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*"Conflicts in the Horn of Africa:
human and ecological consequences of warfare"*

'THE REWARD OF LIFE IS DEATH' :

WARFARE AND THE ANYUAK
ON THE ETHIOPIAN-SUDANESE BORDER

Paper presented at the Centre for Development Studies in Bergen
by

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***In memory of my friend Gilo Akway Cam,
killed by troops of the Sudan Government
in March 1992.***

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"All our bad things came from the white people", the king of the Anyuak, Nyeya Agada Akway Cam Gilo, explains: "Clothes, money and firearms"... The statement sounds like the conclusion of a study about the history of the Anyuak tribe in the 20th century and shows indeed some reasons for the suffering of a people living a difficult life under harsh ecological circumstances in one of the most remote regions of Africa, and which all at a sudden found itself in the geographical centre of international tensions and a seemingly endless civil war.

Clothes and money may stand for European and Arab civilization and thus for completely different moral values, patterns of social behaviour and beliefs; while both are essentially foreign to Anyuak culture, they tend to change traditionally self-sufficient, self-conscious, beautiful and proud people into rather miserably looking persons, too poor to buy any future and yet for sell to the unknown. Clothes and money are indeed the means by which a traditionally independent society can be destroyed from within, by creating new classes and new economical dependencies. It is one of the more paradoxical consequences of modern war in Anyuak country that these two foreign "inventions" gained in popularity and daily importance as a direct result of displacement, lack of self-sufficiency, of starvation as well as of the presence of soldiers, relief-agencies and refugee-camps. Even before the most recent civil war in the Sudan, for example, the social revolution in Ethiopia had succeeded in replacing the Anyuak marriage-beads ("dimui") by money, thereby transforming something which formerly was without price - the woman - into an object which can be purchased like anything else. Cultural change is a normal and permanent process, but it should be growing naturally and not be due to foreign intervention or even cultural oppression. War is an interruption of such a natural process, not only of peace but also of social change and natural development.

Firearms of course do not simply mean war but stand more generally for the possibility of (mass-)killing, of people and animals alike, for the destructive power of the wealthy and the reckless; they mean the end of a society essentially built up on intellectual arguments and social concordance. It is for such "good" reasons that many small tribes in the Southern Sudan have been armed by foreign powers in order to let them create unrest and to bring about a permanent state of tribal tensions and war. Instead of blaming parties to the conflict for making use of the arms at their disposal one could well ask where those weapons are coming from and who is making most profit out of other people's suffering. When blaming the white people, the Anyuak king may not have been completely wrong!

It is worthwhile noticing that king Agada Akway Cam Gilo did not talk about war itself nor its consequences, for war, after all, has been with the Anyuak since the very beginning of their history: the term "Anyuak" comes from "nyuak" which means "to share in fighting (to join in fighting)", and if the Anyuak have survived as a tribal entity in spite of all attacks by other tribes or the destructive policies of different governments, it is well because of the Anyuak famous spiritual and physical fighting capacities. Tribal wars were - and are - very cruel incidents in the people's otherwise peaceful existence.

Yet there were natural limits to man-slaughter and suffering: the limits of the tribe's self-interest. When talking about modern weapons, the king thus expressed his fears of the consequences of a war which is completely out of social control and where the people may never see the fruits of an eventual victory. But certainly the old king may instinctively feel that his absolute, divine power will come to an end once it has become possible to buy military force and to gain political might by money or from foreign people; and when thinking about his own power he actually means the power of a people who find in him their political identity and their spiritual force.

This is not the story of a people who went to war to fight for independence and liberty. It is rather the story of a tribe which did not want this war and which actually had more than enough with fighting back its "aggressive" neighbours. Geographical circumstances rather than anything else forced it to participate in the war, on two sides of an absurd borderline, more passively in the Sudan, more actively in Ethiopia, suffering everywhere alike from the presence of foreigners and getting forced to be concerned by their goals.

Nobody knows how history would have been related if the political events in the Sudan and in Ethiopia had not had their brutal influence, and it is impossible to know if it really had been a more peaceful one. When concentrating on the present civil war in the Sudan, it is important to remember that there are other military conflicts than just those getting international attention, and that oppression can also occur in times of apparent "peace", causing possibly as many victims than an open war would do. The Anyuak have a long, uninterrupted experience both with war and oppression: it is not because their struggle for liberty is ignored by the general public that it would not exist or be less costly in life and human suffering.

In the following, I shall try to illustrate how the traditional life of a small tribe got completely disrupted because of a war exported to their country and which, non-regarding its eventual outcome, risks to be the final point in its existence as a tribal entity. The present paper shall concentrate on foreign impacts on the Anyuak and describe the consequences of wars not directly linked to traditional tribal activities.

The Anyuak belong to the Luo-group of the Western Nilotes, the Shilluk being their closest relatives. In the course of a long migration which perhaps departed (in the 15th century) from the so-called "cradleland of the Nilotes" near Rumbek (in Eastern Lakes Region of the Southern Sudan) or perhaps from an area around Lake Turkana, the Anyuak gradually separated from their fellow kinsmen because of internal power-struggles, as a result of foreign aggressions or in consequence of changing ecological conditions. The fact of having been forced to continuously adopt themselves to new environments and new military situations has helped the Anyuak to survive under extremely difficult, constantly changing conditions and has at a same time increased their consciousness of their own identity.

After their separation from the Shilluk, the Anyuak settled along the banks of the river Sobat and its tributaries in the south, the Baro, the Gilo, the Akobo and the Pibor; other groups of Anyuak, however, have reached the

present country more directly from a place in the South (called "Wi-Paari", north of Lafon).

The Anyuak occupied their present country in small groups, building their tiny villages on elevated places ("bur") which normally do not get flooded in the rainy season and where people can plant on very fertile soils. The Anyuak are now specialized in agriculture, but in ancient times they owned a lot of cattle, exactly as do the Nuer, the Dinka, the Shilluk or the Murle; though a great number of customs still witness of the cattle's former importance, the Anyuak never got their bridewealth from cattle exclusively and were probably always more interested in agriculture than some of their pastoral brothers. Asked why they do not have many cattle, the Anyuak would refer to the presence of the tsetse-fly in their country and to the cattle-raids undertaken by their neighbours, the Murle and the Nuer. Anyuak country being rich in fish and game, and agriculture assuring the people of a decent existence in spite of a difficult environment, the abandon of a pastoral life was certainly acceptable. The highly elaborated political structure of Anyuak society depends moreover on a well-organized, intense life in a village-community, and Anyuak traditions prove that these structures have deep and very strong roots.

