

‘God will crown us’: The Construction of Religious Nationalism in Southern Sudan,  
1898-2011

by

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moment I felt a sense of isolation, being countless miles from home from my then-fiancée, family, and friends. And yet, even that and at every other turn, I felt that You were near. I may have been alone, but never lonely.

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## **Abstract**

My study examines the ways in which Biblical themes and idioms have historically been adopted to enhance arguments for Southern Sudanese self-determination and sovereignty. Beginning with the conclusion of the Mahdist War and continuing through the attainment of national sovereignty, I argue that the Bible not only provided a critical lexicon of resistance and communal identity-formation but also served as a source with which to levy spiritual critiques against the Arab racial Other. ‘Blackness’ became an identity-marker adopted by Southerners of various ethnicities and—within a framework of Arab ‘oppression’—a physical trait marking Southerners as God’s spiritually oppressed people destined for liberation. In this vein I illustrate that Southern Sudan is an important example of the ways in which religious thought can combine with racial politics to fuel revolutionary political action in the modern world. It is also a unique case in African Christianity whereby a liberatory religious thought was aimed against non-white, non-Christian co-citizens.

The diversity of thinkers that contributed to this theology illustrates that the sociology of theological knowledge production was not the exclusive preserve of clergy but involved a tapestry of thinkers. Rather than focusing on a specific subset of people or communities in the vein of Sudanese anthropology, I show that a wide range of ‘oppressed’ actors have used theology to interpret their circumstances, define enemies, script action, and define the future—one that conflated spiritual liberation with material political reformation and revolution. This theology has developed along an historical



trajectory since at least the early twentieth century. By placing vagarious situations into a familiar script of liberation, actors and circumstances have been placed into Biblical archetypes that render understandable action. Less than four years into independence, however, ethnic factionalism threatens the nation that nationalism envisioned. This explosion, I suggest, did not occur spontaneously but reflects longer tensions between missionary, colonial, and African efforts to define ethnicities as distinct social groups and the emergence of 'Southern' as both a subject racial category and nationality. My study shows strengths and limits of racial and religious thoughts as instruments for nation-making in a particular African national context.

## Introduction

The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your  
glory;  
you will be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.  
You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand,  
a royal diadem in the hand of your God.  
Isaiah 62:2-3

Enoch de Mading was born in Southern Sudan in the mid 1930s. A theology student and Presbyterian church official, he became the director of the London-based Sudan Studies Association in 1970, in the waning years of the First Civil War. Mading worked as editor of the SSA's *Grass Curtain* and had connections with the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement. A member of the Southern delegation at the 1972 Addis Ababa talks (the Addis Ababa Agreement ended the war), he later held several positions in the Southern Region High Executive Committee. By 1976 he was Regional Minister of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports.<sup>1</sup> Mading first conceived the idea for a Southern Sudanese archive (or, more properly, an archive of Southern political movements).<sup>2</sup> On the advice of Professor Robert Collins the archive was expanded to include the South's administrative records. In 1976 he surveyed government offices and estimated that some eight thousand records from the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan to the Southern Region's

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Garang, Enoch Madeng De (ca. 1936-?)' in Richard A. Lobban Jr., Robert S. Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85). Third Edition. Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002; 106; Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban Jr., and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 173; and 'Garang (Enok, Madlingde)' in *Who's Who in the Arab World 2007-2008*. Beirut: Publitex Publications, 2007; 321.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas Johnson, '100 Years of History: The South Sudan National Archive', 1 (emailed to author 10 April 2015). Many, many thanks to Douglas for providing me with the background information on the South Sudan National Archive (SSNA) listed in these pages.

formation had survived (this number turned out to be an underestimate). The following year an archives department was created as part of the Ministry of Information and Culture, and Douglas Johnson was made Assistant Director of Archives in 1980. Before the beginning of the Second Civil War in 1983, Southern Regional Government staff had gathered in Juba about five thousand provincial and administrative documents from Greater Equatoria and Greater Upper Nile. This burgeoning effort was not without its obstacles; there was no budget, equipment, archive building, legislation authorizing the transfer of records to the Southern Regional Records Office, or meaningful recruitment/training program. In the midst of such paucity Johnson recounts that he used beer cartons as makeshift archive boxes.<sup>3</sup>

The onset of war had an altogether negative impact on archiving efforts. Archival collection work effectively ended outside of Juba, where staff was forced to abandon records (in addition to those in other Southern district and provincial offices).<sup>4</sup> Over the course of the war—which lasted 22 years—regional and state governments were generally negligent in their care of government records, and many records were lost or irreparably damaged. Others were scattered around different storage sites. Anecdotes from Malakal and Wau, the largest repositories of government records outside Juba, provide chilling illustrations of the low state of things in those years. George Kongor, the state governor in Wau, ordered the destruction of Anglo-Egyptian era (1898-1955) files. In Malakal a Northern Sudanese Finance Minister commandeered the filing cabinets in which older files were kept, and records were thrown into an iron shed. The degradation

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<sup>3</sup> Johnson, '100 Years of History', 1; 'Juba Archives 2012 Summary' (email received from Douglas Johnson, 10 April 2015), 1 and 'Robert O. Collins' UCSB [University of California-Santa Barbara] Department of History. 2007. [[http://www.history.ucsb.edu/people/person.php?account\\_id=66](http://www.history.ucsb.edu/people/person.php?account_id=66)]. Consulted 2 June 2015.

<sup>4</sup> 'Juba Archives 2012 Summary', 1.

of the Juba archive was primarily due to neglect and poor management—some files were lost as they were moved from building to building, and damaged files from the basement of the Equatoria Regional government were discarded because no one was trained to restore them. Nevertheless, Johnson notes that there were stories about “Arabs” burning files before they left and, if true, such papers may have contained sensitive records from the war or documents of a more mundane nature (receipts, invoices). Because it is unlikely that anyone in Juba had a clear idea of what the archive maintained, he asserts that it is doubtful that archival materials would have been deliberately extracted and disposed of.<sup>5</sup>

With the end of the war in 2005, the establishment of the Government of South Sudan (GoSS), and the transfer of authority for the archives from the Central Equatoria State to the GoSS, the restoration of the archives became possible. With government funding and the combined resources of several international bodies (including the University of Michigan), a storage tent was constructed in Juba where records scattered throughout the city could be organized. Although a training program began in 2010 that provided technical support, personnel, and a digitization program for the electronic preservation of particularly important records, the tent—which was intended to for temporary use—became semi-permanent. In time, however, archival work was transferred to a two-story rented house in Juba’s Munuki neighborhood.<sup>6</sup>

In the Summer of 2012 I had the pleasure of participating in an archival cataloging project at the South Sudan National Archives. The project transferred decaying documents from the sweltering archival tent to the Munuki house (or archival

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<sup>5</sup> Johnson, ‘100 Years of History’, 1-2 and Email from Johnson to author, 22 August 2015 (from which the “Arabs” quote comes from).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

repository). There we cataloged, organized, and scanned for digitization documents filled with South Sudan's history dating back to the early twentieth century. Most of the SSNA's holdings—which in truth comprise remnants of the collected records—contain original records that documenting matters like earlier borders, development projects, trade and migration routes, missionaries, the military, education, negotiations of important peace agreements, and significant figures in Southern Sudanese history.<sup>7</sup> The tent was stifling hot, the documents compromised by weather and rats (several folders contained evidence of their biting prowess), and the heavy dust that filled the air warranted our wearing medical masks to avoid the disagreeable feeling that we affectionately started to term 'archive lung'. The scorching conditions, group camaraderie, and chance to examine perhaps hitherto unknown documents gave the project a palpable element of search and discovery.

Organized and cataloged at the house, hundreds of boxes were assembled, filled, and notated during our sixweek stay in June and July. Our labor was rewarded with several important findings, perhaps most notably those documents pertaining to borders—a critical matter given the current geopolitics of the disputed oil-rich Abyei region that straddles the Sudan-South Sudan border. There was also papers concerning chiefs, the 1955 Torit Mutiny, and grazing rights. As a graduate student interested in Southern Sudanese religious and political history, I was pleased to read mission school inspection reports from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium period, letters written by Angelo Tutuo (the first Zande priest) documenting his racial abuses from his Italian counterparts, and documents concerning the tumultuous early independence period. Over eight thousand sorted and listed in over 2,300 boxes, and materials include (but are in no

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<sup>7</sup> 'Juba Archives 2012 Summary', 1.

ways limited to) files from Khartoum's Ministry of Southern Affairs, the High Executive Council, and Southern Regional ministries. The most recent records come just before the 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the Second Civil War, while the oldest records date back to 1910.<sup>8</sup>

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It was not only a singular experience to be involved in organizing the physical archive of my country of study (and the world's newest, no less), but it was also a fortuitous time to be in the capital city because South Sudan celebrated the first anniversary of its independence on Monday, July 9<sup>th</sup>. Commemoration festivities were held at the Anglican All Saints' Cathedral that Sunday; a quite fortunate location for me since I was staying at the ECS Guest House adjacent to the church. As I sat among the throng of people the acting Governor shared that after Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) leader John Garang's death 'God in his mercy give us a Joshua [President Salva Kiir] with unique talent and wisdom who took us through the days of difficulty in the administration of...South Sudan.'<sup>9</sup> Another speaker alluded to the Hebrew captivity in Egypt by thanking God for giving them independence, leading His children across the river, and ending their slavery.<sup>10</sup> These Old Testament references reflected a broader tendency to frame South Sudanese nationhood with Biblical symbolism. Millions believed that a prophecy from Isaiah chapter 18 concerning 'tall, dark, smooth-skinned' Cushites had foretold independence centuries earlier. A few months after independence the *Sudan Tribune* reported that Southern Christians had

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<sup>8</sup> '100 Years of History', 3.

<sup>9</sup> Acting Governor, Episcopal Church of the Sudan (ECS) Independence Service, 8 July 2012 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>10</sup> Prayer given during same service

proposed a pilgrimage to Mount Zion to Vice President Riek Machar—who is currently leading the rebellion against Kiir’s government—in order to further fulfill the Isaiah prophecy (the Cushites present gifts to God on Mount Zion after their period of suffering).<sup>11</sup> The lyrics of the national anthem in its initial draft-form further appropriated the Cush parallel, referring to the country as Cush, Eden, and a land of milk and honey.<sup>12</sup> It seemed impossible to divorce nationalist discourse from sacred lexicon.

Desmond Tutu’s appearance at the independence ceremonies added a revelatory dimension to my perspective of the fusion between religion and politics. The Minister of Information addressed the former Archbishop by saying that he had broken racial barriers and that God had brought him to ‘your people,’ the South Sudanese. Tutu offered congratulatory remarks, pleas for peace, and concluded with a blessing in Xhosa.<sup>13</sup> It was a fraught Diasporic moment, as Tutu’s presence linked the racial struggles and political liberation of Black South Africans from white oppression with those of Southern Sudanese who won independence after decades of war with Khartoum regimes bent on fashioning an Arab-Islamic state. Tutu’s clerical service in the anti-apartheid struggle compelled me to consider the possible influence that liberation theology may have had in Southern Sudan (as it had played a focal role in South Africa).

In time I began to note the ways in which the documents from the Munuki archive housed in those boxes the lives, words, and stories of people who served important roles in the liberatory schema. It became clear to me that modern references and allusions to the Bible in Southern Sudanese political discourse had not emerged organically in recent

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<sup>11</sup> ‘South Sudanese Christians plan “prophesied” pilgrimage to Israel’ *Sudan Tribune* (24 February 2012), [<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article41707>]. Consulted 3 February 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Martell, ‘A Song for South Sudan: Writing a New National Anthem.’ *BBC News*. Posted 11 January 2011. [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12164171>]. Consulted 3 February 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Minister of Information and Desmond Tutu, ECS Independence Service (8 July 2012).

years but had rather built upon a longer history of such appropriations. Southern Sudanese throughout various points of their struggles with Khartoum governments read and used the Bible to define, understand, and script their political and often seditious actions in their quest for self-determination and sovereignty. The Munuki archive was not just an historical repository for the new South Sudanese nation; rather, it is a site containing information on the men and women, organizations, ideas, and developments required to properly investigate the genealogy of the religious nationalism so prevalent and pronounced at independence in 2011.

My study examines the ways in which Biblical themes and idioms have historically been adopted to enhance arguments for Southern Sudanese self-determination and sovereignty. Beginning with the conclusion of the Mahdist War (1898) and continuing through the attainment of national sovereignty (2011), I argue that the Bible not only provided a critical lexicon of resistance and communal identity-formation but also served as a source with which to levy spiritual critiques against the Arab racial Other. ‘Blackness’ and ‘Africaness’ became identity-markers that Southerners of various ethnicities adopted and disseminated to audiences ranging from African heads of state to consumers of print media with international and domestic circulations. As Southerners identified themselves as ‘Black’ and ‘African’, they appealed to a sense of solidarity, community, and destiny with other figures and communities throughout the African Diaspora that included apartheid South Africa, Martin Luther King Jr., and—in its most ancient degree—the Biblical Kingdom of Cush. Within a framework of Arab ‘oppression’, Blackness and Africanism became traits marking Southerners as God’s spiritually oppressed people destined for liberation. In this vein I illustrate that Southern



Sudan is an important example of the ways in which religious thought can combine with racial politics to fuel revolutionary political action in the modern world.

The diverse backgrounds of the thinkers contributed to this theology illustrates that the sociology of theological knowledge production was not the exclusive preserve of clergy but involved a cross-ethnic tapestry of soldiers, politicians, students, and a host of other lay Sudanese within and throughout the global Diaspora. Rather than focusing on a specific subset of people or communities in the vein of mainstream Sudanese anthropology, I show that a wide subset of ‘oppressed’ actors on the local, regional, and national levels have done theology to interpret their circumstances, define enemies, script actions, and define their future—one that conflated spiritual liberation with material political change (including reformation and outright revolution). This theology is not a recent development of the 1980s or 1990s but has, rather, followed an historical logic and trajectory dating back to at least the early twentieth century. It has, furthermore, proven itself to not only be an intellectual system but a means for a wide stratum of people to craft a sense of orientation and direction. By placing uncertain, evolving situations into a familiar script of liberation, people and situations can be placed into an archetype (in this study Biblical ones like Cush, Moses, and the Promised Land) into an understandable framework that dictates action. Theology, in brief, can make plain an incomprehensible, vagarious maelstrom of tribalism, warfare, political marginalization, and suffering.

Less than four years into independence, however, ethnic factionalism threatens the nation that nationalism envisioned. This explosion, I suggest, did not occur spontaneously but instead reflects longer historical tensions between missionary, colonial, and African efforts to define ethnicities as distinct social groups and the

emergence of ‘Southern’ as both a subject racial category and nationality. My study, therefore, show strengths and limits of racial and religious thoughts as instruments for nation-making in a particular African context.

### Literature Review

#### *Race*

Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown have noted that while racism and nationalism are not one in the same, racism’s development was concomitant with that of the nation-state and nationalist ideology. They are often articulated together, influence one another, and—as Etienne Balibar has shown—depend on each other for their respective existences-as-such.<sup>14</sup> A growing body of work has sought to reframe the study of race, ethnicity, and nation/nationalism in more integrated ways and construes ‘ethnicity, race, and nationhood as a single integrated family of forms of cultural understanding, social organization, and political contestation.’<sup>15</sup> While the title of my project may infer my primary concern with the importance of religious thought in the history of Southern Sudanese nationalism, this is not ignore the centrality of race in Sudan’s social and political history. Makau Mutua, for example, stated in 2004 that ‘Race—not religion—is the fundamental fault line in Sudan, though religion has certainly added fuel to the fire in the south. Indeed, since independence from the British in 1956, the demon of Sudan has been race.’<sup>16</sup> Thus, given the understanding that race and nationalism have been historically related to one another and popular divisions of the Sudan into an Arab North and Christian/indigenous South, it is imperative that this study of religious nationalism responds to assessments of race’s importance in Sudanese history and that of African

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown, *Racism*. Second Edition. London and New York: Routledge, 2003; 6-7, 9 [on 6-7 they cite Etienne Balibar, ‘Racism and Nationalism’ in Etienne.Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. London: Verso, 37-67.]

<sup>15</sup> Rogers Brubaker, ‘Ethnicity, race, and nationalism’ *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 35 (2009): 22

<sup>16</sup> Makau Mutua, ‘Racism at root of Sudan’s Darfur crisis’ *The Christian Science Monitor* (14 July 2004) [<http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0714/p09s02-coop.html>] Consulted 25 February 2015.

nationalism. While race in Sudan will be discussed in the section on Sudanese historiography, I discuss the relationship between race and nationalism in modern Africa here. When and how did racial thought in Africa develop, and who were its engineers? What role did race serve in the development of twentieth-century African nationalism? How has historiography dealt with the ways in which race informs or has informed political thought and action in Africa?

Race has been said to be an involuntary matter of external categorization based on phenotypic or otherwise innate differences. Not merely an instrument of social organization, however, it also involves a relational dynamic of superior and a subordinate. Genealogy and descent serve as important markers of racial difference and perhaps lend credence to the notion that race is rigid.<sup>17</sup> Scholars have noted, however, that race and racial ideologies are quite mutable and cannot be considered fixed to factors like physical appearance.<sup>18</sup> The conceptualization of race I employ in this project is most closely aligned with Christopher Lee, who offered that ‘Race is understood to be a marker, as well as a phenomenological schema—a structure of thought for explaining the world. Race is irreducible to any single context or explanation—what Ann Laura Stoler has called its polyvalent mobility—with each of the aforementioned issues carrying historical and pedagogical significance.’<sup>19</sup> To this end I was most interested in examining the ways in which race informed Southern Sudanese understandings of the political

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<sup>17</sup> Brubaker, ‘Ethnicity, race, and nationalism’, 25-26 and Christopher J. Lee, *Unreasonable Histories: Nativism, Multiracial Lives, and the Genealogical Imagination in British Africa*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014; 4.

<sup>18</sup> For instance there is Kwame Anthony Appiah, who in his examination of the work of Alexander Crummell and W.E.B. Du Bois has argued that racialist notions like the idea of an African race ‘are grounded in bad biological...ideas, inherited from the increasingly racialized thought of nineteenth-century Europe and America’. See Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father’s House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 [1993 paperback used], x.

<sup>19</sup> Lee, *Unreasonable Histories*, 5.

circumstances that they have had to historically confront—circumstances largely precipitated by white and Arab racial Others. I show that race—and most principally ‘Arab’ and ‘Black’/’African’—emerged in Southern ideology and theology as markers defining the roles of ruler and ruled, favored and marginalized, and—in the spiritual sense—oppressor and oppressed. I am getting past the ‘race and religion’ dichotomy by showing that racial and religious rhetoric was often blurred; Christian actors employed Biblical idioms and theology when describing elements of a racial conflict in which they represented the oppressed race. In this way many of the actors in my narrative are both racial and religious thinkers. To examine the meaning of ‘race’ for these twentieth-century Sudanese thinkers, one must consider the wider processes by which racial thought came to be constructed in modern Africa. To what ends, furthermore, was racial ideology used in the construction of African nationalisms?

