in 1965 (the law that abolished "national origins quotas that favored European immigrants") have encountered what they can become: black Americans. But this is where the problem starts.

The situation for Sudanese refugees and other African immigrants of the late 20th and early 21st century such as myself is this: Becoming a black American does not have the same benefits that becoming a white American did for Europeans in the late 19th and early 20th century. Indeed, the transformation from ethnic European to white American is the model for what sociologists call "upward assimilation," which is the "assimilation into mainstream middle-class America with acculturation, deliberately adopting the middle-class values and ways of life….Researchers have cited early European immigrants as an example." (Population Research Institute). Unlike some Latin American and Asian immigrants of today, black Africans (and especially Sudanese immigrants, who, as Santino Majok Chuor in the documentary *Lost Boys of Sudan* points out, are much blacker than most black Americans) don't stand a chance of becoming white and having greater access to the institutions and connections that support upward mobility. What a black African can become is the other type of traditional American: black American. However, the transformation of black African into

a black American is called, in sociological terms, "downward assimilation," a process by which new immigrants are absorbed into "impoverished, generally nonwhite, urban groups whose members display adversarial stances toward mainstream behaviors, including the devaluation of education and diminished expectations" (Center for Migration Studies of New York).

Often, black Africans choose to retain their original identities rather than identifying themselves with African Americans. It is in this spirit that the old man near the beginning of the documentary advises the group of young men who are departing for the United States not to wear baggy clothes, and to stick close to their culture. It was also in this spirit that as a boy attending American schools my parents encouraged me to dress and speak distinctly African and not adopt American fashions and slang. For my parents, and the immigrant parents of today, this was a mechanism for surviving in racist America.

As studies have shown, particularly in the area of West Indian immigration, the maintenance of ethnic accents, appearance, and practices improves employment opportunities—a white American in a managerial position is more likely to hire a black immigrant before they hire a black American. In the case of black Africans, the reason for this is, one, an immigrant from a desperately poor country will not openly complain about low wages or difficult working conditions. Whatever they are paid (just below or above the minimum wage), it is still considerably higher than what they would earn for comparable work in Africa. Secondly, there isn't a direct history of conflict between white Americans and black Africans, and as such the working relationship between the two groups is not stressed or burdened by what is often described as 400 years of resistance and repression. (The scene of Peter Dut eating lunch with his white boss and coworker in a park on a sunny Houston day clearly demonstrates this.)

True, Africans understand that black Americans were stolen from Africa and brought to America by the distant ancestors of some white Americans, but, ultimately, this understanding is so abstract and vague that it has almost no value in emotional terms (Which Africans were taken? What tribe? What century?). What is directly felt for black Africans is Europe's colonization and exploitation of Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries, not America's slave trade in the 17th century. For example, in my particular case, the tension has been with white Africans (as we share a long and bloody past) and not with white Americans (as I'm still in the process of developing a history with them).

Black Africans are aware of and often have brushes with American racism. They are also aware of the fact that the harsh realities that exist for urban black Americans are not self-imposed or the product of "a culture of poverty," but imposed by others over a very long and complicated history. And, for the most part, black Africans would prefer to improve their relationship with black Americans. Black American music, athletes, and movies are hugely popular in Africa. But the two big obstacles to building these relationships are: one, a fact of black American poverty is crime, which black Africans experience directly because they are usually resettled in poor, black urban neighborhoods that are badly policed; and two, because of globalization black Africans

know more about black Americans than black Americans know about black Africans. Americans in general know little about the world outside of their country's border, and for many black Americans, who are educated in under-funded public schools, this ignorance is even more pronounced. These factors coupled with the frequently harsh economic realities of being a black American produce a seemingly insurmountable gulf between the groups. It should be said, however, for obvious reasons, the distance between middle-class black Americans and black Africans is not so dramatic.

Shortly after arriving in the United States, as my parents did in the early 70s, Africans realize "what is what," as my mother used to say at the dinner table when the discussion invariably turned to the inexhaustible subject of how to survive in America. Generally, what we determined was this: white Americans have the money and power and black Americans don't. If you want to work in this country then you have to get along with white people. "You can't be their enemy, even if you don't like them," my father would say. The rule for survival was don't threaten their views or way of life, attend their parties, listen to their stories, and pray with them.

Peter Nyarol Dut is a perfect example of the kind of upward mobility that is accessible to black African immigrants. He retains his Africaness, social-izes with suburban white teenagers in Kansas City, and deliberately attends a prosperous white high school. He is friendly to whites—who in turn are friendly to him. And it pays off - he completes high school and faces what is certainly a very bright future.