The Anyuak village is governed either by kings or by chiefs, each village forming a completely independent political unit. The area of kingship lies in the southwest, chiefs ruling in the rest of Anyuak country. There are formal differences in the structure of the two types of political organization, Anyuak kingship claiming divine authority and eternal power while the chiefs have a more earthly and thus less stable position, being periodically ousted from power by purely internal village-rebellions ("agem"). Permanent conspiracy and periodic coup-d'états are the basic characteristics of the Anyuak political system where the people keep final control over very strong and sometimes despotic rulers.

Anyuak country is not accessible from outside during nine months of the year, and even the villages remain in the rainy season separated by oceans of tall grass and walls of clayey water. In that time of the year, communications are poor and each community leads its own life as economically and political completely independent units. It is the lack of internal unity which has made the Anyuak particularly vulnerable, for the lack of any mechanism of mutual assistance facilitated the work of any aggressor; rivalries between Anyuak villages weakened the tribe as a whole more than foreigners could ever have done. Without having the impression of ever having suffered any military defeat, the Anyuak nevertheless lost all their former territories along the Sobat (where the Nuer "invasion" at the end of the last century got facilitated by the presence of a Turkish administrator at Nyium which then got its present name of "Nasir"), a part of their country south of the Baro (where the Gatjaak Nuer took profit of an attack on the Anyuak by the Dervishes), the region around Akobo (in 1983) and the large area of Ojwa which lies in the east of their country, between the Pibor and the Akobo-rivers (in 1973). This history of "defeats" could of course also get a different interpretation and one could emphasize the fact that it was only due to their courage and their military skills, their endurance and their cunning intelligence that the Anyuak have survived the almost permanent aggressions

of more powerful tribes and have managed to remain in control of at least the more remote parts of their pre-sent home land.

Before turning our attention to the war and its consequences for the Anyuak, I want to remind of the already mentioned fact that history is not only the account of social and political events but also the story of a more elementary existence. Indeed, one gets sometimes the impression that surviving under the ecological conditions prevailing in Anyuak-country is a whole war by itself, for rare are the years where the crops are not burnt by the sun, eaten up by birds or grasshoppers, inundated by floods, mowed down by sudden thunderstorms or destroyed by insects, porcupines or monkeys. Hunger, sickness and epidemics are almost daily happenings, cause to constant human misery, suffering, distress and death. Survival in such circumstances is a real art, a special way of overcoming hardship and resisting pressures of all kinds, physical as well as spiritual ones. The specific Anyuak "art of survival" consists in vigorously pretending that they are living in the most beautiful and the most generous of all worlds, in a paradise on earth where meat, fish and food can be found in abundance: it is because this world is so beautiful that everybody, human beings or spiritual entities, have this strong desire to occupy it and to use it for their own goals. The joyful, bold Anyuak character is another aspect of this art of overcoming melancholic loneliness and to fight back the hostile elements in the spiritual, earthly or human domain.

The borderline across Anyuak-country.

The Anyuak share with a good number of other Sudanese (and indeed African) tribes the fate of having been separated in two parts by an artificial borderline which follows the Akobo-river and which makes that some Anyuak are living in the Sudan while others are living in Ethiopia though actually in a same country. The Western border of Southern Sudan dates back to the end of the last century and is the consequence of a French-Ethiopian mission (led by the Marquis de Bonchamps) which left Ethiopia in order to join with Captain Marchand at Fashoda and to assist him in gaining control over Southern Sudan. Water prevented the expedition to reach the Sobat, but it "succeeded" at least to bring all the Anyuak villages found on their way under Ethiopian control, by bribing the ignorant chiefs with cloth (the Ethiopian flag!), bells, beads and mirrors and by promising them protection against the Nuer (in exchange of taxes in form of ivory and slaves). A second expedition followed the course of the Akobo-river and finally reached the Nile (without meeting with Marchand), making the Akobo-river the borderline between Ethiopia and the Sudan. The origins of this border is just one example of the way Africa and with it its people were arbitrarily cut in pieces by ignorant or careless foreigners during colonial times.

The following account of the destiny of the Anyuak tribe shows the consequences of a borderline for a people artificially divided by it; one hundred years after its "invention", it may be time to find ways of reestablishing the integrity of the country of the Anyuak (and of other people

in similar situations), both in what concerns its foreign and its tribal boundaries.

The division of Anyuakland into two "sides", it is true, had not only negative consequences, and the difficult climatic conditions helped the Anyuak to survive: when persecuted by the Anglo-Egyptian government or by the Syrian administrator in Ethiopia, people could simply cross the border to feel in safety. The "punitive expeditions" angrily undertaken by both governments used to strike mainly innocent people staying behind in their villages. The foreign administrators were merely trying to gain military control over the country, were interested in political stability and taxes rather than in any development or assistance.

Ecological conditions and the strong, suspicious Anyuak character made it difficult for these foreigners to achieve their goals, and following a memorable victory by the Anyuak over the British in the beginning of the century, the latter preferred to keep away from these swampy, physically threatening regions. Similar deadly experiences were made by the Galla who were coming down from the Ethiopian escarpment in order to take profit of what was then called "Ethiopia's last slave-producing area", to poach ivory and to loot slaves.

If the ecological difficulties of Anyuak country worked as a kind of natural shield against foreign invaders, they were - naturally - also a hinder for development at times when this elsewhere was possible. Unfortunately, however, these ecological obstacles did not exist for tribes living in the same area, and once weapons were of a general use the Anyuak had little chance to defend themselves against their more numerous or more bellicose neighbours (let alone the governments). Far from being an entirely peace-loving people, the Anyuak certainly contributed to the continuous suffering of their own tribesmen, but at least one must admit that they never tried to occupy foreign territory, not even after their memorable victory about the Nuer in 1914 when their forces reached as far as the Nile and returned home with plenty of cattle and Nuer and Murle captives.