In recent years scholars have debated the question of how understandings of ‘race’ came to enter Africa. Within this vein there are two streams of thought to consider here. The first looks to European colonialism as race’s chief engine. In colonial world historiography’s assumption that ethnic conflict was rooted in social structures strengthened or created by colonial rule, it emphasizes the work of European policy makers—rather than indigenous thinkers—who classified their subjects along lines of race and identity.<sup>20</sup> To this end Mahmood Mamdani has emerged as the most prominent voice of this stream of African historiography. Noting that racism was colonial African civil society’s ‘original sin’,<sup>21</sup> Mamdani frames African uses of racial language as being

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<sup>20</sup> Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011; 7.

<sup>21</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996; 19.

derived from the colonial experience. The core of Hutu Power's ideology was the conviction that the Tutsi were an alien race, and in this vein he posits that Rwandans employed the same tools as the colonizers in their pursuit of power.<sup>22</sup> This would appear to illustrate Chatterjee's critique that 'Europe and the Americas...have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized.'<sup>23</sup> This school of thought presents some thorny problems for scholars of African nationalism. To begin, racial thought—having been introduced by European contact—is perceived as being fixed to the colonial era (a problem, Lee notes, heightened by scholarship that has unevenly examined areas with high rates of white settlement).<sup>24</sup> How, then, must one trace the relationship between racial thought and nationalism in South Sudan, a nation that became independent over fifty years after imperial rule ended there? There is also Chatterjee's critique to consider. If racial thought played a critical role in the development of African nation-states—and several examples speak to the veracity of that claim<sup>25</sup>—then the creative capacity for Africans to conceptualize nation-states would be rooted in the colonial 'exploitation'. Like a slave taking the whip and using it against his master, Africans (according to this line of thought) took the very racism used to subdue them and harnessed it to fuel their liberatory efforts. This leaves little room to approach them as innovative thinkers capable of—following Lee—creating their own structures of thought to organize and explain their world and define their

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<sup>22</sup> Bruce Hall, *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa, 1600-1960*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011; 1-2 [citing quote from Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001; 190.]

<sup>23</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993; 5.

<sup>24</sup> Lee, *Unreasonable Histories*, 6.

<sup>25</sup> See Ibid, 6-7 and James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (New African Histories). Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012; 2.

communities of belonging. Furthermore ‘race’—and specifically European notions of it—is presented as a hegemonic ideology driving African nationalism. Basil Davidson inferred as much when he claimed that African nationalism was the byproduct of a mixture of antiracism and anticolonialism, two elements he considered to be practically the same.<sup>26</sup> If Africans merely followed the model of European nationalism by using the borrowed ‘module’<sup>27</sup> of race to fuel their efforts, there would appear to be little room for Africans to exercise creative, intellectual energies to forge postcolonial nation-states.

Recent work has pushed back by turning the focus away from the colonial state and highlighting the work of indigenous thinkers in fashioning racial thought before, during, and after the colonial period. These studies can be used to reconsider the role of African intellectuals’ use of race in nationalist movements. In *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa* Bruce Hall argued ‘that there are African histories of race that do not obey colonial logics’, showing how a long history of racial language was evident in Muslim intellectual writings long before European arrival. Sahelian writers distinguished between “whites” (for those who could claim Arab descent) and “Blacks” (used as a marker of legal inferiority).<sup>28</sup> Along similar lines, James Brennan has noted that colonial rule did not fully reinvent the language that people used to identify one another. Rather, in a study that looks at identity categories created by the colonial and postcolonial state (and their citizens and subjects) in Tanzania, Brennan ‘demonstrates that categories of

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<sup>26</sup> Basil Davidson, *The Black Man’s Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*. Times Books, 1992; 165.

<sup>27</sup> Benedict Anderson famously argued that towards the end of the eighteenth century certain European cultural artifacts became transplantable to a variety of social spaces. Printed vernaculars are a foundational part of his thesis; as tools of administrative centralization, a shared print culture could contribute to the formation of ‘imagined communities’ whose members may never encounter one another, thereby setting the stage for the creation of modern nations. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition. London, New York: Verso, 2006; 4, 6, 40, 46.

<sup>28</sup> Hall, *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa*, 2.

belonging like nation, race, and ethnicity...were shaped as much by the limitations and contradictions of colonial rule and by local cultural understandings of hierarchy and difference as they were by the imposition of new colonial categories.’<sup>29</sup> Lee has recently explored the stories of people in British Africa who were of multiracial background, writing that while ‘descent and genealogy have played key roles in defining racial difference, their uses in this context were intriguingly inventive...and forcefully grounded in sentiments of family and lived personal experience’. He posits that a socially-constructed, genealogical imagination is essential to understanding how multiracial people navigated a racially-defined colonial world.<sup>30</sup> Jonathon Glassman has argued that the rise of racial thought in colonial Zanzibar was primarily the work of indigenous intellectuals who crafted a hegemonic discourse of racial difference,<sup>31</sup> and within the context of apartheid South Africa Daniel Magaziner has argued that that period’s great changes can only be understood by grasping the ways in which notions of race, faith, and identity developed and were transformed.<sup>32</sup> In each of these instances scholars have found that Africans employed innovative ways of understanding and navigating through the racially-fraught environment of colonial rule. Rather than merely receiving imposed ideas, behaviors, and vocabularies from the colonial state, Africans had precolonial practices of organization and self-identification and possessed the agency to transform racial ideologies during and after the colonial period for their own purposes. With these findings in mind, then, it is important to consider the ways in which Southern

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<sup>29</sup> Brennan, *Taifa*, 1-2 [direct quote from 1]

<sup>30</sup> Lee, *Unreasonable Histories*, 3-4 [direct quote from p. 4].

<sup>31</sup> Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones*, 6-7.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets: Faith, Hope, and Politics in South Africa, 1968-1977*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010.

Sudanese before, during, and after Western colonialism used race to envision and articulate understandings of self and national identity.

This dissertation builds upon this historiography by examining indigenous thinkers in Southern Sudan who blended racial and religious thought to articulate solidarity and distinction from Northern Sudanese. Rather than simply operating within and accepting racial parameters set forth by the Anglo-Egyptian administration, people within Southern Sudan articulated for themselves both their Black African identities and their distinction from the *Mundukuru*, *Turuk*, and *jallaba*—Northern Sudanese Arabs. While colonial actors, structures, and policies like the ‘Southern Policy’ certainly played a role in institutionalizing and policing the Arab-African divide, my project is at all times focused most concerned with Southern Sudanese and their differing responses to Arabs and the prospect of political unity with them. In this vein I focused great attention on serial publications, political and military organizations, private correspondence, and organizational media to capture the influence of race and racism on the liberation project. Glassman’s focus on indigenous thinkers in crafting racial thought in Zanzibar<sup>33</sup> is particularly relevant for my work since the Sudan, like Zanzibar, was conceptually-bifurcated into Arab and African populaces. While Condominium administrators did play a crucial role in reinforcing Arab-African divisions—the ‘Southern Policy’ is discussed in Chapter Two—I also examine the independent Sudanese Government’s efforts to Arabize the country and Southern Sudanese attempts to position themselves as a constituent part of ‘Black Africa’ in Chapters Four and Five. These efforts included appropriations of Pan-Africanism during the First and Second Civil Wars and positions

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid (see 283 for example description).



and statements from figures in the Sudan African National Union and Azania Liberation Front.

To be sure, the current reality of violent, ethnic factionalism within South Sudan demanded that my study deal critically with the history of inter-ethnic relations in the region (and particularly the Dinka and Nuer, which constitute the two largest groups). Given my argument that the thinkers in my study largely perceived the liberation struggle as a racial conflict and sought to define and script their narrative through a theological framework, the current explosion of ethnic politics forced me to consider the ways in which racial and ethnic identities have co-existed in Southern Sudan for a very long time. There were, to be sure, several infrastructures in which ethnic identity and solidarity were encouraged and defined. My study, for example, notes several forums: mission-constructed dictionaries, *Messenger* magazine, rebel organizations during the First Civil War, and the Catholic Church (in which Fr. Angelo Tutuo aired grievances on behalf of fellow Zande clerics specifically). To these were added such mission/Condominium attempts, through educational and linguistic work in vernacular languages, to ‘preserve’ indigenous cultures in the South. In these ways ethnic identities continued to be encouraged while Southern Sudanese political thinkers repeatedly tried to frame and align themselves with Blackness and Africanism. This latter move was perhaps most evident in the publications of trans-ethnic liberation organizations like the Sudan African National Union and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement.

From a cognitive perspective race, ethnicity, and nationhood have each been found to be perspectives on the world that include ways of identifying oneself and others, explaining behavior, construing situations, framing complaints, and sharing stories in

ethnic terms. While finding a criteria that allows for a sharp distinction between race and ethnicity might be a tall task,<sup>34</sup> the potency of ethnic identity in Southern Sudan amid a shared Black racial identity suggests either a limit to race's ability to bind distinct cultural communities or the reality that people believe that ethnicity addresses certain questions, situations, or problems that race does not. In *Citizen and Subject* Mamdani made the following inquiries with respect to the nature of anticolonial nationalism and the roles of ethnicity and racial domination:

‘rather than just uniting diverse ethnic groups in a common predicament, was not racial domination actually mediated through a variety of ethnically organized local powers? If so, is it not too simple even if tempting to think of the anticolonial (nationalist) struggle as just a one-sided repudiation of ethnicity rather than also a series of ethnic revolts against so many ethnically organized and centrally reinforced local powers...was not ethnicity a dimension of both power and resistance, of both the problem and the solution?’<sup>35</sup>

When applied to the narrative I present in this study, my answers to Mamdani's questions are somewhat duplicitous—‘racial domination’ did unite various Southern ethnicities in a common predicament, but the present reality that many Nuer and Dinka continue to defend, fight, and die for their communities betrays any sense that ethnicity has been repudiated. ‘Tribalism’ has been roundly and repeatedly denounced, but ethnicity itself has not. Ethnicity has, furthermore, appeared to have become violently immovable.

Ethnicity's fixity and mutability in Africa has been the subject of historiography that has sought to address the politics and processes of social identity-formation. Literature on East African colonial identities once stressed ‘the rigidification of identity’ that accompanied colonial rule and thinking, with Justin Willis for example showing how

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<sup>34</sup> Brubaker, ‘Ethnicity, race, and nationalism’ 26, 32

<sup>35</sup> Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, 7-8

identity in Mombasa was once malleable but, with the imposition of colonial ideas, ethnicity lost “much of its negotiability”.<sup>36</sup> Rather than ascribing an overemphasis on the colonial state’s transformative power to ascribe subjectivities upon the ruled, attention has been placed on the role of local intellectuals in forming and disseminating new ideas about ethnicity. Though primacy is still given to the colonial state, attention has been paid to the ways in which European constructions of ethnic categories were appropriated by members of these communities in shaping and promoting these categories.<sup>37</sup> If one is to accept the premise that the colonial state and subalterns had a role in shaping ethnicity, that it was both bestowed and re-appropriated, and that different actors had different agendas for promoting ethnic categories, then there is room to consider the ways in which—in Southern Sudan—the colonial state and ethnic subjects themselves moved to reinforce and bridge ethnic identities. How, for example, did the missionary project and colonial life encourage the Dinka and Nuer to define themselves as antagonistic groups even as people in the South came to see themselves as a subject, Black race?

My study illustrates that the recent history of ethnic factionalism and violence are rooted in both the colonial state (and the consequences of its policies) and actions taken by indigenous figures in the colonial and postcolonial periods. During the Anglo-Egyptian period colonial officials sought to shield the South from Arab-Islamic influences and encourage the sustenance of indigenous cultures and languages. This was done in a variety of ways but primarily through linguistic work; education was conducted in vernacular languages, missionaries produced vernacular dictionaries, and vernacular

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<sup>36</sup> Brennan, *Taifa* 12, from whom I borrow the ‘rigidification of identity’ quote and who cites the ‘negotiability’ quote from Justin Willis, *Mombasa, the Swahili, and the Making of the Mijikenda*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993; 201.

<sup>37</sup> Hall, *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa*, 19.

newspapers were produced. In this vein the Christian project not only sponsored the ‘African’ or ‘Southern’ self-identification but also invited people to see themselves as constituents of smaller, ethnic communities. What followed was a tension between the ethnic identities encouraged and buttressed by missionaries (and Africans themselves) and an emerging ‘Southern’ consciousness that was grounded in a shared history of slavery, ‘African’ as opposed to ‘Arab’ identification, and political marginalization. As people increasingly appropriated and fought for the nascent ‘Southern’ community, some still cleaved to ethnicity. Some did not initially participate in the Torit Mutiny because they thought it was a grievance between the Latuko and Arabs; guerrillas in the First Civil War often organized themselves along ethnic lines before the Anyanya was universally accepted late in the conflict; and in both the First and Second Civil Wars Khartoum capitalized on ethnic divisions by arming particular groups in the South to fight one another (see Chapters Five and Seven).

Thus, the current Dinka vs. Nuer conflict did not emerge out of a vacuum but rather out of a long history of ethnic groups continuing to enforce their identities in the midst of cross-ethnic regional conflict pitting ‘the South’ against ‘the North’. Thus, racial (‘African’<sup>38</sup>) and ethnic identities have for a long time existed alongside each other, and in response to specific historical circumstances like mid-century Sudanization, Arabization, and Islamicization, ‘race’ became a way of thinking about self and community that came to predominate others. In changing times, however, race has become less salient and has lost the capital that it had when it was being used as an instrument to distinguish Southern Sudan from the North. Rather than Southern Sudanese

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<sup>38</sup> “‘Africanism’ emerged from the colonial native question, broadly construed, being deeply racialized in the first instance and firmly entrenched in the ethnic politics of the customary in the second”; see Lee, *Unreasonable Histories*, 8.

nationalism being a failed project, however, the contemporary crisis reflects longer tensions and dynamics with Christianity's influence on Southern nationalism.

*Religion and Christianity*

Richard Gray noted that religion in Africa has long been understood to having political elements; it can legitimate the status quo, possesses a prophetic dimension, provide a base from which to levy attacks against those who hold power, and legitimate revolution.<sup>39</sup> The intellectual genealogy of this study was initially birthed from my awareness of Biblical invocations made in relation to independence that included, most prominently, Salva Kiir's portrayal as a 'Joshua' and the purported realization of Isaiah's prophecy. In seeking to trace the historical processes that led to the use of such appropriations, it was necessary for me to investigate the history of Christianity in Sudan in relation to political life and identity-formation. In what ways have Southern Sudanese used Biblical language in other important political moments? What role did Christian mission work have in bridging or reinforcing ethnic divisions? Perhaps most importantly, how have Southern Sudanese used theology to define and augment their efforts to achieve self-determination and separation? Due to Southern Sudan's historical marginalization my study is concerned with the aforementioned elements gleaned from Gray; namely, it asks how Christianity has historically been used by Southern Sudanese to criticize the government, legitimate revolution, script futures, and forge new identities. To this end my project contributes to a body of literature that has dealt with Christianity's relationship with African nationalism; an historiography which, because the colonial state was often the object of such efforts, is often situated in the early to mid-twentieth century. However, because of the common adage for Southern Sudanese the transition

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<sup>39</sup> Richard Gray, *Black Christians and White Missionaries*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990; 2, 3, 4.

from Anglo-Egyptian to (Northern) Sudanese rule was merely the exchange of ‘masters’, I believe there is room to place my analysis in conversation with findings from an earlier period in African history (though my narrative ends over fifty years after Sudanese independence). In this way I am looking to show the ways in which findings about the relationship between colonial Christianity and politics are pertinent when studying African resistance in the postcolonial era. Like my engagement with race historiography my work is responding to two primary schools of thought. And, like the race historiography, one highlights the role of European actors while the other focuses on African ingenuity in using Christianity for their own political purposes.

The first thread looks to two important roles played by missions—grooming educated elites that would lead nationalist movements and, as colonial agents, working on the frontlines in implementing racial policies. With regards to the first element, James Coleman argued that a policy of determined Europeanization by Christian missionaries contributed to the social mobilization of a substantial number of Nigerians, an element he identified as a major contributing factor to nationalism’s development.<sup>40</sup> Missionaries, through education, are positioned as being critical in forging cross-ethnic alliances as students were given similar experiences. Despite denominational differences, education has been found to have mostly proved to be a unifying factor.<sup>41</sup> Another socially-unifying factors provided by missionaries in this paradigm was their role in disseminating vernacular print languages. According to the Andersonian model bilingual elites in the colonized world—through their educational experiences—came to model themselves

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<sup>40</sup> James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958; 410. Coleman also identified growing economic grievances among mobilized groups and the emergence of a Western-educated minority that suffered most acutely from the inequalities and frustrations of colonial rule (410).

<sup>41</sup> Edward H. Berman, ‘Introduction’ and ‘Christian Missions in Africa’ in *African Reactions to Missionary Education*. New York and London: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1975; xv, 42.

after past nation-builders and imagined their nationalism after Western precedents.<sup>42</sup> In this vein some Africanists have examined the standardization of vernacular print languages and its role in shaping political imaginations. One example is Terence Ranger's work on the roots of tribalism in colonial Zimbabwe, wherein "Manyika" history begins with early-twentieth century missionary language work. Taught in grammar schools, disseminated in missionary-crafted dictionaries, and spread by evangelists, a notional Manyika tribal identity was encouraged by European and African mission agents. Ranger thus concluded that Manyika ethnicity was a colonial invention devised in part by missionaries.<sup>43</sup> More the invention of ethnicities, the production of vernacular Bibles has also been identified as a critical chapter in African political self-imaginings. Within Africanist literature perhaps the greatest illustration of this stream of thought is the Yoruba Bible's perceived importance in Peel's *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, where he cites James Johnson's comment that the vernacular Bible "must influence the religion, the coming literature, the thought, the language...and the life of the country if diligently and extensively used."<sup>44</sup> In these ways, then, missionary education and linguistic work are envisioned as having foundational influences on the development of African nations. By producing vernacular Bibles that

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<sup>42</sup> Derek Peterson, *Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya (Social History of Africa)*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, 2004; 7, citing in fn. 29 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1995; ch. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Peterson, *Creative Writing*, 7 [he cited Terrence Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe,' in Leroy Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989; 118-50.]

<sup>44</sup> John D.Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003 paperback edn; 289, who cites in fn. 59 J. Johnson, Report to CMS Secretary, 30 Jan. 1878. More recent studies highlighting the political implications of missionary-driven linguistic work include Peterson's *Creative Writing* and Harries' *Butterflies & Barbarians* (African agency, to be sure, is recognized in each of those works). See Peterson, *Creative Writing* and Patrick Harries, *Butterflies & Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries & Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa*. Oxford: James Currey, 2007; 3, 4-5.

could be used to assess economic or political challenges,<sup>45</sup> forging cross-ethnic alliances, educating future African leaders, and implementing shared print languages, missionaries are afforded a significant role in the history of African nationalism.