The Plight of Refugees Around the World

By Representative Zoe Lofgren, CA-16

Imagine being eight years old running in the middle of the night to escape rebels trying to kill your family and burn down your village. Imagine watching your father being murdered before your eyes just as you barely escape your own death. Imagine ending up in what appears to be a safer foreign country only to learn later that your mother disappears as she attempts to find food and shelter. Imagine being sent to an international refugee camp never knowing where you will go, what you will do, or who will take care of you. All the while, you wonder why this is happening to you as you end each day all alone hoping your mother returns.

This is the plight of thousands of children around the world.

Although these distressing, but very real stories of children always elicit the strongest responses, there are millions of adult refugees who suffer similar fates that often go ignored. Many experience similar horrifying fates through no fault of their own often caught up between warring government factions or militant forces trying to gain power. Others simply try to exercise basic human or political rights we take for granted in this country – the right to vote, the right to print a private newspaper without government control like a local community or school paper, the *L.A. Times*, or the *New York Times*. Some simply want to write an essay just like this one and post it on a private internet website without being arrested.

Today, there are over 11 million refugees worldwide who have fled their countries, 23 million internally displaced persons, and another 5,000 unaccompanied children detained upon arrival in the United States. As Americans in a nation with so many resources and opportunities, we have a moral responsibility to uphold a strong refugee program that provides the inspiration these refugees need to stand up to oppression around the world. We must set an international example for other nations to follow.

As a member of Congress, I take the moral responsibility to help refugees very seriously. I work closely with my colleagues as a co-chair of the Refugee Caucus and as a member of the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees that have jurisdiction over refugees. I work to ensure that the U.S. provides humanitarian assistance to refugees and that, as a leader for freedom around the world, the U.S. helps to prevent new refugee and internally dis-

placed populations while making it safe for refugees to return home. In those cases where returning home is impossible, we work to resettle refugees in the U.S.

As an American with the right to vote or a high school student about to become a voter, you too have a moral responsibility to help refugees by ensuring that your representatives in government uphold a robust US refugee program. I hope you take that responsibility as seriously as I do.

Refugee Resettlement Overview

By The International Rescue Committee (IRC) Resettlement Department

There are an estimated 17 million refugees worldwide. Refugees have fled persecution and conflict in their home countries and, for most, the only options are to remain in refugee camps or live with an uncertain future in the countries to which they fled.[1] However, for a number of refugees there is another option: permanent resettlement in the United States. Each year approximately 50,000 refugees from around the world are admitted under the United States Refugee Resettlement Program to begin new lives in the US.

The refugee process starts overseas: to become eligible for admission through the U.S. Refugee Program, a refugee must be referred to the program through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or a U.S. embassy. Refugees receive referral to the program by being part of a group of special interest to the United States, such as the Lost Boys of Sudan, or by having a close relative who already lives in the U.S. The President of the United States determines the target annual admissions number each year. In the years just prior to September 11, 2001, nearly 70,000 refugees were admitted to the United States annually. After September 11, 2001, there was a significant slowdown in refugee arrivals, with a low of 27,300 refugees arriving in 2002.

Once refugees are selected for admission to the U.S., they usually participate in a cultural orientation program and begin to learn about the United States and American culture. Some refugees participate in English language training. The cultural orientation provided overseas in refugee camps offers refugees the opportunity to learn about many topics, including the role of the resettlement agency; rights and responsibilities of refugees; transit to the U.S.; early employment priority; English language study; public assistance benefits; cultural adjustment; education; health care; and housing.

Every refugee admitted to the U.S. undergoes a security clearance to ensure that he or she does not present a threat to the U.S. or its interests.

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[1] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 2004. http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/basics. Accessed September 13, 2004.

Refugees also undergo a thorough medical examination to check for certain conditions that might make them ineligible for admission to the U.S. Of all of the immigrants admitted to the United States, refugees are the most thoroughly vetted and screened group.

Refugees are admitted to the U.S. through cooperation between UNHCR and US government agencies. Once they arrive, ten voluntary resettlement agencies work in conjunction with the U.S. Department of State to help ease the refugees' transition to life in the U.S. Representatives from the voluntary agencies meet weekly to determine which arriving refugees will be placed by which agency and in which city. Refugees who are being reunited with family members are placed in the same city or town as their relatives. Refugees who do not have close relatives in the U.S. are placed by the resettlement agencies in areas with affordable housing, strong economies, and good social service networks. Refugees are resettled in communities throughout the United States, resettling in both urban and rural areas, as well as in smaller cities. The U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program has an annual budget of $50 million, and each agency is provided with a budget consisting of $800 per refugee, of which a minimum of $400 must be provided in the form of maintenance support for refugees.