The first civil war ("Anyanya-liberation-movement"), 1955-1972

Liberation-movements are often directly depending on the active or passive assistance they receive from neighbouring countries. Uganda, Kenya, Zaire and Ethiopia were the countries showing sympathy for the Sudanese Anyanya-rebel-movement ("Anyanya" means "snake-poison" in Madi-language and was taken as a name for the Southerners' fight for the independence of the South from the North), offering hospitality to refugees and guerilla-leaders and allowing the passage of arms through their territory. Most of the arms came through Ethiopia and thus had to pass the border in Anyuak country, the Upper Nile region of Southern Sudan being the one which is most difficult to control militarily. In consequence, a lot of military activities took place in this region and many troops, both governmental and rebel ones, moved through and fought in Anyuakland.

The Anyuak were divided in their sympathies. In fact, nobody had any reason to support the troops from Northern Sudan, but as it happened, an internal power-struggle separated the people: Aguleh, a son of the former king

Akway Cam, had been left out by his father who appointed Gilo as his heir and successor to the throne; deeply upset, Aguleh went to kill his half-brother who, before passing away, appointed his half-brother Agada as new king. When the Anyanya-movement started, Aguleh joined immediately the rebels, hoping that he could obtain Anyuak king ship with their help. Because of Aguleh's presence amongst the rebels, the Anyuak king could not join the Anyanya and was thought to side with the enemy from the North. In the beginning, the Anyanya did not understand the situation and attacked Agada several times, forcing the king to fight back the rebels. It was only after some time that the Anyanya understood that Aguleh's struggle for power was not their utmost concern and turned their attention to more strategic goals.

Many Anyuak had engaged themselves in the rebel-movement and some became even commanders in Upper Nile Province. A great number of Anyuak lost their lives and those surviving the 17 years long war had never received any other than military education. When the war ended - with the so-called "Addis Ababa agreement" in 1972 -, the Anyuak hoped to gain some benefit out of the newly established regional government in the South. They hoped in vain. Except one or two officers and two politicians (one minister in the South, one ambassador and later governor in Malakal), everybody was left out, and the whole of Anyuak-country fell back in its previous state of almost total isolation from the rest of the country, into a wilderness shared only by other forgotten tribes.

Ten years of "peace".

Having stayed in the heart of Anyuak country throughout the ten years of "peace" and "autonomy", I can witness of the living-conditions of the Anyuak during this period, and in particular of the life at the royal village of Otalo: for a few weeks, a school was somehow functioning under a tree, and very occasionally an unpaid medical assistant brought some medicines. But most of the time, people were left alone with their witchdoctors and their diseases, epidemics periodically killing a great number of people. There was hunger, and there was war: with the Murle first (in 1973, when they attacked Ojwa-region, killing many people and carrying off cattle and children) and then with the Nuer at Akobo (especially in 1983).

The Murle, a small pastoral community living along the Pibor-river and its affluents, are the most defiant enemies of the Anyuak, raiding cattle, abducting children, fishing Anyuak pools empty and causing troubles whenever they bring their cattle to the Anyuak rivers. But the Anyuak attest the Murle great bravery and craftsmanship and even admit that the Murle are a very kind people with whom they could easily coexist ("if only the Murle would not always break our solemn agreements"). Being a pastoral people spending most of their time in completely inaccessible places, the Murle are, if possible, even more neglected than the Anyuak, never having enjoyed a positive experience with any government nor rebel-movement: apparent violence of the tribe produces the violence of the state (or vice versa), and as the latter is always more powerful and more cruel than the former, there is little hope for reconciliation, peace and progress. In times of internal conflicts and civil war, the Murle are the ideal people to be employed by the hostile party for

breaking unity and peace; the so-called "Murle militias" belong to these small tribal groups which are given arms by political movements in order to create insecurity and unrest, the result of such activities naturally being great hatred and more violence on all sides.

The Nuer, being a much larger tribe, represent for the Anyuak a more serious problem than do the Murle; for while the Murle rarely settle in foreign territories, the Nuer are in constant need of expansion. "There was never any true fight with the Nuer", king Agada told me once, "they are chased easily"; never theless, the Nuer succeeded to oust the Anyuak from many places where they were allowed to settle by their Anyuak friends, and this simply because of their greater number. Since independence, the Nuer took also advantage of the high positions of some of their tribesmen in the government or rebel-movements and chased the Anyuak repeatedly from Akobo-region, the only Anyuak strong hold in the Southern Sudan.

Though allegations of governmental involvement in tribal incidents are of course difficult to prove, the military success of both the Murle and the Nuer during the times of "peace" in the region may well be due to such instigation. Similar tactics were, in any case, also used at a later stage, when the government in the Northern Sudan succeeded in splitting the rebels by arming certain tribes of the South. In spite of all tribal incidents and in spite of almost total neglect by the regional government, the period between the first and the second civil war in Southern Sudan allowed the Anyuak to return to their traditional life and thus to regain the consciousness of their unity. Because of his fierce resistance, the Anyanya-war had strengthened the authority of the Anyuak king considerably and allowed a return to the traditional, highly sophisticated political and judicial life at court: old cases could be settled and a new, solid stability obtained; once the social order re-established, it was even possible to renew and to reinforce the divine kingship of the holder of the royal emblems and to elevate a number of crown-princes to royal dignity, thereby bringing new political stability to villages scattered by war. The strong personal position of the king made him to be respected and feared all over the Sudan and maintained the tribe's identity to the outside as well as to the inside. This new self-consciousness of the Sudanese Anyuak was of greatest importance at a moment when the tribe's survival got seriously threatened on the other side of the border.

A "revolution" reaches the "Ethiopian" Anyuak.

While the clouds of the first civil war were slowly dissipating on the Sudanese side of the border, the social revolution led by Mengistu Haile Mariam brought new disorder to Anyuakland: very much to the fury of the Anyuak king in the Sudan, all chiefs were declared normal citizens and replaced by committees consisting mainly out of young men who had to reorganize the traditional Anyuak way of living into a socialistic lifestyle. Socialistic agricultural units and military forces were formed, resisting villages were forcibly displaced and restructured in schemes, those fighting the new order fleeing to the other side of the border. Many Anyuak welcomed the new type of government, and especially the younger generation was quite happy to find some new arguments against the traditional and not always competent

rule of Anyuak chiefs. Traditionally, young people were not supposed to interfere in a village's political life.

