

Comparative Research Paper
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The countries of Bolivia and Sudan are both characterized by the traditional developmental factors most associated with countries located in the Third World. Throughout their history, the two areas have experienced progression from the existence of prehistoric civilizations, to extensive time periods of outside colonial rule and finally to the state of independence seen today in both countries. Although the two countries are located in two completely different world regions, there is a vast assortment of similarities between their social, political, and economic cultures. Slight differences have also contributed to the makeup of the modern existence of both countries.

Bolivia is a landlocked country located in South America. The country is bordered by Brazil to the northeast, Peru to the northwest, Paraguay to the southeast, Chile to the southwest, and Argentina to the south. Prior to colonial rule, the area known as Bolivia was occupied by the indigenous Aymara people of the Andes Mountains until the Inca Empire gained control in the early 1500's. Home to several valuable natural resources, it was not long before the Spanish began invading the territory in search of expanding their own power to the South American continent. With the abundance of Bolivian silver being one of the main pull factors of colonial rule, the Spanish utilized the native labor force in order to extract the various natural resources. Colonial authority declined as a result of Spanish involvement in the Napoleonic wars. Bolivian action towards gaining independence began in 1809 in the city of Sucre leading to a string of small revolutionary wars until independence was gained in 1825, primarily from the military support of Simon Bolivar. Following independence, local conflict between Bolivia and surrounding countries such as Chile and Peru led to the loss of Bolivian land and territories. The

southwestern Bolivian coast was lost to Chile, leaving Bolivia permanently landlocked. The relationship between Bolivia and Chile has been specifically strained by war and conflict since colonial times as the two countries have struggled over natural resources and territorial gains.

Sudan is located in the northern part of Africa, and it borders the countries of Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Libya. Similar to Bolivia, Sudan has a rich prehistoric history consisting of agricultural societies. These civilizations, primarily the Kingdom of Kush, were centered on the Nile River which runs through the middle of Sudan, and divides it between east and west. Contrary to the belief that pre-colonial societies lacked any form of advancement, the Nubian Kingdom of Kush was one of the first societies in the world to use iron smelting technology. A number of regional disputes led to shifting power over the region before modern colonial rule took place. In 1821, Egypt conquered northern Sudan. It was under early Egyptian rule that infrastructural improvements, such as irrigation and cotton production, were implemented. In 1882, Britain became involved in the region when local disputes and mismanagement of power led the Turkiyah people to seek British help. Finally, in 1899, Britain and Egypt had come to an agreement to negotiate authority over Sudan with Britain possessing the majority of the power. The British supported local power, but Egyptian pressure to end colonial rule eventually led to the allowance of a free vote of independence. Under British and Egyptian rule, Sudan was considered different regions between the north and the south until the two were united as one under independence. Growing conflict between the Christians of southern Sudan and the Muslims of the north led to the First Sudanese Civil War. Southern insurgents created the Anyanya guerilla army composed of rebels and students. Although there were internal weaknesses within the secessionist rebel movement, the unstable national government was not able to suppress growing insurgency. Over the course of

the 17-year war, 500,000 people were killed and thousands were forced to leave their homes. The First Sudanese Civil War lasted from 1955 to 1972, and after 11 years, a continuation of the first war began as the Second Sudanese Civil War in 1983. Stemming from some of the sources of the first civil war, the second civil war was caused by a variety of cultural differences between the north and south regions of Sudan. The central government's attempts to impose sharia law on non-Muslim southerners resulted in violence among the two groups. At the same time, northern Arabs were not allowed to hold positions of power in the south, and southerners felt they were not given enough power from the British after independence. Contributing to the cultural differences was the fact that English-trained southerners were opposed to speaking Arabic when it was made the language of administration. Another cause of the second period of conflict were disputes between natural resources such as the abundance of oil that existed between the north and the south. The north wanted to control oil on account of their lack of agricultural development, while the south had access to more suitable agricultural conditions, leaving them less dependent on the oil supply. After decades of fighting, the north and the south began to reach peace agreements through the division of jobs, natural resources, and the implementation of Islamic law. During the time of these peace talks, more regional disputes stemming from the two civil wars resulted in conflict and violence in the region of Darfur. In 2003, Sudanese forces responded to Darfuri rebel movements by Arab militias to attack hundreds of villages throughout the region. 400,000 lives were taken and 2,500,000 people were displaced as a result of the widespread genocide. The Sudanese government refused to cooperate with international human rights organizations, and Darfuris continue to suffer today as peace has not been resolved.

Sudan experienced its first period of self-rule when Ismail al-Azhari was elected first Prime Minister of Sudan's democratic parliament in 1954. Prior to 1955, however, the

government under al-Azhari promoted unity with Egypt under the National Unionist Party. Eventually, popular opinion led Sudanese leaders to break away from Egypt and form a self-reliant society. The Sudanese Declaration of Independence became effective on January 1, 1956. Unlike many other countries in the Third World, Sudan gained independence without violence or conflict. Following independence, a Constituent Assembly adopted a Transitional Constitution, replacing the governor general with a five-member Supreme Commission. Early in its independence, Sudan sought aid from the United States with matters such as education, transportation, and the economy. In 1958, the Sudanese parliament ratified a United States aid agreement. In the same year, General Ibrahim Abboud led an army coup to take over the government of al-Azhari. This was also a bloodless transition in which General Abboud established power through a thirteen member army regime as well as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to control Sudan. The regime utilized Sudan's monocrop of cotton and improved relations with Egypt over the Nile River. Religion also became less involved in the Sudanese government under Abboud's military regime when religious leader, Abd ar Rahman al Mahdi, died in 1959. Despite early success, Abboud's regime experienced opposition from military officers who wanted to establish a popular government. With support from the Sudanese Communist Party, the opposition focused on the government's weaknesses in the ability to stabilize the country in order to push the country towards civilian rule. Ultimately, the government's actions in attempt to handle religious and cultural differences in the south led to its undoing. Strikes and protests mostly associated with the University of Khartoum led to the disintegration of the Abboud regime. The Prime Minister of the new civilian regime government was civil servant, Sirr Al-Khatim Al-Khalifa. The majority of the cabinet members posted by Al-Khalifa did not belong to political parties, however, Al-Khalifa did allow them to operate. By the