Refugees must pay their own airfare to the United States. Since most refugees are not in a position to provide resources to do so, they are given a no-interest loan by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which the refugees pay through a monthly payment plan beginning six months after arrival in the United States. When refugees arrive at the airport, caseworkers or volunteers from the voluntary agencies meet refugees to take them to their newly prepared apartments. Depending on their county of origin, some refugees may already know how to work modern appliances and how to navigate the public transportation system. Many refugees are educated and have left behind thriving careers. For other refugees, such as the Lost Boys of Sudan, gas stoves, mass transit systems, and employment resumes are unfamiliar. Agency caseworkers help refugees apply for Social Security cards, learn English, find viable employment, and integrate in their new communities. Staff also help refugees enroll their children in school, develop job skills, and understand American laws and customs. Resettlement agencies often partner with other non-profit and community-based organizations to provide other services, including after-school programs for refugee teenagers, specialized job training, services for elderly refugees, and financial literacy courses.

Most refugees establish new lives and adjust to their new communities rather quickly. Within six months, most employable refugees are placed in full-time jobs, working and supporting their families without significant support from the voluntary agencies. Refugees work hard, often in entry-level positions, pay taxes, and most receive no public assistance after the initial resettlement process. After their first year in the United States, refugees are eligible to apply to become legal permanent residents. Five years after arrival refugees are eligible to apply for American citizenship, and most do. Refugees make significant contributions to their new communities, as workers in American companies, students in schools, and parents who want the best for their children.

As conflicts emerge and resolve in different parts of the world, the nation-alities of refugees resettled in the U.S. have changed significantly over the years. In the 1970s many Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian refugees came to the U.S. In the 1980s, the U.S. began welcoming higher numbers of refugees from Africa. Throughout the 1990s, the crisis in the former Yugoslavia allowed tens of thousands of refugees to resettle in the United States. In the late 1990s the U.S. assisted nearly 10,000 refugees from Kosovo. In the last ten years, a large number of refugees have come from Africa, including the Somali Bantu, Liberians, and the Lost Boys of Sudan.

Refugee resettlement is part of a proud American tradition of welcoming those fleeing racial, religious, or ethnic persecution, war, and conflict. The US Resettlement Program helps refugees rebuild their lives, free from violence and oppression.

For information on how you can volunteer to support refugee resettlement visit:
www.theirc.org
www.LostBoysFilm.com

Peter Nyarol Dut's Autobiography

By Peter Nyarol Dut

March, 2001

I am Peter Dut. I was born in 1984 in a small village in the Bahr Al Ghazal region of Sudan in Africa. I left my homeland in 1989 when I was five years old due to the war between Southern and Northern Sudan. During that time the Northern government sent the army into villages in the South to come and kill people and take property and women and young children captive.

One day, my father and I were gathered around the fire in my village where my grandparents were telling us stories about things that had happened long ago. We were mainly children gathered around the fire. That night the shooting began in the valley, by the Northern army. At that time, I was near my father. My brothers and sisters were with my mother. When the shooting began everybody just ran for their lives, and I ran too. The following day I found my father who saw me and grabbed my hand, but we never found my mother or brothers and sisters. We decided to join the other people running to the border with Ethiopia. On the way, my father fell sick. One morning I was out playing while my father slept in the sleeping hut. I asked myself why my father was sleeping so late. He had died that night in his sleep. When they told me about the death of my father, I cried and cried a lot because although all these bad things had happened to us, I had my father to protect me. Now I only had God to protect me.

I continued to Ethiopia. I walked without food or water for many days. There were many other orphaned young boys also running. They called us the "Lost Boys of Sudan." We passed through many different places along the way. It was a very hard journey. We had no shelter and had to run from wild animals that would eat us. Many boys died along the way. Finally, we made it to Ethiopia and registered as refugees with the United Nations. We stayed in that camp for three years and began our schooling. In 1991 war broke out in Ethiopia and we had to run again. We had to cross the Gilo River which was moving very fast and full of alligators. Many boys drowned, but I survived. Again our group of boys walked together for months to find a safe place. We crossed the border into Kenya and the United Nations again came and found us. They made a decision with the Kenyan government to bring us to Kakuma refugee camp in 1992.

I lived there for nine years. Kakuma was a very difficult place to live, but we

were schooling. I completed primary school in 1999 and went to high school into my second year. Then the American government decided to bring the Lost Boys to America.

My first day in the United States was quite good because I came to a different world with a different life. I saw many things that I had not seen before in my life. There are a lot of things I really like in America. People are friendly to each other and offer to help you. America is good because life is healthy and secure. When I arrived, I saw that I could start to plan for tomorrow. I would be able to be something in the future and help my people and myself. I am now a senior at Olathe East High School in Kansas.