The Ethiopian revolution had far-reaching consequences for the "Ethiopian" Anyuak, not only because it destroyed all previous political structures but also because it went to change the Anyuak way of marrying: the so-called "dimui"-marriage-beads (which had an immaterial value and thus were a mere symbol for human relationship) were destroyed and replaced by money and thus by a value which lacks all spiritual dimension and which introduces economical power into a society not used to such a type of interpersonal relationship. "Now, there is no difference between buying a piece of cloth at the market or purchasing a woman", an Anyuak girl complained, not mentioning, however, that Anyuak girls in any case use to run away from a husband who fails to give them the expected love.

The destruction of traditional Anyuak life and the introduction of foreign politics into tribal existence had serious consequences for the Anyuak as it separated the Ethiopian part of Anyuakland structurally from the Sudanese Anyuak: the border was no more just a river but a real cut into the tribe's collective existence. In spite of all the damage done by the Mengistu revolution, one has to be fair enough to mention that during his time some notable social progress did take place and that there was hardly any village without its proper school and without a minimum of medical services - all this in flagrant contrast to villages on the Sudanese side of the border where children had to look for schooling far away from home, at Pibor, Malakal or Khartoum.

The second civil war (1983-199?).

The second civil war started in 1983 in Bor. This time, the reason for the military rebellion was not only the economic domination by the North but fears for oppression in the religious and judicial field. A plan for the so-called "re-division of the South" had led (in 1982-83) to much protest as this would have meant direct dependence of each province from the North, thereby bringing to an end whatever had been obtained by the Anyanya-movement in the peace-agreement of Addis Ababa. The future should prove that such fears were more than justified and that the North was clearly decided to impose its will and its laws on people who are strikingly different from the Islamic Arabic North. In 1983, two rebel-movements started to fight the Government in the North, one struggling for independence of the South from the North (the so-called Anyanya-Two-movement), the other one hoping to "liberate" all the Sudanese (those in the South as well as those in the North) from a - in their eyes - fanatic and oppressive government (the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement or SPLM). Before even the fight against the North could start, the two rebel-movements fought themselves bitterly, the SPLA finally remaining as the only force in the South (the Anyanya-Two joined the Northern side).

The Anyuak lacked enthusiasm for the new movement. This was partly because they had never really suffered from any Arab presence nor got anything out of the Regional Government, and partly because they felt instinctively that they would be the losers once again, regardless who would finally be "winning" the war. At this moment with the war still going on, one has to share

these fears of the Anyuak: while hope for peace and stability is fading, prospects of a very difficult future are gaining in evidence every day.

While the Anyanya-movement had several countries as its back yards, the only military stronghold of the SPLA outside of the Sudan was in the Ethiopian part of Anyuakland. Itang on the Baro-river (the Anyuak call it "Openo") was turned into the centre of military training and soon received thousands of refugees from the war-torn Sudan. As the UN HCR (and other organisations) was assisting the refugees with food, shelter and schooling, the refugee-camps at Itang and Pinyudo attracted many Sudanese who were had been looking for a place where to escape the horrors of the war or where to find food in times of starvation.

The strong presence of a "foreign" military power and of some 300'000 refugees was bound to have great impact on the relationship between the Anyuak and the SPLA. In the beginning, the Anyuak were not unsympathetic to the Sudanese liberation movement, but the close links between the Ethiopian regime and the SPLA depending on it and the "occupation" of Anyuakland by Dinka and Nuer refugees or soldiers changed the Anyuak attitude, and this especially when the SPLA put a Nuer administrator at the Anyuak town of Gambela in Ethiopia. The refugees brought foreign relief-workers to Anyuakland, but as usual the Anyuak, representing the local population, were not supposed to receive direct assistance. Smaller and bigger incidents resulted in a growing feeling of oppression, and while the SPLA was out to fight for the liberation of the Sudan, the Ethiopian Anyuak started to dream of their own liberation. A political resistance-movement was formed (the GPLF or Gambela People's Liberation Movement) which was fighting at a same time against SPLA-Nuer dominance in Gambela and the Mengistu-regime.

The fall of the Mengistu-regime in June 1991 was a serious setback to the SPLA. It had to evacuate Itang and the other places in Ethiopian Anyuakland, dragging along all the refugees to the other side of the border: many refugees fled to Nasir on the Sobat but the great majority ran to Pochalla on the Akobo-river where the rainy season prevented them from moving any further. The arrival of some 100'000 people in a small village in the middle of nowhere was a really dramatical event, last but not least for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which brought assistance to the refugees and some 10'000 unaccompanied children who had been living in a school in the UNHCR-camp at Pinyudo and who were now receiving special care.

Recent "history".

The fall of the Mengistu-regime deprived the SPLA from its most active military and ideological support. Tensions existing within the SPLM were now arising and a rift occurred when Cdt. Dr.Riek Machar (a Nuer) and Ctd. Dr. Lam Akol (a Shilluk) at Nasir split the SPLA into two factions (the other one remaining under the command of Dr.John Garang de Mabior, a Dinka from Bor). As differences could not be settled peacefully, the two factions started to

fight each other, thereby inviting the Northern Government to take advantage of these internal problems (Khartoum favouring the Nasir-faction). At present, it is not easy to know the truth about alleged alliances. Without commenting on the split itself, it is certainly unfortunate that its consequences are directly affecting the relationship between the two major tribes and thus may have an impact on the times after the war.

In what concerns the Anyuak, the recent development threw them on different sides: while the Sudanese Anyuak had suffered a lot from the activities of the Nasir-faction (led by former Anyanya-2 leader Gordon Kong, a Nuer) in the Ciro-region (around Akobo) and thus were pushed to the side of the Dinka-dominated so-called Torit-faction of Dr. Garang, the GPLM was still seeking revenge for past SPLM-"mistakes" in Ethiopia and therefore came in passive and active support of anti-Garang-movements. The fact that the liberation-movement of the Oromo-tribe in Ethiopia is trying to get control over the town of Gambela brought about the GPLM's alliance with the EPDRF (Ethiopian People's Democratic Revolutionary Front) which had helped by the Sudanese Government in its fight against Mengistu. In short, the Anyuak in Ethiopia are presently supporting anti-SPLA-forces while those in the Sudan are rather on the side of Garang and, in any case, would not like the Nuer of the Nasir-faction to be successful. The heavily-armed Murle, by the way, are fighting their own war, harassing the main-SPLA, Anyuak and Gatjaak Nuer alike. Quite obviously, small tribes are used by different political or military movements for goals which are not of their direct concern; once the war is over, these small tribes will have to answer for their previous positions and can already now be sure of future vengeance. The fact that all these groups have through all the years of struggle and war acquired a great amount of sophisticated weapons lets fear the worst.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR FOR THE ANYUAK.