late 1980's, an Islamic legal code was introduced into the Sudanese government after another military coup led by Colonel Omar al-Bashir took place. The government under al-Bashir banned associations, political parties, and independent newspapers. Omar al-Bashir appointed himself president and took over all executive and legislative powers. In 1996, Sudan became a single party state under the National Congress Party and al-Bashir was the only candidate to run in the general election. Today, all political power is held by President Omar al-Bashir in a presidential representative democratic republic. Since January 20, 1991, the legal system has been based on Islamic law.

In the early 20th century, the developing political environment of Bolivia was similar to that of Sudan in the fact that transitioning power occurred before democracy was introduced. The historic Revolutionary Nationalist Movement political party was successful under President Victor Paz Estenssoro. The government under Estenssoro focused on issues such as universal suffrage, land reform, education, and nationalization of tin mining which had replaced silver as Bolivia's most valuable resource. Estenssoro was overthrown by the time of his third term in 1964 by a military regime. In 1971, following years of unstable government, Hugo Banzer Suarez was placed in office as president by the military and the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement. Suarez transitioned in and out of office until 2003. Similar to the transitioning power of the Sudanese government, military rule played a major role in Bolivian politics late in the 20th century. Corruption was also prevalent in the elections of 1979 and 1981. A violent coup took place in 1980 led by General Luis Garcia Meza. After being in power for just one year, Meza was forced out of office leading to the installment of three struggling military governments in 14 months.

Bolivia began the transition into democracy in 1982 when the election of President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada. Lozada began intensive social and economic reform through a capitalist system in which foreign investors accounted for 50 percent ownership of public enterprises in exchange for capital investments. In 1993, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada ran for president in association with a group called the Tupac Katari Revolutionary Liberation Movement which promoted multicultural and indigenous sensitive policies. Through this campaign, Sanchez de Lozada introduced intercultural bilingual education, agrarian legislation, and privatization of state owned businesses. Under the plan, Bolivian citizens would own at least 51 percent of enterprises with most state-owned enterprises being sold. Although several advancements were made under Sanchez de Lozada, there was a considerable amount of opposition causing strikes and protests to the new policies. In 1997, Nationalist Democratic Action party leader, General Hugo Banzer was elected into office. While in office, Banzer continued the privatization and free-market policies of Sanchez de Lozada. However, economic crisis in Argentina and Brazil negatively affected the Bolivian economy. Corruption was also involved in the economic downfall. Sanchez de Lozada briefly came back into power before Evo Morales, a native peasant leader, was elected into office in 2005 with a majority vote. Today, Morales is the President of what is described as a presidential representative democratic republic, similar to that of Sudan. However, instead of the President holding the majority of the power of the governmental branches, power is held in both the government and two chambers of parliament.

The history of education in Sudan is strongly associated with the period of Egyptian rule. In northern Sudan during the mid-1800's, Egyptian teachers taught arithmetic and various Islamic studies. During the early 1900's, education in the area began to take an approach focused

more towards Sudanese studies. Strong efforts were made to educate the general population with at least a basic level of knowledge. Prior to Sudanese independence, education had advanced to a university level, and women's education was also a main focus. Under the Bashir government, education strategies became more geared towards the study of Islam with Arabic replacing English as the language of instruction. In Bolivia, there is a significant educational divide between the rural and urban societies. Educational reform in the 1940's required literate Bolivians to teach others to read and write. Fines were also levied for adult illiteracy. By the 1980's a public education system had been implemented, and public and private institutions including the University of Bolivia had been established. Today, Bolivia contributes almost a quarter of its annual budget to educational purposes. However, the rural population remains largely illiterate.

Spanish conquest rooted in Christianity accounts for the majority Catholic population in Bolivia. During the colonial era, religious order played a major role in the societal and governmental structure of Bolivia. The relationship between church and state remained close throughout Spanish rule, and the clergy were mostly of European origin. The church also maintained a fair amount of the wealth with ownership in land and strong relationships with moneylenders. After independence, the Bolivian government took control over the church, but Roman Catholicism remained the sole religion. As opposed to the deep religious conflict prevalent in Sudanese culture, Bolivia's Catholic solidarity remained intact throughout its history with minor deviations and allowances of other religions. Also unlike Sudan, Bolivia is currently a secular state with religion playing a smaller role in politics than it did throughout history.

Overall, the countries of Bolivia and Sudan have the potential to develop a positive future with further implementation of democracy and stable leadership. The historical development of

both regions are similar in terms of the existence of prehistoric societies, colonial involvement, the acquisition of independence, and modern political stability. With the proper management of labor, natural resources, and international relations, the economies of both regions have the potential to experience prosperity in the future. In terms of ethnic differences and cultural and regional disputes, Sudan is lacking in comparison to Bolivia. Human rights issues in Sudan have yet to be eliminated. Despite various differences, both regions possess an extensive historical series of social, political, and economic events that have had a powerful influence on their existence today.

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