To be sure, my project does not seek to intentionally ignore or deemphasize the missionary contributions to Southern Sudanese nationalism where they warrant mentioning. In the first chapter I discuss the foundations of modern mission work in Southern Sudan and early efforts to ‘protect’ the South from the militant Islam that spurred the Mahdiya. In this regard missions, from the earliest years of the Condominium, were part of a larger colonial agenda to create Southern Sudan as a buffer zone against the spread of Islam up the Nile. In my second chapter, which is devoted to missionary language and educational work done in the context of the ‘Southern Policy’, I show how mission schools were arenas in which ethnic pride and cross-ethnic unity were encouraged, vernaculars and English taught, Christianity promulgated, and ultimately new communities of belonging forged. The third chapter highlights the missionary newspaper *Messenger* is a critical instrument with which a rising ‘Southern’ consciousness was being shaped as the Condominium moved closer to independence. My fifth chapter—based largely off of primary source documentation from Rome’s Comboni Mission Archive—focuses on Sudanese correspondences with Italian clergy as key mediums with which to analyze liberationist religious thought during the First Civil War. Finally, my sixth chapter shows how one Zande priest’s liberationist politics during the First Civil War were informed by his earlier experiences of racism from the Italian Verona Fathers. In all these ways, then, my study contends that it is quite impossible to discuss the historical relationship between Christianity and Southern Sudanese

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<sup>45</sup> See Gray, *Black Christians and White Missionaries*, 99



nationalism without a serious engagement with foreign missionary work in the region. Missionaries did have a foundational role to play in the South's religious makeup, structural development, 'preservation' of 'African' cultures and languages, and schools that produced some of Southern nationalism's most prominent figures. However, there is a danger to placing too much focus on the work of European missionaries in the history of African Christianity and/or nationalism. When considering the genealogy of colonial and postcolonial African politics, one must be careful not to ignore or discount the ways in which African communities used Christianity to work—in non-religious ways—for their particular contexts. How did Africans use Christianity to fashion new forms of community and identity-formation? How did Africans respond to and navigate the various projects that European missionaries tried to implement? In what ways did Africans use Christianity in their processes of political resistance and nation-making? How has the Bible been used by nationalist movements in Africa, and to what effect?

The historiography has answered such questions by finding that African mission students, converts, and clerics used mission resources and teachings for political purposes that European missionaries perhaps never intended. Indeed, the very act of conversion—which appears to be a private act of conscience in African religious historiography—has been noted by Peterson as not simply being a change in religious identity or political/social aggrandizement but, in the context of the East African Revival, 'a political action that opens novel paths of self-narration, constitutes new ways of living, and unsettles the inventions of tradition. Conversion was a form of political and cultural criticism.'<sup>46</sup> Some Africans believed that missions helped them to survive and/or master

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<sup>46</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (African Studies). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012; 11-12, 6 [direct quote taken from 6]

modernization and colonialism, and in this vein some studies show that few Africans attended mission school for spiritual purposes—rather, there were well-defined political, social, and economic goals.<sup>47</sup> The Bible could be used to provide templates for action that Africans could implement in their particular contexts. Rather than participating in an ‘encounter’ between two monolithic systems, David Chidester and Elizabeth Elbourne have highlighted the ways that Africans wielded agency through their ability to reinterpret the Bible alongside established beliefs and use Christianity for their progression within and against colonial regimes.<sup>48</sup> In colonial Kenya Peterson has noted that Kenya Kikuyu readers and converts supplied a grammar and vocabulary for new popular politics. The young were enabled to challenge the wisdom of the elderly and wealthy and—by identifying with Biblical subjects—articulate anticolonial sentiments.<sup>49</sup> Through the act of conversion, using mission schools to ‘learn the secrets’ of colonial rule, and looking to the Bible to provide a script and lexicon for political resistance, Africans in the colonial and postcolonial era have used Christian thought to define evil in the political sphere.

My study builds upon this historiography by likewise examining the ways in which Southern Sudanese clerics, politicians, refugees, and others used the Bible to

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<sup>47</sup> Gray, *Black Christians and White Missionaries*, 69-70 and Berman, ‘Introduction’ in *African Reactions to Missionary Education*, xi-xii.

<sup>48</sup> The idea of mission ‘encounter’ is taken most prominently from Jean and John Comaroffs’ massive works *Of Revelation and Revolution, Vol. 1: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991 and *Of Revelation and Revolution. Volume Two: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. See also Meredith McKittrick’s review of Vol. II in *Anthropological Quarterly* Vol. 72 No. 2 (April 1999), 100-101. See David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996; 118 and Elizabeth Elbourne, *Blood Ground: Colonialism, Missions, and the Contest for Christianity in the Cape Colony and Britain, 1799-1853*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002; 18-20.

<sup>49</sup> Brian Stanley, ‘Introduction: Christianity and the End of Empire’ in *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire (Studies in the History of Christian Missions)*, ed. Brian Stanley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004; 6-7 (for Derek Peterson’s chapter, ‘The Rhetoric of the World: Bible Translation and Mau Mau in Colonial Central Kenya,’ see 164-182).

provide templates for action, used theology to sanction their progression against various Khartoum regimes, and identified with Biblical subjects to polish themselves and demonize their enemies. I show that the Bible's emergence as a template for political action was directly related to and concomitant with the emergence of Southern Sudanese political actors on the national stage and, simultaneously, disapproval at the uneven transfer of national power from the British to the Northern Sudanese. In this vein my focus on the Condominium period is chiefly concerned with the mission infrastructures by which people like priest-turned-rebel Angelo Tutuo became familiar with Christian texts and ideas. I locate ways in which missionaries related indigenous beliefs to Christian concepts, how they defined political concepts like 'king', 'state', and 'nation' in dictionaries, and reviewed the kinds of religious texts used in mission schools. In a crucially important moment, the first example I found of the Bible's use in a political fashion came just before the controversial 1947 Juba Conference when Patrisio Lojok argued that the *Mundukuru* (Northern Sudanese) and Southern Sudanese were descended from different sons of Noah (this statement, furthermore, was under the heading "the North for the Northerners the South for the Southerners").<sup>50</sup> As the Condominium moved uneasily closer to independence, mission-educated alum like Hilary Logali and Benjamin Lwoki emerged as leading political representatives of the Southern Region on the national stage. As administrative posts were 'Sudanized', Catholics and Protestants began to accept Sudanese into their clergy. With the cataclysmic changes of the 1955

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<sup>50</sup> See anecdote at the beginning of Chapter Three. SAD.519/2/6-9; Letter by P.C. Patrisio Lojok probably to Governor of Equatoria Province through the D.C. of Juba, June 9, 1947, as taken from Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, [2005]; 38; Corporal Patrisio Lojok to Governor Equatoria Province, 9 June 1947. EP/SCR/1.A.5/1., NRO [National Records Office], as cited by Kenneth Okeny, 'Historical Basis of Southern Sudan's Demand for Self-Determination' *Ufahamu: a Journal of African Studies* 22 [1994] (1-2): 95. See also Wawa 38 for Lojok's document.

Torit Mutiny, government-sponsored Arabization and Islamicization, full-scale war, and exile came an increased political significance imposed upon religious and cultural identities but also, perhaps expectedly, an efflorescence of Christian language in public and private spaces from lay and ecclesiastical figures. This language included references to God's Providence in deliverance from suffering within the greater context of the fight for Southern autonomy.

Reading through the lens of Peel and Peterson, I was also driven to locate the ways in which the Bible empowered Southern Sudanese with powerful identities (the two most predominant that emerge are associations with the Children of Israel and Cush). As Marial shared with me, 'there are a number of passages...commenting about Southern Sudan, and we say that is the way I think of my people of Israel, that is the way also I think of my people of Kush'.<sup>51</sup> I was keen to look for the ways in which Biblical identities and narratives were used to forecast futures, and I noted those moments in which specific Biblical archetypes were used to describe contemporary circumstances. Where my study differs from the aforementioned works is in both the historical period in which my actors constructed their Christian politics (primarily in the postcolonial era) and in the racial climate in which this theology constructed (whereby Arabs, as opposed to white Europeans, occupied the role of 'oppressor'). I show that Southern Sudanese thinkers who emerged out of the mission complex constructed a liberationist theology that was not primarily directed against their British colonizers but rather their fellow Sudanese citizens to the North. This religious thought, furthermore, was not largely constructed and disseminated during the colonial age but rather almost entirely after 1956 independence, when Southerners faced controversial racial and religious projects aimed

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<sup>51</sup> Interview with Samuel Marial, 11 June 11 2012 (Juba, South Sudan)

at fashioning national unity and two violent civil wars. By tracing the genealogy of a largely postcolonial religious thought constructed by thinkers who emerged from the colonial mission influence, I aim to complicate the narrative of political Christianity in Africa by linking the colonial with the postcolonial.

The concept of ‘chosenness’ rests at the core of the religious thought under examination in this study. Though debates about the relationship between modern nationalism and the state had historically ignored the role of religion, attempts have been made to show how the idea of God’s chosenness—first experienced by the Biblical Israelites—has been adopted by modern nationalist movements. Some studies examine the ways in which chosenness underscored and justified political aims and actions, while the theme has also been used to explain suffering and provide a spark for political and national liberation.<sup>52</sup> I build upon this scholarship by presenting a postcolonial African context in which the concept of chosenness was preached and disseminated from the early postcolonial years (the 1960s) through to Southern secession in 2011. Indeed, Southern Sudanese have long framed themselves as a chosen people through their adoption of Old Testament narratives and, in more recent years, the heightened appropriation of the Cushite people from Isaiah 18. Joseph Lagu, leader of the Anyanya I force and graduate of the CMS Nugent School, opined that ‘we the indigenous Sudanese people have completely promised before God and Man to become free, or to be completely annihilated...We are absolutely convinced that we are also God’s beloved children’.<sup>53</sup> During the Second Civil War SPLA Secretary for Education and Religious

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<sup>52</sup> ‘Introduction’ by Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann in Peter Van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds. *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999; 6.

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Lagu, ‘It is Better to Die than to be Slaves of Greedy Arabs’ *Grass Curtain* Vol. 1 No. 2 (August 1970), 17, 18.

Affairs Samson Kwaje stated that the mention of Cush in Isaiah 18 was ‘an unambiguous description of present Southern Sudan.’<sup>54</sup> The fact that numerous appropriations from the history of Biblical Israel supports my argument that the idea of ‘chosenness’ has endured and will perhaps continue for years to come. In an important way my study shows that this sentiment has not been coupled with the religious oppression of other groups. There have been no attempts to institutionalize the country as a Christian nation in the way that the Sudanese Government has tried to do with Islam; conversely, Southern Muslims like Abdel Rahman Sule have offered significant contributions to Southern political life and the liberation movement. Indeed, during the First Civil War the secessionist Sudan African National Union (SANU) highlighted contributions made by Southern Muslims in its broader attempt to argue that the war, from its perspective, was not based on religion. My analysis of the *SPLM/SPLA Update* during the Second Civil War highlights the fact that the secular SPLM/A found great value in disseminating religious thought in its print propaganda, illustrating that the use of theology for political purposes was not seen as being irreconcilable with a secular agenda. Thus, while a profound union between theology and nationalism has long existed and blurred the lines between the secular and sacred in its history of political thought, South Sudan is by all accounts a secular state. In this vein my project supports Lamin Sanneh’s view that religious thought is deeply connected with the roots of the secular state.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Samson L. Kwaje, ‘Vision, Perspective, and Position of the SPLM’. In *The Sudan at War In Search of Peace*. Report of a Consultation Convened by Church and Christian Councils of the Great Lakes-Horn of Africa Region April 7-8, 1998. Karen, Nairobi; p. 19. Kwaje’s quotation can also be found in Chapter Seven, which concerns the *SPLM/SPLA Update*.

<sup>55</sup> Lamin Sanneh, ‘Religion, Politics, and National Integration: A Comparative African Perspective’ in John O. Hunwick, ed. *Religion and National Integration in Africa: Islam, Christianity, and Politics in the Sudan and Nigeria*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992; 151.

More than providing a narrative trajectory ending in liberation, my study suggests an important link between the Christian politics of ‘chosenness’ and the racial politics of aligning with ‘Black’ Africa. In this vein I am intimately concerned with the ways in which Sudanese Christians acted as racial architects, fashioning race through a crucible that allied racial with spiritual identity and difference. By looking at the role of African Christians in the formation of racial thought, my focus differs from those who have looked to the role of missions in this regard. Indeed, one scholar went so far as to note that the mission project ‘made race’ through a language of religion, culture, nation, and transformation.<sup>56</sup> With missions seen as implementing or mirroring imperialism on a micro level Clifton Crais has understood the mission station to be “a colonialist institution par excellence”,<sup>57</sup> and due to the perceived centrality of the colonial state in the history of race and racism scholars have noted ways in which missions were involved in the construction and implementation of racial and ethnic projects. Missionaries who arrived in Rwanda and Burundi, for example, understood local populations according to their own conceptions of race and nationality. Considering Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa as concrete racial categories, ‘their observations...profoundly influenced subsequent European engagement...and ultimately reshaped social reality in the two countries’; a reality that saw the exclusion of Hutu from political opportunity while missionaries

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<sup>56</sup> Derek Chang, *Citizens of a Christian Nation: Evangelical Missions and the Problem of Race in the Nineteenth Century (Politics and Culture in Modern America)*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010; 9.

<sup>57</sup> Norman Etherington, ‘Introduction’ in Norman Etherington, ed. *Missions and Empire* (Oxford History of the British Empire Companion). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; 1, 4 (for the direct quote, on p. 4, Etherington cites in fn. 7 Clifton C. Crais, *White Supremacy and Black Resistance in Pre-industrial South Africa: The Making of the Colonial Order in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*. Cambridge, 1992; 104). The historiography concerning American missionaries is not different in this regard by generally assuming that missionaries were ‘willing accomplices to American imperialism, racism and ethnocentrism.’ See Jennifer Snow, *Protestant Missionaries, Asian Immigrants, and Ideologies of Race in America, 1850-1924 (Studies in Asian Americans)*. New York: Routledge, 2006; xiv.

initially offered Tutsi—whom they believed to be natural superiors—more educational and employment opportunities.<sup>58</sup> In Southern Africa missionaries were complicit maintaining white supremacy while missions in the Sudan were almost chiefly responsible for implementing the isolationist ‘Southern Policy’ that sought to promote the underdeveloped South’s ‘Africanness’ in favor of the ‘Arabism’ of the more-advantaged North.<sup>59</sup> Thus, missionary involvement with colonialism’s racial (and racist) projects, mid-twentieth century African nationalism—so often expressed in the language of resisting racial oppression—would seem to support one scholar’s assertion that mission schools and churches contributed to their own demise by helping to produce elites that challenged a European dominance that contradicted Christian teachings.<sup>60</sup>

I have earlier acknowledged that missions and the Condominium administration had an important role in the institutional separation of Sudanese ‘Arabs’ from ‘Africans’. I am, however, more interested in the ways that Southern Christians reconciled their faith with their racial identity in the midst of political marginalization from Khartoum regimes invested in uniting the country under an Arab framework. How, in essence, did they blend their racial and spiritual identities when making political, even seditious, arguments? Perhaps the most famous blending of racial and religious politics in this vein in twentieth-century African Diasporic was the Black Liberation Theology that emerged from the United States. James Cone and Gayraud Wilmore noted that faith is the

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<sup>58</sup> Timothy Longman, ‘Church Politics and the Genocide in Rwanda’ *Journal of Religion in Africa* Vol. 31 No. 2 (Religion and War in the 1990s) (May 2001), 168-169 [direct quote from 169]

<sup>59</sup> Clement T. Keto, ‘Race Relations, Land and the Changing Missionary Role in South Africa: A Case Study of the American Zulu Mission, 1950-1910’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* Vol. 10 No. 4 (1977): 600, 601, 612, 626. [I cite this in chapter six as well]. In the Sudanese context, incoming British brought their own conception of labor along ethnic lines and certain perceptions about the working capacity of each ethnic group. See Ahmed Alawad Sikainga, *Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labor in Colonial Sudan*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996; xiii.

<sup>60</sup> Berman, ‘Introduction’ in *African Reactions to Missionary Education*, xv.



encounter between the divine and human in the historical context of oppression. The enslaved community recognizes that its deliverance is the Divine's work in history, and that knowing God is, therefore, 'to know the actuality of oppression and the certainty of liberation.'<sup>61</sup> God's liberating acts, they added, directly inform the position and duty of His people: 'He is the Liberator par excellence, who reveals not only who God is and what he is doing, but also who we are and what we are called to do about human degradation...The free man in Christ is the man who rebels against false authorities by reducing them to their proper status.'<sup>62</sup> Cone related this theology to the history of racial oppression experienced by Blacks in the United States. Black consciousness, he stated, was the Black community focusing on its Blackness so that they could not only know why they were oppressed but what they must do about their plight.<sup>63</sup>

If African analogues to such a theology are to be found, Gray has noted that some educated Africans envisioned the Kingdom of Heaven as overcoming the evils of racial discrimination and political oppression.<sup>64</sup> Perhaps the most popular example comes from 1980s apartheid South Africa and the Kairos Document. Written by laypeople and clergy (including Desmond Tutu), the Kairos Document was a theological treatise that aimed to develop a Biblical model that would lead to action. It castigated apartheid's 'State Theology' that contorted Scripture to buttress racist totalitarianism and countered that Scripture condemns states that fail in their God-given duty (using Rome, which is described in the Book of Revelations as Satan's servant, as an example). When regimes

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<sup>61</sup> James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, 'Black Theology and African Theology: Considerations for Dialogue, Critique, and Integration' in James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, eds. *Black Theology: A Documentary History, Volume One: 1966-1979*. Second edn., revised. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993; 370.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 370.

<sup>63</sup> James H. Cone, 'Black Consciousness and the Black Church: A Historical-Theological Interpretation' *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 387, The Sixties: Radical Change in American Religion (Jan., 1970); 49.

<sup>64</sup> Gray, *Black Christians, White Missionaries*, 69-70.

become morally illegitimate, they argued, theological teaching clearly compels Christians to remove them rather than compromise. Conversely, God liberated the oppressed and immoral states are not allowed to rule forever.<sup>65</sup> For Black South African Christians struggling under the weight of apartheid, the Bible provided a message that liberation from immoral, racist rule would come.