The history of different times of war and "peace" has already brought out a number of consequences for the Anyuak as a tribal entity. In the following, attention will be put on various specific aspects of Anyuak life during and after the war, pieces of information which should be put together and be understood as a whole: for consequences of war are accumulating and bring not only physical hardship but affect a person also on the mental and psychological level.

Many of the usual consequences of war (as for example destruction of buildings and social services) were not felt so much amongst the Anyuak simply because they have never existed and thus could not be destroyed or disrupted. Examples taken from other parts of the Sudan shall illustrate these types of consequences.

1. Disruption of family-life and social activities.

When the war started, many Anyuak were outside of their home-country, in places like Bor, Malakal, Juba or Khartoum. A great number got

engaged in the governmental army, others worked in the administration and there were young people doing cheap labour-work and hoping to be admitted to a school in the region. Some of the educated Anyuak joined the rebel-movement, but most of the people and in particular the children stayed in the towns, far away from their homes. Most of them endured very difficult living conditions in a hostile environment, left alone with their worries and problems. Many of the Anyuak serving in the army were sent to the south to fight their brothers, and Anyuak casualties - in particular during the fight at Nasir - were said to be very high.

Some Anyuak returned from Khartoum following a very long and complicated road via Ethiopia, but most Anyuak got stuck in the towns like the other refugees from the South. As the Anyuak in the towns use to remain in constant contact, families staying behind in Anyuakland could from time to time receive news about their children and friends by people arriving from there, but such good news (if there were) would of course not compensate for the loss of physical contact.

Unlike in other regions, the displacement of Anyuak was not only due to the civil war itself but also to attacks from other tribes (the Murle) and to starvation following a number of years of drought and flooding (1986-1991). Such displacement occurred mainly inside Anyuakland where refugees could expect help from their relatives or friends, some people bartering goods from the refugees staying in the UNHCR-camps in Pinyudo or Itang.

Besides of human suffering and hardship connected to displacement and separation from the families at home, the Anyuak were in this regard certainly better off than other tribes, their country being not only at the remote periphery of the Sudan but also near to a country where people could - at least up to 1990 - escape the most immediate effects of the war while still staying inside own tribal boundaries.

2. Collapse of the economical system.

The absence of many able men (absent or dead because of their participation in the rebel-movement, killed in tribal clashes, displaced or away in governmental towns) had several serious consequences on the people, some of these naturally concerning agriculture and other means of subsistence.

The Anyuak are fervent agriculturists who have crops of a very high quality. Only men are planting the durra-fields, for "the women do not know this difficult work". The absence of qualified men resulted in a lack of professional care for the fields and thus in a reduced crop-production.

The fact that the traditional social and political life was severely disrupted had effects on the organisation of agricultural activities. When coordination is lacking, the natural enemies of the crops - weaver-birds, grasshoppers etc. - have a much more easy game than when they are fought collectively. The past five years in Anyuak- and Murle-country were a mere disaster, also from an ecological view-point: droughts and floods alternated, burning the fields or washing away the crops. War and nature seemed to have united for torturing, killing and chasing people. Nuts, waterlilies and certain types of grass allowed people to survive for a while, but many of those having

escaped hunger-death perished later because of various diseases. Weak people, women and especially children, could often not make it to the refugee-camps or other assistance-points and passed away silently. Compared to other people, the Anyuak were probably somewhat better off from a nutritional point of view; their country is fertile and the Anyuak know to make use of the most hidden natural resources. Yet, their situation sometimes got really desperate, and this for a number of reasons:

The constant displacement did not allow the Anyuak a proper preparation of their (usually very large) fields, people on the move simply planting small fields of maize along the rivers.

The absence of the strong generation of men made it easy for other tribes to attack Anyuak villages, to burn the crops and to chase the people (recent examples are the attacks by Nuer at Akobo and by Murle in Jor-region); such loss of crops made people desperate and reduced their courage to plant on a large scale. Nobody could be sure to be at harvest-time at the same place, and people often reached a new place after the time of sowing: as a consequence, people planted only the necessary minimum.

SPLA-soldiers crossing Anyuak-territory on their way to Boma or to Bor had to be given food for their journey, another discouraging element and sometimes even a reason to move to more hidden places.

Traditionally, the Anyuak in times of hunger or other hardship used to seek help from their relatives in more fortunate regions. During the war, this system of mutual assistance has collapsed, partly because people would not move as easily as in normal times and partly because there were, for above mentioned reasons, no regions with a surplus in production.

Anyuak country had never any market, except at peripheral places like Akobo, Pibor and Gambela. The closure of markets consequently did not affect them in the same dramatic way it did in other regions in Southern Sudan, but the fact that trading was now very difficult had a considerable impact on the Anyuak wealth (clothing, soap, salt etc.). The presence of relief-agencies came as an urgent needed relief for the starving Anyuak and helped them - indirectly - to survive; though the Anyuak did not receive anything free, they got at least the opportunity to barter food in exchange of Anyuak tobacco or alcohol. To summarize, the war has brought great instability and insecurity to the country of the Anyuak, constantly displacing people without giving them the time to prepare their fields or taking profit of their crops; interruption of traditional village-life, absence of the care-takers of the families and family-separation brought the usual economical system to a collapse which in its turn led both to a physical and spiritual breakdown of the people's energy and capacities of resistance. The effects of war were further accentuated and increased by natural calamities which even in more peaceful times would have caused much human suffering. If the Anyuak managed to survive under such difficult circumstances, it was because they were already accustomed to fight sickness, hunger and death, refusing to ever give up their struggle for a better life.

3. Lack of medical services.

Many regions in the Southern Sudan have always lacked of services in the field of health and therefore could hardly notice their breakdown as a consequence of war. This is true for the country of the Anyuak where the present growing popularity and prestige of witchdoctors is nevertheless an indication for the lack of any modern medical service. Other regions suffer more directly - and in any case more consciously - from the absence of drugs, medical personnel, proper water-supply and the collapse of equipments, roads and means of transport. Relief-agencies have tried to fill the gap, but their dependance on flights and flight-permissions (to be given by the Government of the Sudan and the SPLA) has restricted their activities to a very few places only and left entire regions without medical care. The surgical hospital of the International Committee of the Red Cross offers about 300 beds to war-wounded soldiers and civilians and has already saved a very great number of lives; it is perhaps here one can best observe human tragedies due to war alone, the impression getting even more depressing if one knows that most of the war-wounded people could (and will) never get transported in time to the ICRC-hospital in Lokichokio in Kenya.

Though all health-problems become big worries when medical help is not available, some diseases are more directly linked to the situation of war. Such is the case of tuberculosis which would not be the great problem it is at present as there would be means to cure it; but under the present circumstances, the majority of TB-patients pass away simply because they can't reach the only hospital treating the disease.

Even more terrible are the effects of the so-called Khalazar-disease which kills people in great numbers. It is directly linked to the war itself as its transmitting agent, the sandfly, is travelling with infected persons or finds infected persons at formerly clean places: it is the constant dislocation of the population which has allowed the disease to spread over a very large area in a very short time. A Dutch organisation tried to fight the disease, but their struggle was hopeless and finally interrupted because of the ongoing war. Though it would be possible to cure patients within three weeks, it is an impossible task, partly because the treatment is extremely expensive, partly because the patients need a lot of food to recover, and partly because the area in question lies on both sides of the war-factions, between the North (Bentiu) and the South (Ler). Entire villages have been exterminated because of the disease, and refugees fear to return home if they know that the area is infected by the Khalazar.

4. Lack of veterinary services.

The health of cattle is of an absolutely primordial importance for all pastoral people, both from a nutritional and from a cultural viewpoint. It is not surprising that certain of the relief-agencies (namely the ICRC and UNICEF) have understood the vital significance of cattle for the Nilotes and conducted cattle-vaccination-programs in the regions which were accessible to them and where they were allowed to work. Tribes in more remote areas did not have the chance, and both Anyuak and Murle cattle were not vaccinated, an attack

on Pochalla in March 1992 bringing the beginning of the vaccination-campaign to an abrupt end.

The vaccination-programs were only preventive (rinderpest) and not curative; thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of cattle died as a consequence of constant displacement and various diseases. Especially the floods in the region around Bor and the Anyanya-2-raids in this area during the autumn of 1991 had terrible consequences for the people's livelihood.

In Anyuak area, the Murle cattle were dying away in great numbers, forcing the starving Murle to attack other tribes for food or, if possible, cattle, and, on the other side, to kill the arriving antelopes in huge numbers.

5. Lack of education and school-facilities.

Lack of education is doubtless one of the worst consequences of war, and this especially in a country like the Sudan where cultural differences shall only be overcome through more enlightenment and tolerance. Lack of schooling is preparing for the next war before the present one has come to an end! A boy who was 9 years old in 1983 is now already 18 years old without ever having seen a school, and unless he is very exceptional, he will never get any voice in his new country nor understand its complex problems.

Before the war, education was a privilege reserved to the lucky children of particular regions; as there was no school in Anyuakland, many Anyuak children used to run away from home for getting education abroad, in Malakal, Rabak or Khartoum. After the outbreak of the second civil war, schools were closed almost everywhere either because of lack of teachers and school-material or because of hunger and the displacement of people.

The present long-lasting war has also left a lot of frustrations amongst all those lucky Southern Sudanese who actually had finished secondary school and perhaps even reached or completed university: the war has crashed all their hopes to find a work in the destroyed Sudan. The presence of sometimes haughty, occasionally ill-prepared or even arrogant relief-people comes as an additional humiliation to this category of black Sudanese.

The fact that education plays a crucial role in the life not only of people but also of the state can be illustrated by the story of the now famous 10'000 unaccompanied children "of Gorkuoo" (Gorkuoo was the village where the children were settled when in Anyuakland) who had fled from the refugee-camp at Pinyudo in Ethiopia to Pochalla where the International Committee of the Red Cross took care of their protection and assistance. For security-reasons, the SPLA decided later on to send the children to a place near the Kenyan border where the boys now wait for re-unification with their relatives. What brought these children into the headlines was not at all their suffering in their home-places, their terrible experiences on their way from very far distant places through war-torn regions to Ethiopia or their personal problems of being separated for years from their parents without ever getting any news about their whereabouts and welfare but the fact that they were practically only boys and all living together in a kind of boarding-school: the suspicion was general that these children were actually sent to Ethiopia for military training, nobody wondering why such a thing would not have been better organised in a less public place than a UNHCR-refugee-camp and why 8 to

12 year old boys should be selected such a long time before really becoming useful as soldiers. Though the SPLA has got its child-soldiers like so many African rebel-movements (the Geneva Conventions protect children only up to the age of 15), the care-takers of these children probably speak the truth when they say that the children are only occupied with their education. To believe this, one can remember the above mentioned total lack of school-facilities in rebel-held areas in the Sudan; one can also consider the possibility that a rebel-movement is thinking of the time after the war, a time when there will be great need for educated people. For making sure that the future will not be completely empty in terms of human intellectual manpower, the SPLM seems to have encouraged some chiefs to send children from their village to the schools in Ethiopian refugee-camps, possible arguments being security, food and education available there. Such an understanding of the children's presence could explain why so many chiefs and military commanders have sent their own children to Ethiopia and why some Anyuak could bitterly complain that their children were not accepted... Indeed, by selecting only children from the own tribal group or even from a particular tribal section, the responsible people would make sure that the future is under the control of their people. "We would love to put an Anyuak at this post", the argument could be, "but unfortunately he lacks education...". So if the boys were not sent to Ethiopia for military reasons, there was probably some other and more cunning reason behind it: the wish that people of the own tribe (or the own tribal section) shall have a leading role to play in the future country.

Saying this, we have nevertheless to remember that one third of the children had actually been escaping the terror of war and were seeking refuge at a place where they would get food and find safety. The news that there was a place where everything could be got free of cost (including even education!) had spread all over the Southern Sudan and incited many children to run away from home. Whatever the reason for the unaccompanied children's presence in the refugee-camps in Ethiopia may have been, the individual fate of each child is really a dramatic and very sad one, an endless story of running away from the war, of escaping death, of witnessing the horrors of war, of starving and falling sick, of loneliness and hunger of love. And though these children one day might be in the privileged position of an educated person, they will never forget what they have seen and what they have experienced; and they will never get that type of private education which is more important than anything else and which can only be found at home and during childhood. Culture cannot be acquired by reading books and listening to young teachers only.