Despite the empowering message of such a theology, John Mbiti—perhaps the most prominent name associated with African Theology—was highly critical of race’s infusion into theology. Modern African Theology began with the 1956 publication of *Les Prêtres noirs s’interrogent*, where a group of African theologians questioned how theology was being done on the continent and whether things could be different. How, in essence, might theology deal with issues important to Africans?<sup>66</sup> Mbiti identified three primary elements of African theology: written theology, oral theology, and symbolic theology. Written theology was constructed by the relatively few Christians with considerable education and articulated their theological views in mostly-Western language articles and books; oral theology was produced in African languages by ‘the masses’ in forms including song, sermon, and prayer; and symbolic theology was expressed in art forms like rituals, symbols, and drama.<sup>67</sup> Mbiti criticized Black Theology, stating that in reading it ‘one becomes sated by color consciousness. It is necessary to remind oneself that racial color is not a theological concept in the Scriptures.

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<sup>65</sup> South African History Online, ‘Challenge to the church: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa I The Kairos Document, 1985’ [<http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/challenge-church-theological-comment-political-crisis-south-africa-kairos-document-1985>] Accessed 12 February 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, ‘Foreword’ in Bénézet Bujo, *African Theology in Its Social Context* (Faith and Cultures Series). Translated from the German by John O’Donohue. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992; 5.

<sup>67</sup> John S. Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986; 46-47 [in fn. 2 (63) Mbiti directs readers to John Mbiti, “Cattle are born with ears, their horns grow later”: towards an appreciation of African oral theology,’ *African Theological Journal* Vol. 8 No. 1 (Makumira, 1979), pp. 15-25 for more discussion on African oral theology]

A few black theologians are becoming aware of the dangers in excessive emphasis upon color.<sup>68</sup> To this he added that its eschatological hopes were not clearly defined; when did one arrive at liberation? Noting that Black Theology and African Theology emerged from different contexts, Mbiti acknowledged that Southern Africa was to a limited extent similar to the American context that produced Black Theology.<sup>69</sup> Mbiti concluded that—apart from Southern Africa—Black Theology’s concerns were different from those of African Theology and not so restricted in its concerns.<sup>70</sup>

Given Mbiti’s castigation of Black Theology and his making exception of Southern Africa, one may be compelled to ask African thinkers in other sites of racial discord and oppression (outside of Southern Africa) theologize their circumstances? Mbiti makes no mention of authors or actors in his work, and liberation theologians tend to write with respect to entire social groupings (the students, the workers, etc.). Despite the fact that the same Scriptures or texts may be used by different actors in different contexts, theology is not universal. My interest in examining religious thought throughout eleven decades of Southern Sudanese history is, by contrast, in demonstrating the salience of social history and biography in order to better understand the relevance of theological thought in the nation-making process. Moving away from Mbiti, it is noteworthy that Cone’s Black Theology and the theology infused in the Kairos Document were each produced in contexts whereby Blacks were struggling to be liberated from the dictates of white oppressive rule. Is there room, then, to push against Mbiti and expand on Cone by analyzing an African context in which racial and spiritual identities were

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<sup>68</sup> John Mbiti, ‘An African Views American Black Theology’ in James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, eds. *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979; 478.

<sup>69</sup> *Black Theology: A Documentary History, Volume One: 1966-1979* [from *Black Theology* Revised Second Edition], 381, 382-383

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 383.

combined to argue for political liberation where the racial dynamic—rather than White ruler and Black ruled—was Arab and Black instead?

I argue that Southern Sudan provides a compelling answer. I was much interested in exploring the ways in which Sudanese thinkers transformed Christian thought and theology into spaces wherein racial identities could obtain potent, spiritual power. My study pushes back against Mbiti by analyzing a religious thought that emerged out of the highly-race conscious outside of Southern Africa. The Sudan has arguably been the most racially-charged region on the continent, with race historically connected to understandings of power and definitions of ruler and ruled. Mbiti's reference to Southern Africa, where 'African peoples...are oppressed, exploited and unjustly governed by minority regimes...robbed of their land and dignity and are denied even a minimum of human rights',<sup>71</sup> typified the frustration felt by many in the South during the First Civil War. Given the problems wrought by Khartoum's violent attempts to implement Arabization, I believe that it is possible to accept the possibility that the religious thought to emerge from such conditions may be connected in form and substance to the liberation theologies that materialized in places like the United States and South Africa. Thus, it was through the lens of the Kairos Document and Black Theology's recognition of God as 'Liberator par excellence' that my investigation of Southern Sudanese religious nationalism was conducted. I was compelled to locate the following moments:

- 1) Southerners compared to or inserted as Biblical Israel
- 2) God framed as a Liberator
- 3) Arabs or Khartoum regimes framed as oppressors, evil, or Biblical examples of evil government (Egypt, Babylon, Rome)<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Mbiti, 'An African Views American Black Theology' [from *Black Theology* Revised Second Edition], 383

<sup>72</sup> Each of these states are mentioned in the Kairos Document; the KD states that each of those empires were described in the Book of Daniel and Revelation as 'beasts' (see Kairos Document). Thus, I was

- 4) Belief that God would intervene on Southerners' behalf
- 5) 'Liberation' conflated with national independence.

My findings illustrate that the religious thought that has coursed through Southern history since the mid-twentieth century is closely emblematic of those produced in the United States and South Africa, with certain important differences germane to the Sudanese context. The religious thought which culminated with the Moses-Joshua, Exodus, and Isaiah 18 references near independence was facilitated by an acute recognition of God's Providence and interpretations of Sudan as the Biblical Cush. During the First Civil War the Exodus story carried special appeal and God was credited as an active liberating agent who performed miraculous acts of delivery. The Cush template of the Second Civil War combined an understanding of Black African consciousness with a Biblically-sanctioned destiny of liberation. Cone once stated that 'To know self is to know the historical self, and for black people, this involves the investigation of other black selves who lived in a similar historical setting. Our present being is defined by the being of our fathers'<sup>73</sup> Many Southerners have identified their historical selves with the Kingdom of Cush, an ancient nation south of Egypt located in a region that was—as evidenced from Egyptian art—Black.<sup>74</sup> In the midst of efforts to marginalize Southerners in national politics, John Garang is said to have used Cush's historical heritage to reposition Southerners at the center:<sup>75</sup> 'raising awareness within Southern...stakeholders about their glorious history in the ancient Sudan. He labored...to

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particularly fascinated by moments in which these empires were mentioned directly or by allusion in the Sudanese archival record.

<sup>73</sup> Cone, 'Black Consciousness and the Black Church', 50.

<sup>74</sup> J. Daniel Hays, 'From the Land of the Bow: Black soldiers in the ancient Near East' *Bible Review* 14:4 (August 1998): 28-51, 55 as taken from Biblical Archaeology Society Online Archive, [<http://www.basarchive.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/bswbBrowse.asp?PubID=BSBR&Volume=14&Issue=4&ArticleID=20&UserID=7652>]. Consulted 20 February 2015.

<sup>75</sup> Lual A. Deng, *The Power of Creative Reasoning: The Ideas and Vision of John Garang*. Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc., 2013; 3.

show that we, as Kushites, have a solid historical foundation...we have a significant share of the Sudanese heritage...which Khartoum was determined to deny us.’<sup>76</sup> In this vein Biblical Cush provides Southerners with the historical currency of being able to claim descent from a prominent Black society prophesied by Isaiah for liberation. That Cush actually occupied territory within the Republic of the Sudan adds a degree of singularity, though Southerners’ unique claims to Cush has been challenged (see Gordon Buay’s comments in conclusion).<sup>77</sup>

Added to the commonalities that this religious thought has with Black Theology, I illustrate that it possesses the three components Mbiti identified with African Theology (written, oral, and symbolic theologies). By highlighting indigenous thinkers as the most significant architects of this religious thought, my study serves to bridge Glassman’s work on racial thought in Zanzibar (and Arab-African context) and Magaziner’s concerning religious thought in apartheid South Africa. To be perfectly clear, I *am not* suggesting that Southern Sudanese were influenced by liberationist thinking from those two contexts or in some ways modeled their religious thought after them. I do not analyze to any great extent Southern Sudanese religious borrowings and exchanges with South Africa and the United States. Rather, my study is suggesting that elements of the liberationist thinking that Black Christians have espoused in spaces with White racial dominance (like the US and South Africa) may be transmutable to accommodate spaces where Blacks were pushing for liberation from non-White Others (in this case Arabs).

### *The Sudan*

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>77</sup> See map on Hays, ‘From the Land of the Bow’ and fn. 55 listed above (which includes Hays citations of Bugner et al)

Most scholars point to Muhammad Ali's 1820-1821 invasion as the beginning of modern Sudanese history. The Turco-Egyptian regime established its base at Khartoum, which for the course of the Ottoman period became a primary base for the Egyptian army, administration, and regional slave trading. In 1881 the Mahdiya movement—led by Muhammad Ahmad, the self-proclaimed Mahdi—moved to expel the regime, and Mahdist control was established with the death of Charles 'Chinese' Gordon. The Mahdiya ended, for all intents and purposes, when an Anglo-Egyptian army led by Horatio Kitchener destroyed the Mahdist army at the Battle of Omdurman in 1898. The subsequent Anglo-Egyptian regime, or Condominium, governed the country until 1956.<sup>78</sup> In an effort to maintain peace with Muslims in the North, British administrators funneled evangelistic mission work to the South while maintaining the pre-existent Northern order that had Muslims at the top of the social hierarchy. The government envisioned the South as a Christian buffer zone that could halt the spread of Islam down the Nile, and with the 'Southern Policy' North and South were effectively isolated and developed along separate tracks. This measure reinforced the popular understanding that Northern Sudan—characterized by Arabism and Islam—and Southern Sudan—characterized by Africanism and 'paganism'—were culturally distinct. As a result the North, the historical center of Sudanese administrative power, enjoyed and developed numerous infrastructural advantages over its Southern counterpart.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> See Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, 'Sudan' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. *Oxford Islamic Studies Online* [<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/article/opr/t236/e0758>]. Accessed 15 September 2012; Winston S. Churchill, *The River War*. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1899; G.W. Steevens, *With Kitchener to Khartoum*. 7th ed. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1898; Owen S. Watkins, *With Kitchener's Army: Being a Chaplain's Experiences with the Nile Expedition, 1898*. London: S.W. Partridge & Co., 1899; and Haim Shaked, *The Life of the Sudanese Mahdi*. Foreword by P.M. Holt. First pbk. printing. New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 2008.

<sup>79</sup> See SAD 27/3/13-14 and SAD 28/12/12-13; Heather J. Sharkey, "Colonialism, Character Building and the Culture of Nationalism in the Sudan, 1898-1956" in James D. Le Sueur, ed. *The Decolonization*

In 1947 these divisive restrictions were lifted at the Juba Conference, and a maelstrom of anxiety, nervousness, and anger at the nationalization process and impending national unity erupted with the Torit Mutiny of August 1955. Over the ensuing years Khartoum regimes sought to frame the Sudan as an Arab-Islamic state and, in the process, encourage Arabism and Islam in the South (to the chagrin of many Southerners). Increasingly violent measures led to more formalized violence between government forces, the creation of the rebel Anyanya force, and a massive refugee flight to various East African countries. That war concluded with the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, which gave Southern Sudan regional autonomy within a national framework. Growing tensions in the post-war decade resulted in the mutiny of troops at Bor, spurring the start of the Second Sudanese Civil War in 1983.<sup>80</sup> The rebellion was led by SPLM/A leader John Garang, who sought to create a 'New Sudan' while Omar al-Beshir and the National Islamic Front (NIF) proclaimed Sharia law and tried to establish the country as an Islamic state. The war ended with the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which mandated a future Southern referendum on unity or secession. In January 2011 voters in the referendum overwhelmingly opted for secession, and the Republic of South Sudan became independent on 9 July 2011.<sup>81</sup> Since December 2013, roughly two and a half

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*Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 218-237 and Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003: 8-9; EGYPT. No. 1. (1905). *Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904*. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, [1905], 139-140; Lilian Passmore Sanderson and Neville Sanderson (contributor), *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan, 1899-1964*. London: Ithaca Press; Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1981; 8.

<sup>80</sup> Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, [2005]; 11, 12, 18 and 20.

<sup>81</sup> See Wawa, *Pursuits*, 20; Jok Madut Jok, *Sudan: Race, Religion and Violence*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2007; 12-13; Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil, 'Power-Sharing or Ethnic Polarization: The Role of Schoolteachers in Conflict Management in North Darfur' in *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*, eds. Salah Hassan and Carina Ray. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009; 326; 'Comprehensive Peace Agreement' in Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary*



years into South Sudan's independence, civil war broke out between supporters of President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar. Their camps—and the ongoing violence—have been drawn along ethnic lines (Kiir's Dinka and Machar's Nuer). The conflict rages.

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In the early 1980s Douglas Johnson noted that Southern Sudanese history had suffered from the assumption that it did not exist. As this problem was rooted in a lack of sources concerning records of the past, the historians' interest in the Sudan began with the creation of written records about the South during the Egyptian invasion.<sup>82</sup> While great advances were made in African historiography during the first twenty-five years of Sudan's independence, positive influences were made in the scholarship concerning Northern Sudan's history while little inroads were made in work on Southern history. The colonial period was regarded as the most important era in Southern history because it was then that the region's relationship with the rest of the country was made. With this colonial focus came historical assessments derived from the European actors in that period, and themes like regional isolation, colonial resistance, and the destruction of Southern societies by external forces dominated the historiography (see for example work by Richard Gray and Robert Collins). With administrative documents best preserving administrative history, the internal histories of Southern societies were marginalized in the historiography. Such societies were interpreted as powerless observers as successive

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*of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 115-116; Steve Paterno questionnaire (2013).

<sup>82</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, 'The Future of Southern Sudan's Past.' *Africa Today* Vol. 28 No. 2 (1981): 33.

waves of invaders and administrators (Turks, then the Condominium, then Khartoum regimes) dismantled and reassembled their social and political structures.<sup>83</sup>

Given the historical proximity, significance, and devastation of the two Civil Wars, it is perhaps not surprising that much work on Southern Sudan in recent years has focused on the social, religious, political, and cultural impact of those conflicts on Southern Sudanese people in the country and those driven into Diaspora. Serious analyses of the Sudan have focused on a range of causes behind the conflicts, including the precolonial and colonial histories, nineteenth century violence, British administrative efforts in leaving the South unprepared for political independence, and continual competition for scarce resources.<sup>84</sup> With a general but often over-simplified conceptual division of Sudan into Arab-Islamic North and Black, Christian, and ‘animist’ South, race and religion are often identified as being the primary engines that have driven modern Sudan’s fractious history. As my study is building off of historiography that has addressed these two elements, my focus is perhaps emblematic of a scholarly interest in addressing the crisis of the African state and the root causes of its civil wars.<sup>85</sup>

Those who have examined ‘the racial factor’ have mostly concentrated on Northern Sudanese efforts to fashion itself as an Arab country and, in the process, disseminate Arab language and cultural elements into the ‘Black’ South. To this end scholars have noted that there are several historical factors—dating back to the Turco-Egyptian period of the nineteenth century—that inform the importance of Arabism and race more generally in the North. The first is the historical reality of slavery. Douglas

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 33-35

<sup>84</sup> Lamin Sanneh, ‘Preface: Religion and Conflict in Sudan’ in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan: Papers from an International Conference at Yale, May 1999* (Faith in Sudan, 12). Yusuf Fadl Hasan and Richard Gray (eds.). Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2002; 9-10.

<sup>85</sup> Amir Idris, *Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; 2.

Johnson has argued that Arab-African antagonism can be traced to the Turco-Egyptian period, when Arab nomads allied with the Egyptian army and government to mount raids to find slaves for military and domestic use. This established the dual understanding that Sudanese power would be maintained by Arabs in Khartoum and that those on the periphery of state power could be exploited as “martial races”.<sup>86</sup> Northerners crafted racial ideologies favoring Arabs over Africans, as some developed genealogies that allowed them to claim Arab descent and ideologies defining who could be free and who could be enslaved. These stipulations were racially-defined, as Arab ancestry defined freedom while animists or those with darker skin were connected with servility.<sup>87</sup> One scholar connected Northern racism with the legacy of slavery in opining that ‘Northern Sudanese society is profoundly racist and colour-conscious. This is in a way not surprising in a society where—and this is one historian's informed guess—some 30% of the population in nineteenth century Sudan were slaves.’<sup>88</sup> Amir Idris has considered slavery’s legacy to be so formative to Sudanese history that he positioned it at the center of Sudan’s postcolonial crisis of citizenship. Noting that racialized Sudanese states have a had a crucial role in spreading violence in Southern Sudan and Darfur, he wrote in 2005 that ‘the legacies of slavery, the slave trade, and colonialism are particularly significant in understanding the interplay between the processes of state formation and nation-building, and the crisis of democratic citizenship and violence.’<sup>89</sup> Rather than arguing that race or culture were at the root of the conflict, Idris maintained that racialized states transformed the cultural identities of Arab-Muslim North and African-Christian-animist South into

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<sup>86</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, ‘Sudanese Military Slavery from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century’ in *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour*, ed. Leonie Archer. London: Routledge, 1988: 148-149 [martial race quote specifically comes from p. 149]

<sup>87</sup> Sikainga, *Slaves into Workers*, xii-xiii.

<sup>88</sup> O’Fahey, “They Are Slaves, but Yet Go Free”, 55.

<sup>89</sup> Idris, *Conflict and Politics of Identity in Sudan*, 4 [quote and attributions come from same page]

political identities through the practices of precolonial slavery, colonial indirect rule, and postcolonial state-sponsored Arabization and Islamicization.<sup>90</sup>

My study builds upon these findings by highlighting the centrality of slavery's legacy in not only Southern Sudanese resistance discourse but also to basic understandings of history. I show, for example, in my first chapter that that nineteenth-century slavery was referenced by Southerners during the context of the First Civil War, when government-sanctioned Arabization and Islamicization were growing increasingly widespread and violent. During the Condominium period missionaries made the history of slavery available to Southerners in school and in written texts like vernacular dictionaries, which I analyze in Chapter Two. While slave narratives are generally recognized as being polished in the mission station context (and thus cannot be accepted as objective historical evidence), my primary concern here is not in evaluating the integrity of mission pedagogy in this regard but rather the influence that the history of slavery—however accurately or inaccurately taught—had on Southerners in their formulations of political argument, definition, and dissent. In Chapter Four I argue that participants in the 1955 Torit Mutiny were driven by an impulse to prevent a new chapter of Northern Sudanese subjugation in the South from occurring again—a history that included slavery. In Chapter Five, where I discuss growing arguments that Southern Sudan was a constituent piece of Black Africa and was therefore distinct from the North, I highlight the fact that Southerners cited Arab intentions to enslave Blacks as a real motivation dictating contemporary government policy. In these ways and others I show that slavery—and specifically the Arab enslavement of Black people in the Sudan—has for a very long time occupied Southern Sudanese portrayals of the North. Unlike Idris,

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 6

however—who when examining Southern Sudanese nationalist discourses made no mention of Christian or Biblical elements in such discourse—I illustrate that religious elements were mentioned by Southern refugees, clerics, and members of the liberation movement in the broader context of nationalist rhetoric in the First and Second Civil Wars. Through repeated invocations of the Exodus story, for example, Southern Sudanese have historically likened themselves with another enslaved society—Biblical Israel—and in the process sought to script their destinies according to a narrative that ends in liberation. In this way, I argue that the historical reality of racialized slavery has allowed Southerners a doorway through which to claim solidarity with God’s chosen people—the Israelites—and the Providential, liberatory relationship that that affords. It also, as I will explain in discussing historiographical treatments of ‘the religious factor’, encouraged them to identify the enemies of God in this paradigm.