6. Religious aspects of the war.

The Southern Sudanese would never imagine that one person could want to impose his own beliefs on another person. "Religion", to them, is not to be separated from experience and tradition, and if there is the firm belief in a supreme spiritual power (called God in its neutral form but getting other names when revealing itself through particular appearances or actions), there is no religious doctrine which could be learned as the only truth in the world: "There is only one single God", king Agada Akway Cam explains, "but this

only God has made many small Gods, one for the Christians, one for the Arabs, some for the Hindi...". If religion is playing an important role in the present conflict, it is because (some of) the Islamic Northern Sudanese want to impose their own beliefs (and religious laws) on other people, an intention which naturally is a provocation to the Southerners' pride and self-consciousness. Everybody is free to adopt new beliefs (Southern Sudanese frequently borrow Gods from other tribes) but nobody should impose his own beliefs on others: belief, after all, is essentially a private, not a political force.

At this instance, we don't want to discuss the religious aspects of a war which has other and probably stronger roots, but it is worthwhile noticing that Christianity gained in popularity just because of Islamic pressure. It seems that everybody felt that only unity could oppose a (militarily!) invading religious power, and Christianity obviously was the only force strong enough to assemble people of various individual and tribal beliefs and to resist growing oppression. But Christianity did not only become a shield against the Islamic forces from the North, it turned also into a kind of refuge for Southern Sudanese who did not necessarily agree with the SPLA and who could find within the church a space of liberty and freedom.

7. Ecological consequences of war in Anyuakland.

These consequences were linked to the presence of the refugees in Anyuak country for many years and to the over-exploitation of natural resources.

The presence of several hundred-thousand refugees at a few places (Itang, Pinyudo and later Pochalla and Gorkuoo) was bound to show effects on natural resources: for example, the formerly well-wooded area around Itang was completely deforested and turned into a mere desert. At Pochalla, one could witness with amazement and horror how the forest virtually moved away day after day. Wood was not only needed for cooking but also for shelter, the big trees inviting people to choose the best of all available materials. Fortunately, Anyuak soil is very fertile and trees are growing fast; at least in Pochalla-area one can be confident that the damages done by the refugees will be healed by nature soon.

In Pochalla, the refugees were surviving thanks to the help provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross, but people were also greatly assisted by the generosity of nature: in the beginning and at times of greatest hardship, nuts and different grasses could feed at least the children (but at one moment, all the trees were empty and it needed spectacular courage to reach the last of nuts on high trees), but as vital were at a later time of the season the fishes found in abundance in the Akobo- and Oboth-rivers. The Anyuak complained bitterly that "the Dinka are emptying our rivers", perhaps without knowing that they could be right. For indeed, the fishes were on their way up to the source of the river to lay their eggs there; and as they never reached, there will be much less and perhaps even very little fish during the coming years. Anyuak country is not only rich in wood and fish but also in game. At the beginning of the dry season, thousands of antelopes use to migrate from the South to Anyuak-country, passing through Pibor and moving

up to Pochalla. The Anyuak use to hunt these antelopes which provide them with meat for the rainy season.

Before the war, the Anyuak (and other tribes) owned already firearms, but as there were few of them and as ammunition was scarce and expensive, they were only used for fighting. Hunting was done exclusively with spears, giraffe-hunting sometimes excepted (but giraffe-hunting is of little interest as giraffes are living far away and as transport-facilities for such big amounts of meat are lacking). Amongst the Anyuak, each killed antelope belongs at least to four persons, non-considering those persons' participation in the hunt itself: this type of sharing meat is both economical and social and keeps the relation between needs and damage in balance.

Modern weapons do not respect the laws of coexistence between the human and the natural world; they kill easily, do not demand much efforts nor courage and often destroy without real necessity, leaving many dead animals to the vultures. Before the war, the German Frankfurter Zoologische Gesellschaft (led by Prof.Grzimek) had started to establish the "Boma National Park", a project which would have deprived the Anyuak from their meat-supply and the Murle from their grazing-ground. At the time, my efforts of convincing the responsables for the park to allow hunting with spears and grazing of cattle failed. From an Anyuak or a Murle viewpoint, the fact that the political events stopped this project of a park in their territories may have been one of the few positive consequences of war. However, it is evident that the wildlife must be saved (and this in particular from the army of any prove-nance); and it is good news that the importance of the issue is now at least theoretically recognized by the SPLA. Before the war, the Sudanese army stationed in Pochalla used their "training-ammunition" for killing giraffes, elephants, antelopes and other animals in great numbers. The present war does not allow that bullets are used for the purpose of poaching exclusively, but soldiers in Pochalla still get their meat from the White-eared Cobe-ante-lopes.

The present Murle-hunting may be of an even more serious significance for the future of wildlife. As mentioned before, the Murle were - like the Anyuak - completely left out by the relief-agencies and suffered both from loss of cattle and natural calamities. But unlike the Anyuak, the Murle are no specialists in agriculture and thus even more exposed to hunger when crops are failing or when cattle die. As starvation has been general in Murle-country since several years, the Murle concentrated on the hunting of antelopes; well-equipped with automatic weapons, they managed to kill a lot of the antelopes passing through their country. In fact, they killed so many animals that the antelopes changed the usual itinerary of their migration, moving far to the east of Murleland. As the Murle followed the antelopes, they entered Anyuak territory and came into conflict with the people living there. If the killing of antelopes continues on the present scale, these rare and beautiful animals may completely disappear from the region, leaving the Anyuak and the Murle without any provision of meat. As long as the war continues, there is little hope that the present situation will improve.

The ecological consequences of the present war in Anyuak country are thus due to over-population, subsequent over-exploitation of natural resources and the lack of spiritual care which the Anyuak traditionally take for

their country. Where respect for nature and its spiritual essence gets neglected or forgotten, a virtual earthly paradise is bound to disappear.

8. Impact of the presence of refugees and relief-agencies.

The damage done by relief-agencies is difficult to establish, for it might be too easy to blame people for actions which actually were of vital importance: without any doubt, many Sudanese lives were saved by emergency-relief-actions. The fact that all presence of relief-agencies attracts and thus dislocates people should not be accepted as a pretext for leaving helpless people alone in their fight for naked survival. One should rather wonder why it is not possible to reach the needy populations in their home-areas, why food is still used as a weapon in fighting military movements and why it is always the civilian population which gets more affected by the war than its fighting part. Though precise figures are of course not available in a country where nobody even knows the exact figure of its population, there is no doubt that thousands of people died as a consequence of continuous natural calamities and of the direct and indirect effects of war.