At a conference concerning religion and Sudanese conflict hosted at Yale University in 2002, Richard Gray remembered his earlier conviction that religious factors had marginal significance in motivating Southern fear and hostility for government from Khartoum. He instead argued after a visit to the South in 1956 that the Southern demand for a federal constitution was rooted mostly in political and social fears of Northern domination. Yet, by the early twenty-first century, he believed that more consideration of the exact role of religious differences and motivations during the earlier stages of Sudanese conflict were needed.<sup>91</sup> To be sure, few now would doubt religion’s relevance as either a cultural distinction or factor driving divisions in the precolonial or postcolonial

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<sup>91</sup> Richard Gray, ‘Some Reflections on Christian Involvement 1955-1972’ in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 114 (he cites his ‘South of Khartoum’ *The Economist* (22 September 1956) and ‘How fares the Southern Sudan?’ *New Commonwealth* (24 December 1956) and *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 6 (1971), pp. 108-120 as venues where he made his arguments about religion’s salience known)

eras. Those who have examined religion's role in the North-South divide usually focus on government efforts to fashion the Sudan as an Islamic state and Southern Sudan, being primarily Christian and 'animist', being incompatible with such a vision. While Sudanese nationalism has entailed several attempts to unify the nation as an Islamic state, the presence of a significant population of non-Muslims has made such attempts highly problematic and destructive.<sup>92</sup> With regards to post-1956 government attempts to frame the country as an Islamic state, scholars have noted the Koran's role in Sudanese constitution-making, the rising ideological influences of Islamist communities, the National Islamic Front's official projection of the Second War as a jihad, and the Muslim soldier's role in executing 'obvious racist and religious fanaticism...in the non-Arab areas in the south and in the non-Muslim regions of the west.'<sup>93</sup>

Coupled with the government's religiously-infused policies is the work and legacy of mission work throughout Southern Sudan. Missionaries have been connected to nationalism in Northern and Southern Sudan by the backlash stimulated from their attempts to convert Muslims, their purported involvement in political activities in the South, and converting thousands of Southerners who went on to comprise part of the South's intelligentsia by the 1960s.<sup>94</sup> Apart from missionary legacies from the colonial period, others have focused on the ways in which Christianity—though to a lesser extent

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<sup>92</sup> Jok, *Sudan*, 40.

<sup>93</sup> See Mohamed Salih, 'The Bible, the Qur'an and the Conflict in South Sudan'. In *Scriptural Politics: the Bible and the Koran as Political Models in the Middle East and Africa*. Ed. Niels Kastfelt. London: Hurst & Company, 2003; 98 (103-109 for full description); Abdel Sidahmed, *Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1997; 7, 113 (see entire chapter, 'From Populist Leader to an 'Imam'); Abdel Salam Sidahmed, 'The Unholy War: Jihad and the Conflict in Sudan' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 83; and direct quote about Muslim soldiers comes from Jok, *Sudan*, 17.

<sup>94</sup> Sharkey, 'Missionary Legacies: Muslim-Christian Encounters in Egypt and Sudan during the Colonial and Postcolonial Periods' In *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa*, ed. Benjamin F. Soares. Brill: Leiden, 2006; 64 and undated letter detailing expulsion of Roman Catholic Fathers at Mupoi; SSNA Box EP 373, Folder EP.46.B.2.

than the government's use of Islam—has become both a means for individuals to cope and make sense of their circumstances and the SPLA's use of Christianity during the Second Civil War (see Chapter Seven for more on this point). Important findings include Sharon Hutchinson's examination of the interplay between militarism, Christianity, and indigenous prophecy. Hutchinson inquired into the ways in which people (particularly rural Nuer in the Western Upper Nile) maintained spiritual hope in the midst of loss during the Second Civil War.<sup>95</sup> The SPLA made increasing use of Christian identity partly as a counter measure against the government's emphasis on the conflict's Islamic nature after Beshir's 1989 coup.<sup>96</sup> While Christianity was found to have utility at the micro and macro levels, there is a way in which the two bodies of Southern Sudanese political and social history have taken remarkably disparate approaches to religion's role in the conflict. As evinced by the work of Hutchinson and Nikkel (who did voluminous work on Christianity among the Dinka), anthropological studies on Sudan tend to follow in Evans-Pritchard's footsteps by focusing on the local scene. In the meantime, political processes at the national level comprise part of the backdrop of the people under study much. As studies from the Second Civil War explore how the conflict has affected local societies, much work on Southern Sudanese religious life and change during that war are consequently localized.<sup>97</sup> What results is an historiography that is quite compartmentalized between religious studies of Hutchinson, Nikkel, and the 'Faith in

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<sup>95</sup> Sharon E. Hutchinson, 'Spiritual Fragments of an Unfinished War' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 136-137 (for full chapter see 136-159).

<sup>96</sup> Peter Woodward, 'Religion and Politics in the Southern Sudan: The Ugandan Dimension' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 177-178.

<sup>97</sup> Øystein Rolandsen, *Guerilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2005; 17. For work done by Nikkel on Dinka Christianity see his *Dinka Christianity: The Origins and Development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Faith in Sudan No. 11) and 'Christian Conversion among the Jieng Bor' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, pp. 162-168.

Sudan' series (which I will explain momentarily) and the political works of Rolandsen, Johnson, Holt, and Daly.

Perhaps nowhere is this gap more noticeable than in Paulines Publications' 'Faith in Sudan' series, a collection of books that has attempted to compile an authoritative history of Sudanese Christianity. While authors like Marc Nikkel, Andrew Wheeler, Roland Stevenson, and others show their mastery of myriad topics in that subject (notably Nikkel's *Dinka Christianity and Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, which covers over two thousand years and serves as an excellent general reference book), they are written by people from within the church and have a noticeable evangelical element. As Peter Williams noted in his review of the series, 'these books are intended to nurture piety in the Sudan...these volumes are subversive of the intended Islamic hegemony of Khartoum.'<sup>98</sup> In Isaiah Dau's contribution to the series *Suffering and God*, which seeks to relate the question of why God allows suffering within the context of the civil war, he focuses on how Christians interpret their suffering in the light of their faith. Rather than looking at Southern communities broadly, however, he focuses on the Bor Dinka (reflecting once again the localized nature of works on Southern Christianity).<sup>99</sup> Dau notes the strong belief that God, in answering prayer, will deliver from suffering and that He 'is asked in an outpouring of prayer to deliver from suffering and bondage in the same manner that he delivered Israel from Egypt'.<sup>100</sup> To be sure, similar statements concerning God's perceived role was actively intervening in the Second Civil War have been made. In his study of Christian conversion among the Jieng Bor, Marc Nikkel found that

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<sup>98</sup> For quote see Peter Williams, 'Faith in Sudan' (review article) *Anvil* Vol. 19, No. 1 (2002); 28. For authors' Church affiliation see 27-28.

<sup>99</sup> Isaiah Dau, *Suffering and God: A Theological Reflection on the War in Sudan*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2002; 13-14, 15-16.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, 78-79



Christians used Old Testament imagery to surmise that their suffering in the Second Civil War was punishment from *Nhialic* (God) and that the war was thus an act of divine cleansing.<sup>101</sup> A paper produced by the organization African Rights in the mid-1990s found that Southerners wanted the Bible to address them directly and so that the world could recognize their identity and legitimacy. In addition to this reality, “Liberation” from Khartoum meant the absence of discrimination and intimidation against Christians.<sup>102</sup> While such findings are of course closely related to my work, my study is distinguished by several elements, namely my concern with how race was integrated into this paradigm (not just resisting Northern Sudanese but Arabs specifically), the historical logic and genealogy of this stream of thought going back to the colonial era (rather than emerging in the 1980s/1990s), the ways in which this thought was articulated in printed mediums like *Grass Curtain* and *SPLM/SPLA Update*, how this thought continued past the Second Civil War and on into independence (highlighting the important timing of this study), and—perhaps most intriguingly—how the Bible has been used to critique other Southerners during and after the war (debunking the notion that there was a unidirectional focus on ‘Northerners’ or ‘Arabs’).

If we are to accept Gray’s contention that most Sudanese who lead agricultural or pastoral lives believe in the possibility that good or evil rest behind important events that affect them,<sup>103</sup> how have Southern thinkers in the organizational and national levels employed Biblical imagery in political, anti-government rhetoric? How has political change—whether the achievement of a ‘New Sudan’ or an independent South Sudan—

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<sup>101</sup> Nikkel, ‘Christian Conversion among the Jieng Bor’, 165

<sup>102</sup> [ACR E/678/3/1] ‘Great Expectations: The Civil Roles of the Churches in Southern Sudan’ *African Rights*, Discussion Paper No. 6 (April 1995); 6, 7, 10.

<sup>103</sup> Gray, ‘Epilogue’ in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 199.

been directly connected with the Promised Land or other Biblical parallel? In what veins have political opponents—whether Arab, Dinka, Nuer or otherwise—been demonized with Biblical idioms? There is a way, I believe, in which religious change on the local or ethnic level can be examined and linked to organizational uses of theology and the Bible on the wider, regional level. I am proposing, therefore, that Sudanese scholarship conduct more work to link regional/national political histories with the local/ethnic religious (specifically Christian) history.

My dissertation moves in this direction by focusing on the ways in which religious thought has been articulated by a host of actors in a range of print spaces. Rather than limiting my focus to a specific community or ethnic group, the actors in my study range from mission students, clergy, politicians, and other actors from a wide range of ethnicities in the South. Through my extensive use of print media like *Messenger*, the *SPLM/SPLA Update*, and *Grass Curtain* that were published and circulated internationally, I am able to more closely chart the ways in which theology was articulated in overtly political forums. My chapter on Angelo Tutuo, the first Zande priest who after leaving the priesthood on account of Italian racism joined the rebel Anyanya movement, is devoted to the question of how personal theology and political ideology could be brought into relation with one another. My principal goal in this regard is to show how the lines separating public and private theology and politics were often blurred in the spiritually-infused language of resistance. ‘Liberation’ did not have two separate definitions in two separate spheres. Rather, spiritual liberation from suffering and material liberation from Khartoum were linked together in quite creative ways. Spiritual and political identities, in this fashion, could be inextricably linked to one another. To

this end my work is building upon scholars who have identified religion's role has been its formative influence on identity. 'Religious identity,' said Lamin Sanneh, 'is one form of self-understanding among many, such as gender, class, or race, and where religion cuts across multiple forms of identity, as it does in Sudan, it can be a mobilizing force for good or for ill.'<sup>104</sup> The Yale conference papers suggested that while religious factors have been identified as having little importance in creating the conflicts, religions and the ideologies rooted in them have been used to legitimate the violence. Francis Deng noted that religion had become an identity symbol and of the culture that informed the Sudanese sense of who they are and with whom in the world they relate to. Perhaps most importantly, 'a religious identity at a time of crisis can take precedence over all others.'<sup>105</sup>

Building off of Sanneh, Deng, and Gray, this study examines the ways in which how religion has cut across multiple forms of identity—namely race and ethnicity—to fashion outlooks, worldviews, and actions towards Southern Sudanese ideological and political distinction separation from Northern Sudan. Rather than examining race and religion as mutually exclusive entities or forms of identity, I examine religious thought as an arena in which racial understandings were defined, spiritualized, and appropriated for political purposes. The dissertation shows how Southern Sudanese lay and ecclesiastical thinkers read the Bible to find historical precedents for their circumstances and a lexicon for resistance. In using the Bible to provide a 'script' for liberation, they came to as a 'chosen people' destined for liberation like Old Testament Israel. On the other hand, various Khartoum regimes were repeatedly—directly and indirectly—positioned with the

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<sup>104</sup> Sanneh, 'Preface: Religion and Conflict in Sudan', 9.

<sup>105</sup> Richard Gray, 'Epilogue', 195 [quote from 196]; Yusuf Fadl Hasan, 'The Role of Religion in the North-South Conflict with Special Reference to Islam' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 24 (citing a quotation from Francis Deng in Abdel Gbaffar M. Ahmed, and Gunnar M. Sorbo (eds); *Management of the Crisis in the Sudan*, Proceedings of the Bergen Forum, 23-24 Feb. 1989, KUP, Khartoum, University of Bergen, 1898 [sic], p. 47.)

Biblical Egyptians, Babylonians, and other enemies of Israel. Thus, this study connects the study of theological insertion with political evolution from the Condominium, Sudanese independence, and Southern Sudanese independence. In an important way, the project illustrates that theology is an integral part of social history by showing that Southern Sudanese crafted their Biblical oppressor-oppressed parallels along racial lines. Not merely racial Others, Northern Sudanese Arabs came to occupy the unenviable position of modern-day Egyptians, Babylonians, and Philistines. Southern Sudanese Blacks, however, placed themselves in the favorable position of being God's oppressed but ultimately chosen people that would be favored with liberation at some point. In brief, this paradigm allowed for the demonization of Arabs and the sacralization of Blackness. Because Biblical appropriations did the political work of strengthening an 'oppressed' peoples' ideology and vocabulary of resistance, religious thought contributed to South Sudan's national formation by capitalizing on understandings of the region and its people as 'Black' and 'African'. And yet, given the current potency of ethnicity and 'tribalism' in South Sudan, there is room to consider the strength, utility, and effectiveness of racial thought in the national project historically and moving forward.

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Finally, it is first imperative for me to address the Arab Muslim North vs. Black, African, Christian and indigenous South dichotomy and opposition that has long characterized popular and academic studies of the Sudan. Several historical and disciplinary factors fed this inaccurate polarity. To begin, historians like R.S. O'Fahey tended to see Sudanese history from a North-South perspective in which 'civilization' in the form of Arab culture and Islamic religion came from the North. While O'Fahey

places the formative period of Northern Sudanese culture in the sixteenth century, the colonial period (beginning in the early nineteenth century) was taken to be the unofficial beginning of Southern Sudanese history. Johnson opined in 1981 that the notion that Southern Sudan could maintain an isolated, ahistorical existence in the absence of colonial power not only reveals something about the author's point of view but also the lack of sources; such a superficial judgment would continue unless sources like local documents and oral traditions containing information about internal developments and the impact of external developments were tapped.<sup>106</sup>

There are also a host of historical factors that have fed the conceptual North-South division. Francis Deng has conjectured that the seeds of the modern division between North and South were sown thousands of years before Christ, when the Egyptians and Arabs began to expand southwards in search of material wealth (more specifically gold, ivory, slaves, and revenue from taxation). While the Mahdist State was aligned with Islamic identity, the Southern Sudan was not considered part of the *Dar al-Islam* (and the Mahdists withdrew from the area). Following the Mahdist War missionaries were given more privileges to operate in the South rather than the North, and the Anglo-Egyptian administration practically governed the Northern and Southern regions differently (and isolated its residents from one another). As political tensions between the two devolved into civil war in the mid-twentieth century, some began to advocate for Southern Sudanese separation (see Chapter Five). In more recent history

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<sup>106</sup> R.S. O'Fahey, "They Are Slaves, but Yet Go Free": Some Reflections on Sudanese History' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 49; Johnson, 'Future of Southern Sudan's Past', 34-36.

North-South animosity developed into an ideological context between Islamists and secularists (Christian and Muslim).<sup>107</sup>

Notwithstanding the veracity of some of these factors, scholarship has in recent years tackled the North-South binary by showing the ways in which interactions between peoples in the two regions reflect the tenuousness of drawing such a hard distinction. Johnson has explained that when the colonial period is not viewed as the beginning of Southern Sudan's past, several historical realities emerge (most importantly fact that the South did not exist in isolation). The people of the Upper Nile were not static but were conversely mobile and mingled with others; large sections of the South had already had contact with "the outside world" before the Egyptian conquest; and that the Azande, Dinka of Bahr al-Ghazal, and Nuer occupied more territory and influence at the end of the nineteenth century—the era of colonial predation—than they had fifty year earlier.<sup>108</sup> Cherry Leonardi has examined South Sudanese Arabic as an innovative, necessary means for multiple actors to communicate within new spaces of interaction. In the midst of the 'Southern Policy' that aimed to isolate the South from Arab and Islamic influences, 'Juba Arabic' became the unofficial *lingua franca* in the South. Its uses in Christian services, broadcasts, and publications have eroded Arabic's lingering association with Islam.<sup>109</sup> Peter Woodward noted that the Muslim Nubi Idi Amin supported what was seen as the South's Christian movement that resisted Islam, and that as a direct result of the conflicts

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<sup>107</sup> O'Fahey, "They Are Slaves, but Yet Go Free", 50; Francis M. Deng, 'The Identity Factor in the Sudanese Conflict.' In *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, ed. J.V. Montville, 343-62. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990; 344; Yusuf Fadl Hasan, 'The Role of Religion in the North-South Conflict with Special Reference to Islam' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 23. The Sudan African National Union, for example, advocated complete Southern separation. See Gray, 'Some Reflections on Christian Involvement 1955-1972', 121.

<sup>108</sup> Johnson, 'Future of Southern Sudan's Past', 39-40

<sup>109</sup> Cherry Leonardi, 'South Sudanese Arabic and the Negotiation of the Local State, c. 1840-2011' *Journal of African History*, Vol. 54 Iss. 3 (November 2013): 351, 371.

(with large groups of Christians in Northern areas) the regions cannot be neatly divided by Islam and Christianity.<sup>110</sup> By the late 1990s substantial groups of Christians lived in many Northern urban areas as a result of refugees finding solidarity and survival mechanisms in Christian clubs and communities (further weakening the ‘Muslim North/‘Christian South’ paradigm).<sup>111</sup>

In addition to such cross-regional interactions over time are the slippery nature of terms commonly used to describe the people of each region—namely ‘Arab’, ‘African’ and ‘Black’. Each term, to be sure, is a construction, and Arabism in Northern Sudan evinces this point. Arabism there is contested and varied, with ‘Arabs’ commonly identified with the Khartoum government, economically-marginalized Arab nomads, and Arabs who live within Southern Sudan’s borders and have long co-existed with Southerners. Amal Fadlalla has written that ‘constructions of “Arabism” are constantly negotiated, debated, and invented among many Muslim groups (including Darfurians, to whom I will return momentarily). While the term *Arab* has historically been associated with Arabic-speaking Muslim Northern Sudanese and their elite, ruling elites have recently risen from non-Arabic speaking Nubians of the North. Many Sudanese nomads self-identify as Arabs in order to denote a pastoral lifestyle and identity rooted in conceptions of land and descent, while *Arab* can for many urbanite Sudanese be used derisively to distinguish modernity and progress from a nomadic lifestyle. The question of one’s Arabness or non-Arabness, Fadlalla concludes, is ‘complexly determined by ethnic and racial categories that take into account regionality and skin tone, as well as

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<sup>110</sup> Woodward, ‘Religion and Politics in the Southern Sudan’, 170; Gray, ‘Epilogue’, 198-199.

<sup>111</sup> Richard Gray, ‘Epilogue’ in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 188-189

other bodily attributes'.<sup>112</sup> While a large portion of Darfurians can claim Arab ancestry, numerous ethnic groups (which are all Muslim) in Darfur classify themselves as Black African. Indeed, Africanism there has superseded language—Arabic is the spoken language—and Arab culture as the primary identity-marker. Blackness, furthermore, denotes both belonging to the land and distinction from their Arab opponents (Arabs in Khartoum and Omdurman have solidified their position as the nation's rulers).<sup>113</sup> NIF-head Hassan al-Turabi, to be sure, has tried to distinguish between Islamic principles from Arabism's cultural wrappings (non-Arab Darfuri Islamists initially flocked to the NIF). The paradox of Muslims fighting Muslims in Darfur, according to Abdullah El-Tom, resulted from the hegemonic center's efforts to create an Arab-Islamic belt in the region by replacing Darfuri groups understood as being non-Arab.<sup>114</sup> The term Arab, therefore, cannot be used as a monolithic racial term to describe all Sudanese in the North. Rather, to employ a highly technical term, it is fuzzy.

Nor can Arab be used interchangeably with Islam (despite the popular tendency to frame Northern Sudan as Arab-Muslim). The notion of an *Islam noir*—an Africanized variety of Islam that was somehow diluted from authentic Islam and infused with traditional African beliefs and practices—emerged in early 20<sup>th</sup> century French West Africa. The colonial French administration was suspicious of Islam after its role in mobilizing anticolonial resistance in Algeria and kept Muslim clerics under surveillance

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<sup>112</sup> Information and quotations come from Amal Hassan Fadlalla, 'The Neoliberalization of Compassion: Darfur and the Mediation of American Faith, Fear, and Terror' in *New Landscapes of Inequality: Neoliberalism and the Erosion of Democracy in America*. Eds. Jane L. Collins, Micaela di Leonardo, and Brett Williams. Sante Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008; 212-213. [italics in original]

<sup>113</sup> Abdullah Osman El-Tom, 'Darfur People: Too Black for the Arab-Islamic Project of Sudan' in *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan*, 85, 90.

<sup>114</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War on Terror*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2009; 194 and 196 and Salah M. Hassan and Carina E. Ray, 'Introduction: Critically Reading Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan' in *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan*, 20.



with files synthesized by Paul Marty. These files comprised a series of studies on Islam in French West African colonies, and these studies contributed to the conceptual formulation of *Islam noir*'s existence.<sup>115</sup> Robert Launay has suggested that though the French may have been comforted by the idea that they did not have to worry about Islamic danger, the idea of Islamic noir had damaging consequences for anthropology's study of Islam in French West Africa: 'Once "African Islam" could be reduced to its component parts—Arab Islam and African "fetishism"—then the study of Islam could be properly left to Orientalists, leaving to anthropologists the task of decoding more "authentically" African beliefs and practices.'<sup>116</sup> The net effect of this rhetorical distancing between Africa and Islam is perhaps best evidenced in the inferences made by distinguishing an 'Arab-Muslim North' from a 'Black-African South'. Against the historical backdrop of *Islam noir*, Islamic studies have traditionally marginalized Africa despite its deep Islamic history and African Muslims' demographic strength. The racial elements of this tendency became more transparent when one recalls that Marty was 'routinely appealing to the logic of race...tapping deeply held stereotypes of black civilizational and intellectual inferiority'.<sup>117</sup> In these ways, one might read references to an Arab-Muslim North as in some ways inferring that a purer form of Islam exists there (since it is not 'African Muslim') and that, being Arab, is more civilized than their Black African neighbors to the South (remembering O'Fahey's connection between civilization with the influx of Arabs and Islam in the North). Given the historical and slippery

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<sup>115</sup> Robert Launay, 'An Invisible Religion? Anthropology's Avoidance of Islam in Africa' in Mwenda Ntarangwi, David Mills and Mustafa Babiker, eds. *African Anthropologies: History, Critique and Practice*. Dakar, London, New York: CODESRIA in association with Zed Books, 2006: 189-190.

<sup>116</sup> Launay, 'An Invisible Religion?', 190.

<sup>117</sup> Rudolph T. Ware III, *The Walking Qur'an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014; 19-20 (for specific quotation see 20).

realities, assumptions, and meanings of racial and religious identities, it is prudent to tear asunder the conflation of ‘Arab’ and ‘Islamic’ in Northern Sudan.

Just as the North is not a monolithic entity, the reality of sundry ethnic groups within Southern Sudan makes it difficult—if not impossible—to easily frame the South as one-half of a North-South dichotomy. To be sure, I do show that mission schools were important sites of cross-ethnic interaction; that the Nugent and Rumbek Schools were particularly important in this regard; *Messenger* newspaper provided readers with ‘Southern’ news; and that ‘Southern’ became a potent political and electoral strategy of definition as the country neared independence in 1956. The First Civil War had an important tenor of Southern separatism, and though the SPLM/A’s fight in the Second War was waged for revolution rather than secession, many desired Southern separation (see Chapter Seven). However, in my attempt to show that ‘Southern’ as a sociopolitical identity has co-existed alongside ethnic identities, I do illustrate the diversity and political salience of ethnicity in Southern Sudan—Chapter One includes a description of ethnic diversity in the nineteenth century; Chapter Two includes an administrative effort to reinforce Dinka-Nuer divisions and encourage the maintenance of ethnic languages; Chapter Three notes the ways in which contributors to *Messenger* sought to inform readers about different ethnic customs; Chapter Four notes the ways in which the Torit Mutiny was initially perceived as a Latuko-Arab grievance; Chapter Five recounts different antigovernment organizations that were drawn along ethnic lines; Chapter Six includes Fr. Angelo Tutuo’s decision to convey Verona mistreatment among fellow Zande clerics; Chapter Seven reviews inter-ethnic violence and the sense of possible Dinka patriotism in Isaiah 18 invocations; and the Conclusion essentially revolves around

the causes, moment, and consequences of the December 2013 explosion of Dinka-Nuer conflict. Ethnicity's historical realities, debates, and power in Southern Sudan demands escaping the bounds of a North-South polarization and recognizing the ways in which the terms 'Southern', 'Black', and 'African'—like the term 'Arab'—are tenuous when used to describe everyone throughout the region.

Thus, while my study of religious nationalism in Southern Sudan is keenly concerned with the processes that encouraged a 'Southern' consciousness—imagined, political, or otherwise—I try to escape the North-South polarization by showing the ways in which ethnic identities continued to be significant in discursive and social milieus swirling with competing social, racial, religious, and national identities. Furthermore, I have opted to use the term 'the North' rather than Arab-Islamic North in my effort to detach the racial and cultural term 'Arab' from Islam.

'God will crown us': Behind the Title

'God will crown us' is borrowed from the central figure of my sixth chapter, Angelo Tutuo. Tutuo, the first Catholic priest from the Zande ethnic group, left the priesthood in the mid-1950s following a series of mistreatments from the Verona Fathers that he believed to be rooted in racism. During the First Civil War he worked with the Anyanya in the field of journalism and combined anti-Arab sentiments with a liberationist theology. On 15 June 1969 he penned a letter conflating Southern Sudan's political liberation with spiritual destiny:

'in the jungles of our dear motherland- the Southern Sudan...patiently awaiting our salvation- Liberation and Independence through the future victories to be reported; God will definitely crown us with soon or later. We are very much concerned now in seeking among our Anyanya military and political heads and leaders, real constant men of determination...real nationalists...instructing, insisting

and interesting into their minds...the right Southern Sudan Policy...the Heavenly glory God will crown us with in his eternal life to follow among his Holy Angels and Saints'<sup>118</sup>

In many respects this quotation represents the heart of the religious thought that is at the heart of my study. The deeply-fraught religious idioms ‘salvation’ and ‘liberation’—by being used in connection with a defined political aim rather than a figurative, spiritual sense—are politicized through their association with Southern Sudanese independence. As the acknowledged provider of Southern Sudanese liberation and independence, God is positioned not just as spiritual crown-giver in the afterlife but also as the granter of independence in the immediate, temporal context. Through ‘crowning’ Southerners with liberation and independence there is perhaps an implied understanding of God as not simply an active observer but, through Providence, actively intervening to bring freedom about. To this end the First Civil War produced several specific anecdotes in which participants credited God with miraculous, saving acts in the midst of grave danger. As Rev. Samuel Marial expressed to me in 2012, ‘There are visible agents in the history, and invisible agents...the visible agents are people of course, and the invisible agent is God...many people in South Sudan always share the history of the church in South Sudan as a time of God ministering to the people of South Sudan.’<sup>119</sup> This study seeks to trace and analyze the ideology that links the beliefs expressed by Tutuo and Marial—that God, the invisible agent in Southern Sudanese history, has been Providentially-working to ensure that Southerners will wear the crown of liberation and independence.

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<sup>118</sup> ACR A/98/39/5b, ‘The Voice of the Anyanya’, letter from Chairman and Secretary for Defense and Commissioner WERC/H.Qs. to Biki and Ringasi [Councils; inferred from ACR A/98/39/5a, letter from Chairman and Secretary for Defence WERC/H.Qs. to Ringasi and Biki Councils, 22 Apr. 1969], WERC/H.Qs. Ringasi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information Eastern Region (Joseph Oduho) and Chief of General Staff New Liberation Front S.S. Eastern Region (Joseph Lagu), 15 Jun. 1969. See sixth chapter for more on Tutuo.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Samuel Marial, 11 June 11 2012 (Juba, South Sudan).

My use of ‘construction’ is an attempt to resist the notion that South Sudan was in some sense ‘born’ on 9 July 2011. At the first independence anniversary celebrations Archbishop Tutu called the nation a ‘baby’ on the world stage,<sup>120</sup> a description I find troubling not only for the risk of infantilizing the nation but also because it ignores the myriad developments that occurred over several decades leading up to independence. In many respects the 1955 Torit Mutiny can be read as the seminal origin of Southern self-determination (or, going back even further, the 1947 Juba Conference), with one primary account of the Mutiny stating that the Sudan was merely experiencing the ‘birth-pangs’ of independence.<sup>121</sup> Due to the fact that there are several ‘birth’ moments one can identify, the use of the term should certainly not be limited to July 2011. Rather, in a roundabout way I align myself with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdallah Khalil’s statement from November 1957: that “we thought we could take independence, but we discovered that we must build it.”<sup>122</sup> Because Southern Sudanese nationalism was forged by a variety of figures, evolved in design over time, and continues to change at this very moment, ‘construction’ is my designation of choice.

Finally, my use of Southern Sudan—rather than South Sudan—is intentional. Given the chronological scope of the study, it is necessary to distinguish between the Republic of South Sudan and the region now occupied by the nation-state. South Sudan is comprised of three principal regions: the Upper Nile, Bahr el Ghazal, and Equatoria. Each of these served as administrative Provinces when the Sudan was still united

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<sup>120</sup> Tutu remarked, ‘I also have a great privilege of saying congratulations to you on celebrating your very first birthday. You are a beautiful baby, one year old. And a baby deserves everything of the best. A baby needs everything that is beautiful. And you are that baby.’ ECS Independence Service, 8 July 2012.

<sup>121</sup> Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College [BGCA], Collection 081, Africa Inland Mission; Box 102, Folder 6, ‘SUDAN Late 50s//Early 60s’, 3-4.

<sup>122</sup> Toward Freedom Newsletter Records, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University [hereafter MJHL]; Box 3, Folder 13 (‘Sudan’); ‘Street manners tells lot about a country’, 1.

politically and date further back into the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium era (pre-1956). Thus, in examining religious and political thought in the region since the late nineteenth century, my decision to employ ‘Southern Sudan’ when referring to nationalism in these three regions collectively until July 2011 is done to avoid historical confusion.

#### Description of Sources and Methodology<sup>123</sup>

My primary source base was dictated largely by the nature of my inquiry and the agents in my narrative. As a history of nationalism my study is, as I envision it, a history of discourse, ideology, and thought. As my chronological scope stretches from Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule to Sudanese independence and on through Southern Sudanese nationhood, the ideologies that form the basis of my investigation were espoused by agents that vary greatly with respect to nationality, profession, religion, time period, race, and a host of other socioeconomic declensions. Furthermore, the means by which their views were expressed were fashioned in a variety of media including newspapers, magazines, speeches, government and ecclesiastical correspondences, private letters, song, poetry, and sermons. Given the international scope of government and mission work in the Sudan since the late nineteenth century, research necessitated visits to government, religious, and university archives in South Sudan, Egypt, England, Italy and various American locations (the complete list of archives cited in the dissertation can be found in the list of abbreviated texts following the table of contents). While each research site contributed to the formulation and construction of my project, in many respects the most significant archives proved to be the South Sudan National Archives (SSNA), Durham University’s Sudan Archive (SAD), and Rome’s Comboni Mission Archive (ACR).

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<sup>123</sup> Many thanks to Heather Sharkey, who in her introduction to *Living with Colonialism* provided the framework for how I constructed this section on sources (12-14).

The SSNA is a government archive flush with official documents from the Anglo-Egyptian administration and early Sudanese Governments are housed. Holdings include government and missionary correspondences, mission schools inspections reports, official government newspapers, and a host of other memoranda. Files are classified thematically into subjects like Education, Army, and Missions and date from the early twentieth century through the beginning of the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983). Mission school reports were particularly useful for gaining insight into Condominium educational curriculums, student body makeups, and socio-pedagogical priorities. Authored primarily by British administrators like Resident Inspector A.G. Hickson, these documents also offer private insights and clues regarding British positions regarding the social objectives and ramifications of their work. The Angelo Tutuo chapter is based quite heavily on his 1950s correspondences with government officials that are housed in the SSNA, and the archive's holdings concerning the aftermath of the Torit Mutiny allowed me to chart and analyze accounts from individuals who participated in the violence. Many of the early independence documents pertain to the controversial process of Arabization and Islamicization, and of chief importance are those materials produced by Ali Baldo, the Governor of Equatoria during the late 1950s and early 1960s who became perhaps the most notorious figure in this regard. Indeed, the SSNA is a critical resource with which to chronicle official dimensions of the Sudanese Government's cultural and religious objectives in Southern Sudan during the early years of Sudanese independence.

For any work that seriously interrogates Sudanese Catholic history, Rome's Comboni Mission Archive is a collection of the first magnitude. With primarily English-language materials (with a smattering of documents in Latin and Italian), the ACR proved

to be the most important repository I visited with respect to primary sources produced by Sudanese Catholic priests and refugees. With the clerical Sudanization process beginning in the 1940s, there are documents written by members of the early cadre of Sudanese priests including political leader Saturnino Lohure, the controversial first Zande priest Angelo Tutuo (the subject of my fifth chapter), Ireneo Dud (the first Sudanese raised to the level of Bishop), Paolino Doggale (who participated in the 1960 Sunday Protest), and others. Letters written by priests and other refugees afforded me the opportunity to trace the ideological and spiritual contours of the refugee experiences. What Biblical narratives, for example, did refugees reference in their letters? How did they recognize God in the midst of their suffering? Other documents of great use to me from the ACR included those concerning the Anyanya I movement, Sudanese student organizations within the country and throughout the Diaspora, foreign press coverage of developments in the country, and the First Civil War's position within the broader context of contemporary Pan-Africanism. In many respects, perhaps the most pleasant surprise from the ACR was the *Sudanese Catholic Clergy* volume that is kept downstairs in the Comboni Library. *SCC* not only contains mini-biographies of Sudanese clerics but also contact information with which I was able to track down and connect with several priests through questionnaires and during my 2013 trip to Juba.

Durham University's Sudan Archive combined the best elements of the SSNA and ACR by offering a prodigious amount of religious and government materials covering nearly the entire chronology of my study. Like the SSNA it contains documents authored by colonial officials concerning various spheres of administration (including a comprehensive roll of Annual Reports and Sudan Government Gazettes), as well editions



of periodicals not limited to but including the *Grass Curtain*, *SPLM/A Update*, and *Sudan Diocesan Review*. As a brief aside, the Durham University Library also contains perhaps the most extensive run of the *Catholic Messenger* newspaper that was published from Wau and served for a time as Southern Sudan's only newspaper. That periodical is my main point of analysis in Chapter Three. Unlike the ACR, whose Church/mission holdings are overwhelmingly Catholic, the SAD houses an abundance of materials pertaining to Protestant Church work. This includes, for example, the papers of longtime Anglican Bishop of the Sudan Oliver Allison and materials concerning the Church Missionary Society. I was fortunate enough to visit Durham shortly after the Library had received the translated collection of Kuku-Balokole songs that I discuss in Chapter Six, and the unpublished autobiographies of Nugent School graduates Erisa Penesi and Hilary Paul Logali also proved extremely useful.

Following in the vein of *Magaziner*, my focus was not limited to people and organizations but also circulating texts and ideas which allow me to chronicle change over time. This entailed looking at poems, songs, letters, sermons, prayers, speeches, and newspapers crafted by Southern and Euro-American individuals and organizations. My heavy use of newspapers published in Southern Sudan and throughout sites in the Sudanese Diaspora allowed me to note the evolution of thought concerning various Khartoum governments, treatment of Church and missionary institutions, and Southern self-determination. Examining poetry in newspapers and magazines not only allowed me to examine political views, laments, and thoughts from contributors around the world but also enabled me to put their ideas in conversation with those of others of varying professional, personal, and geographic backgrounds. By incorporating voices throughout

the Diaspora, I show the ways in which Southern Sudanese religious and political thought was not just developed within the political borders of Southern Sudan but evolved and proliferated throughout the Sudanese Diaspora.

In addition to archival work I conducted nearly fifty interviews with clerical and non-clerical figures; almost all of them were done in Juba. As I was very much interested in the Southern Church's political actions and thought both historically and present, many of my participants were Southern clergy. This notwithstanding, I prioritized the inclusion of laypeople and non-Sudanese clerical figures who have spent time in the country. Participants included a Member of Parliament, various Church Brothers, Sisters, priests and Bishops, the former General Secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches, a man who has since been appointed as an Ambassador, employees at Juba's Catholic Radio Bakhita, an Anyanya I veteran, an SPLA chaplain related to John Garang, the President of the Mothers' Union, and several Lost Boys. My oldest participant was an Italian priest who had been in Sudan for over half a century, while my youngest were two teenaged women attending a local secondary school. Sharing their life histories and stories passed down to them from their elders resulted in my receiving intimate perspectives on some of the most formative elements in my study including the Juba Conference, the Torit Mutiny, refugee experiences, education, Anyanya I, and SPLA-Church relations. What I heard was beautiful, macabre, and transformative. While my questions varied depending on factors like age, background, and experience, I invariably sought to capture the ways in which they related or could relate the history of Southern Sudan to the Providence of God. Perhaps most importantly, these interviews allowed me to compliment archival research that dealt, for all intents and purposes, with Southern history pre-2006 with thoughts and

memories on the most important developments in recent memory like the death of John Garang and the July 2011 independence moment.