The relief-agencies were absent at too many places, only a few very small organisations daring to bring assistance without the consent of the Sudanese Government. Financial problems hampered the task of aid-organisations, for while Africa as a whole is not very popular in the medias of the economically powerful nations, the Sudan and its problems are even less well-known to the public and therefore do not receive the so urgently needed attention, sympathy and help.

Some of the foreign organisations being active in the Sudan have tried to put emphasis on the protection of the civilians, prevention of diseases through vaccination-programs (children, cattle and specific diseases like meningitis) and rehabilitation-programs, keeping food-distribution, whenever possible, at an absolute minimum. Their cautious approach to free food-distribution was facilitated by the Nilotes' critical attitude towards unconditional help: indeed, free relief-assistance makes them highly suspicious as they fear to lose their independence and personal pride. "The worst thing which could ever happen to us", a starving Nuer once told me, "is that we have to beg for food". Nilotes prefer to die in silence rather than to cry or to prostrate themselves.

The refugee-camps of the UNHCR in Ethiopia, however, had quite a damaging effect on the people's mentality, for there food was given over a long period to people who were not starving anymore. After some years, the refugees considered assistance not as a burden but as a right and thus lost their former approach to food as the most precious of all materials. The war going on and all the refugee-camps having been closed because of the war, the refugees had in the meantime to re-discover the reality of their life as refugees.

9. Cultural damage.

Most of the above mentioned consequences of war are visible, sometimes spectacular ones. Others, however, cannot be seen in the immediate but have more long-term effects. This of course is true for the psychological state of the people and especially of children, but it is also true for the life of a community and for the survival of its culture.

Certain consequences of war for the Anyuak tribe as a whole were indirectly shown in the previous review of the recent history of the civil war: the Ethiopian part of Anyuakland has been highly politicized and was pushed to different alliances with other political movements while the Sudanese Anyuak remained with their traditional Nuer and Murle problems and therefore refused similar alliances with political groupings. An attack by Ethiopian Anyuak on Pochalla in December 1991 was meant to strike the SPLA rather than the Sudanese Anyuak living there, and yet it became obvious that different political interests seriously disrupted the previous unity of the people.

Due to war, displacement and the presence of so many "foreigners" (Dinka, Nuer, Europeans etc.) had a serious impact on the traditional life of the Anyuak village community. There is a whole generation of children which has been absent from home and which lacks all the experiences connected to traditional life, to the field of agriculture and cattle, to nature and wild life, and, last but not least, to the whole sphere of traditions and socio-political activities. During a recent visit to Otalo, the residential village of king Agada Akway Cam, I found mainly elderly and old men and very young children with their mothers and grandmothers; the whole "leading generation" of adult men was found to be absent. This present emptiness between generations, if it continues, will show serious consequences, and this not only in the field of agriculture or warfare but even more on the life at court which is so decisive for Anyuak self-understanding. As a matter of fact, the generally acknowledged Anyuak intelligence and their brilliant, bold eloquence is not a mere gift of nature but originates in the public debates at court, in the thorough discussion of problems and a fine discernment of judgements: the whole Anyuak character gets build up on these intellectual activities which result in social discipline, political awareness and a very strong self-consciousness. Loss of these political, social and spiritual qualities would undermine Anyuak culture from within and finally leave the Anyuak identity without its present content.

10. Human consequences

The human consequences of a war can be enumerated and one can try to imagine hunger, exhaustion, fear, sorrow, solitude, sickness and despair; the real impacts of war, however, will not be measured and never be understood because they occur in an unknown future. We presently witness the horrors of a war and we can already see some of the future results of years of human and ecological destruction, but we cannot see the wounds which are not bleeding, which lie in the heart and the mind of the people, and which may never heal. A war destroys much more than what is seen, and these invisible wounds are perhaps the worst of all consequences of war: peace itself is a consequence of war, a victim of armed conflicts who will need a lot of rest to regain normal physical strength and mental health. The war in

the Sudan is not a forgotten war, as it is often said, it is simply ignored; one may hope that a coming, unavoidable peace will be of more interest to those sharing a same humanity.

When talking about human consequences, it is perhaps easiest to think of the future life of all the children separated from home for many years, mentally tortured by the events of the war, left completely alone with their fears and tears. A laughter helps them now to struggle on, to resist despair, and this laughter gives us still some courage to imagine better times; but their future is, as it looks at present, empty of any hope. And whoever looks at these children feels ashamed.

Conclusion.

Of course, there can't be any definite conclusion of a war which is still going on and which remains unpredictable in what concerns new developments and future consequences. Our information concerned the Anyuak and the Sudanese, the constant displacement of people because of fighting, hunger and natural calamities, the disruption of family-ties, the destruction of natural resources, the harm done to wildlife, the lack of medical and veterinary services with the subsequent spreading out of diseases and epidemics, the steadily increasing number of war-wounded, disabled and amputees, the sad fate of children separated from their parents, cut off from their cultural environment and desperately looking for education, the disruption of normal social life with its loss of experience and consciousness and, last but not least, the continuous tribal fighting which now got the dimensions of modern war-fare. If it was possible to enumerate some of the most serious consequences of war, for the Anyuak and other populations, it would be impossible to give a full account of the personal sufferings endured by these people and to describe the tragedy which each individual has passed through without seeing any end.

Will the Anyuak survive as a distinctive cultural entity in the Southern Sudan and Ethiopia, will they ever get a chance to reach a future through an organic development?

At present, I am rather pessimistic. But there is always some hope: "Soon, very soon", the wise Anyuak king told me for fifteen years ago, "God shall create a new type of human being... Completely new people, people who are not tired yet..."; and as if there was need for any further explanation, he added: "for we people living now, we are so tired, so deadly tired...". The king is old now, but still alive and strong-minded. His prophecy has not realized yet. Many of his people have died. War does not make new people, nor does it necessarily create a better world. At present, an old Anyuak saying may contain the only truth, bitter and pitiless, when it says: "The reward of life is death"... Let's hope that the king's mentioned "new people" will soon find reasons to reach a more optimistic conclusion in a more peaceful Sudan.