### Chapter Breakdowns

Chapter One, ‘The Raw Material of a Mighty State’, provides the historical foundation from which the dissertation builds. It begins with a discussion of Southern Sudan’s cultural diversity leading up to the Mahdiya period began in the early 1880s. Noting Mahdism’s effects on the South for the next two decades, the chapter continues with the arrival of missionaries into the South as an extension of the anti-Mahdist war. Concomitant with the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, the administration endeavored to create in Southern Sudan a buffer against the spread of Arabism and Islam down the Nile (thus beginning a controversial relationship between the Condominium government and mission organizations in the South). The chapter concludes with the formation of the Equatorial Corps, an institution birthed by the administration’s aim to counter Islam’s spread in the South. These elements lay the historical foundations for the ensuing chapters on the Condominium era.

Chapter Two, ‘Creating Subjectivities: Education and the Dictates of the Southern Policy, 1920-1956’, examines Southern Sudanese education as a formative element of the Southern Policy—the colloquial term for the goal of developing Southern Sudan as an African, Christian, and English-speaking entity isolated from the North. With particular attention given to elementary vernacular schools and upper level institutions (the CMS Nugent School and the Rumbek Secondary School), I examine school curriculums and the role of the school in reinforcing and dismantling ethnic division among student bodies. The chapter analyzes the Nugent and Rumbek schools as spaces where a Southern Sudanese, English-speaking elite was cultivated—an elite that went on to lead the region

during the First Civil War and beyond. I show that despite strides made in encouraging cross-ethnic connections, ethnic division persisted. In these ways schools operated as arenas for the flowering of collectiveness, the education of a Biblically-literate, English-speaking elite, and a tangible sense of ethnic division. These dueling realities of community and division persist to the present day and complicate the idea that racial solidarity (or Blackness more specifically) served to bind those of various ethnicities together. Nevertheless, a heightened sense of political consciousness and connection with other East Africans was detected, preceding the Southern consciousness and anger directed towards Northerners in the years leading up to the 1955 Torit Mutiny.

Chapter Three, 'Infrastructures of Belonging and Dissent: The Liberal Party and *Messenger* Newspaper, 1932-1956', shifts to a focus on non-educational infrastructures. As the Sudan was inching from Condominium to nationhood, Southerners were divided on the prospects of national unity with the North. 'Infrastructures of Dissent' focuses on non-educational means by which Southerners came to know their racial, ethnic, and political subjectivities in the midst of political change. I pay particular attention to the Liberal Party, the South's only political party leading up to Sudanese independence, and the Catholic *Messenger* newspaper, the foremost periodical produced in Southern Sudan. By highlighting Southerners' divergent approaches to Sudanese nationalism, the chapter pushes back against a hegemonic narrative of longstanding resistance leading to the teleological conclusion of independence. Nevertheless, the immediate pre-war years witnessed the emergence of two critical discourses: one rejecting national unity and another that defined and encouraged the idea that Southern Sudan was distinct from the North.

Chapter Four, ‘A New Rome: The Torit Mutiny and Moral Assessments of the Sudanese State’, discusses the causes, conduct, and consequences of the Torit Mutiny. One of the most enduring consequences was the Sudanese Government’s attempt to solve the problem of national division by uniting the country under an Arab-Islamic framework—a move that spurred intense opposition in the South. During this period Southern Sudanese and Euro-American missionaries in the South began to draw from historical precedents to redefine the relationship between ruler and ruled. By the time the 1962 Missionary Societies Act was passed, some had begun to express that the Ibrahim Abboud regime deserved the categorization of ‘evil’—a critical theoretical shift paving the way for the liberation theology that emerged in subsequent years. In an important respect, this chapter builds upon Øystein Rolandsen’s declension of the First Civil War (whereby the war did not really begin until formalized political violence commenced in 1963)<sup>124</sup> by showing that the post-Mutiny years did not just consist of a progressive series of events leading up to formal violence. Rather, an intellectual history of the period is needed because it was through the borrowing of historical and Biblical precedents that people found models for action.

Chapter Five, ‘The Blended Discourse of Nationalism and Providence’, examines the liberatory religious thought that began emerged during the First Civil War. Building off of Black Theology and the Kairos Document, the chapter examines the ways in which Southern Sudanese compared the tumultuous circumstances facing the region to those that faced Old Testament Israel. By inserting themselves into such Biblical narratives, Southern ecclesiastical thinkers like Catholic priests Jerome Siri and Paolino Doggale

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<sup>124</sup> Øystein H. Rolandsen, ‘A False Start: Between War and Peace in the Southern Sudan, 1956-62’ *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 52, Iss. 1 (March 2011); 105.

and non-clerical figures like Anyanya leader Joseph Lagu framed themselves as scions of the ‘chosenness’ that distinguished the Children of Israel. Conversely, Khartoum regimes and Northern Sudanese Arabs were likened to Egypt and Babylon. These discursive moves were part of a liberation theology founded on four principles: Southerners were God’s people, the Khartoum government and Northern Sudanese Arabs were evil antagonists, God was sought for and credited with intervening on their behalf, and—most critically—God would provide liberation and victory. The stream of religious thought was inherently racialized, as Blacks were generally positioned as God’s suffering people while Arabs were placed in the oppressive role. This liberatory thought was critical to the historical development of Southern nationalism in that it was a crucial element in the effort to express the South’s cultural distinction from the North and encouraged the idea of a proto-national imagined community.

Chapter Six, ‘Persecution to Promised Land: Fr. Angelo Tutuo, Religious Thought, and Separatist Politics during the First Civil War’, examines the personal politics of Fr. Angelo Tutuo, the first Zande priest. During research trips to the South Sudan National Archive (SSNA) and Rome’s Comboniani Archive, I examined letters written by and about Tutuo than revealed hitherto unpublished information about his life. One aspect of note was the racist treatment he received from the Italian Verona Fathers in the early 1950s. The archival documents reveal both a liberation theology stipulating his belief that God would orchestrate Southern victory over the North and suggestions that this ideology was rooted in his earlier clerical frustrations. The chapter uses his story as a case study with which to examine the broader relationship between racial discrimination and political (liberation) theology during the war years. Furthermore, it illustrates how

the evolving SSNA—whether used in isolation or with documents from other repositories—can alter understandings of important figures and developments in Sudanese history.

The seventh and final chapter, ‘Khartoum Goliath: The Martial Theology of the *SPLM/SPLA Update*, 1992-2002’, uses the *SPLM/SPLA Update* as a space where writers attempted to construct a unified political theory during the complicated ebbs and flows of the Second Sudanese Civil War. The SPLM’s official newspaper medium, publication began in 1992 after the fall of the Mengistu regime forced the SPLA to reorganize in Nairobi. It was published free of charge throughout East Africa and was the primary media outlet for organizational news and policy.<sup>125</sup> With reports and contributions from all over the globe, the newspaper became a forum for people across the world to discuss, celebrate, lament, and debate happenings in Sudanese politics and the rebel war effort. Editors and contributors were not necessarily religious ideologues but rather creative intellectuals who sought to organize a unifying account of events in the midst of internal splits and factionalism. To this end the Bible provided a foundation from which people divided by language, politics, and culture could envision themselves as sharing a common heritage through the lens of Cush. In this sense Biblical references were essentially used to cover up hard realities of internal division. The chapter is intended to offer a useful intervention into studies of the Second Sudanese Civil War by using the *SPLM/A Update*—a propaganda form whose content has hitherto been unexamined to

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<sup>125</sup> See Mawut Achiecque Mach Guarak, *Integration and Fragmentation of the Sudan: An African Renaissance*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011; 285; Pa’gan Amum Okiech, ‘Organisational Report’ Presented to the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Convention of the Sudan People Liberation Movement [2008]. [<http://www.splmtoday.com/docs/statements%20and%20speeches/2012%2003%20Organizational%20Report%20-%20SG%20Amum%20-%202nd%20NLC%20Meeting.pdf>], 16; Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars*. London: International African Institute in association with James Currey (Oxford), Indiana University Press (Bloomington & Indianapolis), and Fountain Publishers (Kampala), 2003 (updated second impression 2004), 190.

any serious degree—as a means to examine the roles of Christianity and theology in SPLM/A ideology and politics.

The conclusion, ‘The Troubled Promised Land’, reiterates and re-examines the dissertation’s argument in light of the ongoing civil conflict that has wracked the country since December 2013. My project argues that South Sudan should be joined alongside South Africa as prime African contexts through which to examine black liberation theology. However, one would be remiss not to acknowledge that current manifestations of ethnic factionalism and full-scale war reinforce one of Mbiti’s primary critiques of Black Theology; namely, ‘When the immediate concerns of liberation are realized, it is not at all clear where Black Theology is supposed to go...There is no clue as to when one arrives at the paradise of “liberation.”’<sup>126</sup> In this the tenth year anniversary of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (which ended the Second Civil War), how have religious appropriations in the political sphere evolved since then? How has the current conflict, which began a mere two and a half years into independence, complicated the historical development and significance of liberation theology in Southern Sudan moving forward? How might the historiographical positions of figures like Fanon, Sanneh, Hastings, and others be used to analyze and assess the roots and meaning of the war? And, finally, how might the history presented in this dissertation inform the country’s uncertain present and future? The conclusion addresses these questions and offers some speculation on the interplay between governance, religious rhetoric, and national identity moving forward.

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<sup>126</sup> John Mbiti, ‘An African Views American Black Theology’ [from *Black Theology* Revised Second Edition] 381.



**Chapter One**  
**‘The Raw Material of a Mighty State’: Southern Sudan from Turco-Egyptian to  
Condominium Rule, 1821-1917**

‘By the overthrow of Mahdism, the great region of Central Africa has been opened to civilisation. From the date of the splendid victory at Omdurman...may be reckoned the creation of a vast Soudan empire...it may be expected that the mixed negroid races of the Upper Nile will prove themselves as orderly and industrious as they are conspicuously brave. Whoever rules them wisely, will have the control of the best native tribes of the Dark Continent, the raw material of a mighty state.’<sup>127</sup>

Bennet Burleigh, December 1898

The genealogy of Southern Sudanese separatism begins with colonial projects instituted in the wake of the Mahdist War, a conflict waged between Anglo-Egyptian and Mahdist forces from 1881 to 1899. The War was situated within the broader context of the rise of two movements: Pan-Islamism (which attempted to protect Islamic lands from European imperialism) and the evangelical movement. Many blended commercial and economic impulses with the moral responsibility to spread the Gospel to “heathens” and Muslims, the latter of whom received particular interest.<sup>128</sup> Anglo-Egyptian victory in the Sudan was interpreted as opening a new opportunity in this ideological war between these Abrahamic faiths, as evidenced by the following comment made by Presbyterian missionary Charles Watson: ‘What means the history of this land...with its bloodshed

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Archival designations include SAD [Sudan Archive Durham; Durham University] and ACR [Comboni Mission Archive, Rome].

<sup>127</sup> Bennet Burleigh, *Khartoum Campaign 1898: or, The Re-Conquest of the Soudan*. London: Chapman & Hall, Limited; 1899; vii, viii.

<sup>128</sup> See David W. Lesch, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; 20-22 and J. I. Smith, ‘Christian missionary views of Islam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 9, 3 (1998): 357, 358.

and war, with its death of Gordon and its reconquest of the country by Herbert Kitchener, what is it all but a dramatic call to the Church of God to enter in and occupy the land for Christ?’<sup>129</sup> After the war the country became known as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, the official designation that remained until 1956. While Kitchener and Lord Cromer (Egypt’s Consul-General from 1883-1907) were each reticent to allow open proselytizing in the predominately Muslim North, mission organizations were allowed to have relatively free reign in educational, medical, industrial, and evangelistic work in the South. Institutionalized mission work in the region during this period set the wheels in motion for Christianity, by mid-century, to develop into a primary identity-marker used to distinguish the South from the North.

Concomitant with the wave of mission Christianity into the South were British efforts to ensure that the Southern provinces were ‘protected’ from Northern, Arab, Islamic influences. While mindful of the political pragmatism of governing Christians and Muslims equally, officials discussed how best to ensure that the South be prepared for Christianity and preserve its indigenous ‘African’ cultures. The most significant attempt to accomplish these goals was the decision to create an armed force comprised of locally-recruited regiments that would keep Southern soldiers away from the Egyptian Army’s ‘Islamicizing’ influence: the Equatorial Corps. In these ways the early twentieth century witnessed the establishment of structures from which Christian intelligentsia, clerics, and soldiery—each leaders of Southern nationalism—emerged.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Charles R. Watson, *The Sorrow and Hope of the Egyptian Sudan: A Survey of Missionary Conditions and Methods of Work in the Egyptian Sudan*. Philadelphia: The Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 1913; 191.

<sup>130</sup> See Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Missionary Legacies: Muslim-Christian Encounters in Egypt and Sudan during the Colonial and Postcolonial Periods’ *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa*, ed. Benjamin F. Soares. Brill: Leiden, 2006; 63-64, where in reference to the intelligentsia in the 1960s she states that, ‘By 1964, Presbyterians alone claimed 5,000 southern Sudanese converts—a small fraction of the population but

This chapter begins with a description of Southern Sudan before the onset of the Mahdiyya and highlights the cultural and linguistic diversity that existed in the region. It continues with a description of political consolidation in the North and the Mahdist movement of the 1880s-90s that attracted missionary attention to the Sudan. The chapter proceeds with a sketch of missionaries' arrival in Southern Sudan as an extension of the military war against the Mahdi and their role in encouraging the Condominium's goal of establishing a Christian sphere in the South that could serve as a buffer against Arabism and Islam. It concludes with the formation of the Equatorial Corps, a prime example of the ways in which political, racial, and religious aims merged together in a structural organization purposed as a defense against Islam. These themes and developments are indispensable in setting up the rest of this study on the genealogy of religious nationalism in Southern Sudan.

#### Southern Sudanese Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, pre-1880s

Most scholars pinpoint the beginning of modern Sudanese history with Muhammad Ali's Ottoman invasion in 1820, establishing a Turco-Egyptian rule which lasted until the Mahdist overthrow in 1881. With the defeats of the Funj, Sennar and Kordofan in 1820-21 the core of what became the Democratic Republic of the Sudan in the twentieth century was founded as a political entity. Ali's takeover effectively spurred centralized government in the region for the first time in its history.<sup>131</sup> With the conquest of al-Taka in 1841 and the incorporations of Darfur, Equatoria, Bahr al-Ghazal, and the

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enough to contribute to the modern southern intelligentsia and set the foundations for accelerated southern Christianization in the postcolonial civil-war era.'

<sup>131</sup> See Richard Gray, 'Some Aspects of Islam in the Southern Sudan during the Turkiya' in *Northern Africa: Islam and Modernization*. Ed. Michael Brett. London: Cass, 1973; 65; Gino Barsella and Miguel A. Ayuso Guixot, *Struggling to be Heard: The Christian Voice in Independent Sudan, 1956-1996*. (Faith in Sudan No. 4) Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998; 13; and H.A. Ibrahim and B.A. Ogot, 'The Sudan in the Nineteenth Century.' In *General History of Africa*, vol. 6, Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1880s, ed. J.F. de Ajayi. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989; 372.

Red Sea coast during Khedive Ismail's reign, administered territory by the eve of the Mahdiya extended North to South from the second cataract to the Equatorial Lakes and, West to East, from Darfur to the Red Sea.<sup>132</sup> The Turco-Egyptian administration was a military government, with military officers governing each province while Sudanese chiefs and indigenous leaders were deprived of their traditional authority. This has been said to have engendered a humiliating effect among the people.<sup>133</sup>

Until the Turkish conquest political and economic powers of the Northern states and Southern Sudan were relatively comparable, though the South—as evidenced by its variety of social and political systems—was arguably more diverse from a cultural and linguistic standpoint.<sup>134</sup> During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Islam became increasingly allied to Sudanese political power. Political systems with nominal Islamic allegiance were established in regions like Sinnar and Darfur, and a bevy of political shifts and socioeconomic conditions spurred the adoption of Arabic and Islamic culture in Northern and Western Sudan.<sup>135</sup> Although the influx of Arabism and Islam did not eliminate the North's linguistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity, a cultural unity was established in a manner that was not replicated in the South. In addition to the fact that most Northern Muslims claimed patrilineal descent from notable Arab ancestors, 'in sharp contrast to Southern Sudan, it was comprehended within a single religious and cultural framework. Most people north of the 13<sup>th</sup> parallel had by the 19<sup>th</sup> century become

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<sup>132</sup> Ibrahim and Ogot, 'Sudan', 372.

<sup>133</sup> Mahgoub el-Tigani Mahmoud, 'The Mahdist Correctional System in the Sudan: Aspects of Ideology in Politics.' *Africa Today* 28, no. 2 (1981): 80.

<sup>134</sup> Ibrahim and Ogot, 'Sudan', 363 and Øystein H. Rolandsen, 'From Colonial Backwater to an Independent State' in *One Church From Every Tribe, Tongue and People: Symposium on the Role of the Church in the Independence of South Sudan*. Papers presented at a Symposium held at Nyajuron Cultural Centre and St. Theresa's Cathedral Juba, South Sudan 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Ed. John Ashworth. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2012; 17.

<sup>135</sup> Abdel Sidahmed, *Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan*. Richmond, Surrey [England]: Curzon, 1997; 5.

Muslims'.<sup>136</sup> Before the 1830s Southern Sudan had social and political systems ranging from the Shilluk and Azande kingdoms to the more egalitarian Nuer and Dinka structures. In a most general sense 'Nilotics'—the Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk—comprise the main group of Southerners along with other ethnic groups that include the Azande, Bari, and Latuko (each with their own languages and traditional religions). Although many languages were spoken and religions practised, there is reason to believe that these conditions did not result in ethnic isolation; on the contrary groups had frequent contact with one another.<sup>137</sup>

Pre-Mahdiya missionary work in Sudan was largely executed by the Catholics. In 1846 Pope Gregory XVI created the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Africa, and Jesuit missionaries began working in the South in 1850. By 1860, however, the Jesuits were compelled to leave their Holy Cross and Gondokoro stations in part because the Bari would only tolerate missionaries if they proved to be sufficient trading partners in firearms and allies in war.<sup>138</sup> The British and Foreign Bible Society started working in the country in 1866, but this proved to be a brief venture and would resume after over thirty years of inactivity. While only a small number of Muslims were converted during this initial period of mission work, the greatest impact was the establishment of a tangible Christian presence in Sudan (particularly among non-Muslim groups). The rise of Mahdism brought a violent end to this period of mission work. When missionary efforts resumed after the fall of that regime, there were only a small number of local and Middle

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<sup>136</sup> Lilian Passmore Sanderson and Neville Sanderson (contributor), *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan, 1899-1964 [ERP]*. London: Ithaca Press; Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1981; 8.

<sup>137</sup> Rolandsen, 'Backwater', 17 and Barsella and Guixot, *Struggling*, 11-12.

<sup>138</sup> See Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 131 and the Sandersons', *ERP*, 18-19.

Eastern Christians (from the Coptic Church, for example) who were not part of Western denominations.<sup>139</sup>

Primary source material from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries speak to the sundry languages missionary translators in the South had to work with. A series of missionary explorations into the South occurred after the creation of the Central African Vicariate, and travel diaries and accounts recounting these voyages provide insight into the linguistic terrain missionaries needed to understand to effectively spread the Gospel. Fr. Emanuele Pedemonte, who traveled up the White Nile in 1849-1850, was one of the first Europeans to investigate Nilotic linguistics. ‘We did not learn much about the religion of these people’, he remarked, ‘as we did not understand their language’.<sup>140</sup> Before leaving the Aliab and Bor territories—where Dinka dialects end—he was joined by a dragoman [or dragomen] who knew the language of the Bari, Northern Mandari, Shir, and some Arabic. Another man from the Bari country who knew Arabic provided much assistance to the missionaries.<sup>141</sup> Angelo Vinco came to the Sudan with the first missionary party in 1847 and made two trips up the White Nile. Recounting his second trip Vinco included the following anecdote illustrating the potential challenges of translation:

‘As it had always been my intention to settle among the Bari, I had been making a study of their language since my first journey. As the language was difficult and I had not studied it well, I had secured the services of a Bari interpreter...No sooner had we reached the Shir than I

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<sup>139</sup> See Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 131 and John O. Voll, ‘Imperialism, Nationalism and Missionaries: Lessons from Sudan for the Twenty-First Century’ *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 8 (1997), no. i: 40.

<sup>140</sup> For quote see Emanuele Pedemonte, ‘A Report on the Voyage of 1849-50’ in Richard Hill and Elias Toniolo, eds. *The Opening of the Nile Basin: Writings by Members of the Catholic Mission to Central Africa on the Geography and Ethnography of the Sudan, 1842-1881*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975; 57. For other information on Pedemonte see 55 and 58 [fn. 5]

<sup>141</sup> Pedemonte, ‘A Report on the Voyage of 1849-50’, 60.

discovered one night that my bag had been opened, most of the beads had disappeared and the interpreter had vanished. I was thus left alone in the midst of these wild tribes, without a working knowledge of their language and unable to converse with them. I cannot express the anguish I felt. I could see myself being forced to turn back and... would have been unable to remain among the Bari, even if I were to succeed in reaching them. However, I trusted myself to God, and without further meditation I gave orders to set sail, and the voyage continued. As the Shir have the same language as the Bari, I began to make myself understood a little, partly with the limited vocabulary at my command, and partly with the help of signs...<sup>142</sup>

Vinco noted that the people had no knowledge of the written word and would gather around him to ask for the latest news when he lifted his eyes from his books. The presence of Arabic in the areas he traveled is evidenced by the fact that when he was greeted at Margiù the people used *Rabbunā*—Arabic for Lord—when imploring God to help him and smooth out his difficulties.<sup>143</sup> Another missionary, Giovanni Beltrame, came to the Sudan in 1853 and became noted for his pioneering work in the Dinka language. He noted that Dinka was the most prominent language in the Upper Nile and that its differences among various ethnic groups—he listed eighteen—were small enough for them to understand each other and for him to understand any of their languages. As proof of this his Dunghiol interpreter could communicate with eight other ethnicities. The fruit of Beltrame's labor were the production of several texts: a dictionary comprised 2,692 words from Italian to Dinka and 2,212 Dinka words into Italian (the latter of which included was accented and contained illustrated examples), a book on Cic habits entitled

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<sup>142</sup> For the quotation see Angelo Vinco, 'First Christian to Live Among the Bari. His Journeys, 1851-1852' in Hill and Toniolo, ed. *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, 76. For aforementioned information on Vinco see *Basin*, 74.

<sup>143</sup> See *Ibid*, 80 (for *Rabbunā*) and 99-100.

*Exercises and Dialogues*, and *General Rules of Grammar* where he tried to organize the Dinka language.<sup>144</sup>

Based on comments made by Watson it is evident that Southern Sudan's linguistic milieu continued to present translation problems into the twentieth century. In a section of his *Sorrow and Hope* concerning work with the Shilluk language, he lists in a series of questions some serious difficulties for the mission. As a language that had never been written, should Arabic characters (which might lead Shilluk to learn Arabic easier and consequently Islam) or Roman characters be used? How should sounds without European equivalent be represented? He continued that even when a system for transcribing sounds had been found the work of obtaining a vocabulary would be no small matter.<sup>145</sup> 'how can you point to mental, moral and spiritual realities and discover the equivalents of "thought," "purpose," "love,"...And even when long vocabularies have been listed, how will the grammatical structure of the language be analyzed?'<sup>146</sup> Despite such problems Watson noted that German linguist Diedrich Westermann was able to produce a short grammar, a larger work comprised of folklore, dictionary and grammar, and a small primer. Nevertheless, according to Rev. R.E. Carson, the work in obtaining Scripture translations was one of the main tasks that remained to be accomplished.<sup>147</sup> Echoing Vinco's issues over a half-century earlier, Watson noted the ways in which the efficacy of a Mission's evangelistic efforts could be heavily predicated on the interpreter:

'The earliest efforts at evangelistic work were by means of an interpreter, a Mohammedan who was a Shilluk by birth, but who had lived in Northern Sudan for some time...what

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<sup>144</sup> Giovanni Beltrame, 'On the White Nile from Khartoum to Gondokoro, 1859-1860' in *Basin*, 129, 136.

<sup>145</sup> Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 157.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, 158.

<sup>147</sup> Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 158 (where he includes R.E. Carson's quote from 'the Report of 1908' concerning the attainment of Scriptural translations) and 159, concerning Westermann.



assurance had the missionary that his thought reached the mind of the native Shilluk?...the missionary had to express his own thought in Arabic, to most of the missionaries an unfamiliar language. Then the Mohammedan interpreter had to grasp the thought thus crudely expressed; to what extent would his Moslem conceptions permit him to understand the Christian truth?...to what extent might he be expected to be either willing or able to translate into the Shilluk language these Christian terms and teachings?’<sup>148</sup>

These were some linguistic questions and concerns that continued to face missionaries as they sought to connect with communities in Southern Sudan. The following chapter includes a discussion on continued linguistic efforts during the mid-Condominium period, when missionaries created dictionaries and the administration legislated the use of particular languages in Southern education.

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By 1841 Ali’s expeditions had penetrated a thousand miles south of Khartoum, and with Turco-Egyptian expansion into the South came the influx of foreign religions, governments, ideas, and products like firearms and sugar. The quest for slaves, gold, and ivory lured newcomers away from the Nile and into the hinterland, and by 1880 most of Southern Sudan had been explored. Among these newcomers was a particular group of Northerners called *jallaba*. An Arabic term for small-scale merchants and traders, it was historically used when referring to Arab and Arabized Nubian merchants from Northern riverain groups who in the nineteenth century were driven by the ivory and slave trades to areas like Equatoria and Bahr al-Ghazal. Though they initially came as servants and armed retainers of foreign merchants, in time they increased in power, influence, and

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid, 159-160

notoriety.<sup>149</sup> Writing in the 1980s H.A. Ibrahim and B.A. Ogot noted that their attitude and violence towards Southerners ‘nurtured the distrust and fear that still dominates the relations between northern and southern parts of the country.’<sup>150</sup> More than this, however, Romolo Gessi—an Italian soldier and explorer who served under Governor-General Charles Gordon and stopped a revolt of Arab slave traders in Southern Sudan<sup>151</sup> — suggested that the ivory trade not only planted tension between North and South but also bred inter-ethnic feuding within the South:

‘The Bagaras fight with the Shilluks, these attack the Nuers, the Nuers the Dinkas and the Dinkas the Baris. If a native has so much boldness as to thrust himself among a tribe that are strangers to him, he is immediately killed or made a slave...one village assaults another of the same tribe without plausible motive, for the mere purpose of plunder. The prisoners are sold to other tribes in exchange for cows and goats.’<sup>152</sup>

By the mid-1840s a significant amount of ivory was flowing from Southern Sudan to the North, and by the 1850s thousands of Southerners were being transported to Khartoum and Cairo. In the 1850s private slave armies led by ivory and slave merchants began to appear in the South, and soldiers from these armies and the Egyptian Army later formed the nucleus of Mahdist forces. Weak and vulnerable Southern groups were unable to provide meaningful resistance to the traders’ raids, and many were enslaved or killed in battles. While the Jieng and Noath protected themselves by retreating with their cattle

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<sup>149</sup> Gray, ‘Aspects’, 65; Rolandsen, ‘Backwater’, 17-18; ‘Jallaba’ *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth edition. Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban Jr., and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 228, and Ibrahim and Ogot, ‘Sudan’, 373.

<sup>150</sup> Ibrahim and Ogot, ‘Sudan’, 373.

<sup>151</sup> ‘Romolo Gessi’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2014. [<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/232062/Romolo-Gessi>]. Consulted 13 November 2014.

<sup>152</sup> Romolo Gessi Pasha, *Seven Years in the Soudan Being a Record of Explorations, Adventures, and Campaigns Against the Arab Slave Hunters*. Ed. and Collected by Felix Gessi. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1892. Republished in 1968 by Gregg International Publishers Limited (Farnborough, Hants., England); 84-85.

into swamps, the general narrative of the region during that period is one of decimation and suffering. It has been said that the Dinka were the most sought-after slaves during the Turco-Egyptian period, with constant penetration into their northwest Dinkaland villages. For a long time the popular interpretation—based on British humanitarian preoccupation with the slave trade and late observations of British explorers—was that Islam and its sanction of the slave trade sowed enmity between North and South. Evidence from earlier observers, however, illustrates that the slave trade was not initially responsible; rather, ethnic groups' unpreparedness to meet the ivory trade's demands and European traders' insatiable desire to win quick and easy profits have been cited.<sup>153</sup> During this time Western nations began applying pressure on Egyptian and Ottoman rulers to eliminate the slave trade in the Upper Nile. Because the trade—based on corruption, murder, and enslavement—was operating in Ottoman territory, Ottoman rulers sought the help of Europeans (Baker, General Charles 'Chinese' Gordon, Amin Pasha, and Romolo Gessi) to bring order and establish legitimate trade. These men would have little success.<sup>154</sup> Regardless of Islam's purported association with Southern slavery, it can be said that Islamic and Arab influences increased in the late-nineteenth century as a result of government expansion in the region. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal the Feroqe people had fully converted to Islam, and in Equatoria some notables were beginning to adopt Arab dress, social customs, and attend Muslim festivals.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Philip Legge Pitya, 'History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan, 1898-1964' Dissertation, Boston University Graduate School, 1996; 46-47; Ibrahim and Ogot, 'Sudan', 368; Gray, 'Aspects', 67; Douglas Johnson, 'Sudanese Military Slavery from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century'. In *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour*, ed. Leonie Archer. London: Routledge, 1988; 143; and Stephanie Beswick, *Sudan's Blood Memory: The Legacy of War, Ethnicity, and Slavery in South Sudan*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004; 201.

<sup>154</sup> Pitya, *History*, 47.

<sup>155</sup> Sandersons, *ERP*, 11

Thus, it is important to note that North-South relations were already highly contentious before the inception of Anglo-Egyptian colonialism in the late nineteenth century. In addition, the enduring impact of Turco-Egyptian slavery on Southern Sudanese consciousness is evidenced in the ways that twentieth century nationalists used the history of slavery to chastise Northerners and fuel efforts to prevent future exploitation. While sundry episodes are noted in the chapters detailing events from the end of the Second World War onwards, the following examples provide some insight into political endurance of the slavery trope for Southerners and Northerners alike.

The first comes from the 1947 Juba Conference, a foundational political conference between Northern and Southern delegates (this is discussed in greater length in Chapter Three). At one point T.R.H. Owen, Deputy Governor of Bahr el Ghazal, addressed those Northerners present and explained that they were still ‘suffering from the sins of Zubeir Pasha and the slavers.’<sup>156</sup> Zubeir Rahama Mansour was, during the Turco-Egyptian period, Northern Sudan’s greatest slave hunter. One of Zubeir’s slave-hunting objectives was to raise a personal army, and with this army he conquered Dar Fur.<sup>157</sup> Owen continued that though the North had forgotten the oppressive days the South had not and remained suspicious. With this preface he concluded that Southerners would never willfully join the North unless they were convinced that Northerners had really changed. Mohd. Saleh Eff. Shingeiti stated that Northerners did not want to dominate and, responding to Owen’s slave trade reference, countered that the British had been history’s biggest enslavers. Not only were the West Indies populated by Africans whom

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<sup>156</sup> ‘Appendix 9: Proceedings of the Juba Conference on the Political Development of the Southern Sudan, June 1947’, in Mohamed Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict*. London: C. Hurst & Co., 1968; 141. See also 136 for info. on Owen.

<sup>157</sup> Mansour Khalid, *War and Peace in the Sudan*. London: Kegan Paul Limited, 2003; 8.

the British had enslaved, he claimed, but slavery had been introduced into the Sudan from Abyssinia under the Condominium Government. Indeed, as a Sub-Mamur in the White Nile he had personally been involved in emancipating slaves.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the history of slavery could be used for the political purposes of casting doubt on the possibility of national unity and impugning those—in this case a Briton—compelled to make such a claim. Neither the Sudanese nor the British, it seemed, could in this instance completely shed the sins of their fathers.

During the First Sudanese Civil War (1955-1972) slavery played a prominent role in the *The Problem of the Southern Sudan*, written by Southern leaders Joseph Oduho, William Deng, Catholic priest Saturnino Lohure (unofficially—see Chapter Five). Published in 1963 as the War was intensifying, *Problem*'s three-paragraph long 'History' section gave prominent place to slavery during the Turco-Egyptian and Mahdist periods. It was then that

‘the South experienced the unrelieved tragedy of the slave trade...It is unfortunate that half a century of Anglo-Egyptian rule did not succeed in dissipating the impressions left by the slave trade on Northern and Southern Sudanese...the former tend to regard themselves as born masters, and the latter surround themselves in a stockade of suspicion which has proved to be well founded.’<sup>159</sup>

Two years later the *Voice of Southern Sudan* noted that during Sudanese Prime Minister M.A. Mahgoub's Kenyan leg of goodwill tour of East Africa, many Southern refugees demonstrated and carried banners that read, '*Sons of Mahdi, ancient slavers leave the*

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<sup>158</sup> 'Appendix 9: Proceedings of the Juba Conference' in *Southern Sudan*, 141.

<sup>159</sup> Joseph Oduho and William Deng, *The Problem of the Southern Sudan* [London: Institute of Race Relations, Oxford University Press, 1963], 11.

*South alone*'.<sup>160</sup> Reference to nineteenth-century slavery continued through to the Second Civil War in invocations concerning Josephine Bakhita. Bakhita was born in Darfur in 1869 and kidnapped by slavers at the age of six. Sold after a month of imprisonment, she attempted escape only to be captured and sold twice again. Cruelly treated and regularly beaten, she was ransomed by Italian consul Callisto Legnani. After sailing to Italy she was placed in a Venetian school run by the Canossian Sisters. She joined the catechumenate, converted to Christianity, and took religious vows in 1896. In 1902 Bakhita was appointed to the Canossian convent in Schio, where she spent the rest of her life. Beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1992, she was canonized in October 2000.<sup>161</sup> Bakhita achieved particular prominence during the Second Civil War not only because of the increased oppression of Sudanese Christianity but also because of the Khartoum government's use of slavery. During the Pope's 1993 papal visit to Sudan Catholic Archbishop Gabriel Zubeir Wako remarked that no one had ever brought such honor to the country as Bakhita, and that her name was the best known name in Sudan's Catholic Church; a Church, he noted, was comprised mostly of Southerners. 'Ever since her beatification,' he noted, 'they have turned to her in their troubles, and they have never been disappointed.'<sup>162</sup> That same year the *SPLM/SPLA Update* published a letter warning the pontiff that the Khartoum government was comprised of 'the same people who still

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<sup>160</sup> 'News--Comments' *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 3 No. 2 (October 1965): 4. For biographical information on Mahgoub see 'Mahjub, Muhammad Ahmad (1908-1976),' in Richard A. Lobban, Jr, Robert S. Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85). Third Edition. Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002; 181.

<sup>161</sup> Aylward Shorter m. Afr., 'Bakhita, Josephine Margaret Fortunata' *Dictionary of African Christian Biography* [[http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/bakhita\\_josephine.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/bakhita_josephine.html)]. Consulted 2 May 2015.

<sup>162</sup> Gabriel Zubeir Wako, 'Welcoming of the Holy Father By Archbishop Gabriel Zubeir Wako to the Eucharistic Celebration' *Letters to the Church of the Sudan*. Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference. Khartoum, 2001; 266.

practice slavery, capturing and selling African children. Indeed the tragedy of Sister Bakhita, proclaimed every year.<sup>163</sup>

In these ways nineteenth century slavery was salient for subsequent figures who attempted to frame seeking to chastise Northerners for their former (or contemporary) slavery. My chapters on the mid-twentieth century discuss in much greater depth the degree to which Southern Sudanese discourse concerning rule from the North was saturated with the themes of subjection and enslavement.

#### The Mahdiya: Incipient Sudanese Nationalism and Impact on the South

From this milieu of Turco-Egyptian rule, slavery, and Western pressure emerged the cataclysmic era in Sudanese history known as the Mahdiya. While there are several reasons why the revolt was occasioned, reaction to the slave trade's elimination appeared to represent the primary engine driving the revolution.

In his original account of the Mahdiya published in 1903, Na'ūm Shuqayr listed the violence which accompanied the 1820s conquest as creating a desire for revenge.<sup>164</sup> Indeed, at the most general level the Turco-Egyptian regime was unpopular. A foreign power dedicated to extracting Sudanese wealth, it was seen as a conquering force regardless of the race, religion, or language of its representatives. While some Northerners reaped financial benefits from the slave trade, most were suffering under the weight of Ottoman corruption and taxation (which was accompanied by violence). Northern Sudanese regretted the loss of their former ethnic independence, and leading up to the revolt nomads on the Southern fringe became increasingly conscious of

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<sup>163</sup> 'Christian Leaders Present Our Tragedy to the Pope' *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 2 no. 6 (14 February 1993): 4-5. Bakhita's legacy continues to be celebrated in the form of Radio Bakhita, a Catholic radio station run based in Juba.

<sup>164</sup> Hasan Qasim Murad, 'The Mahdist Movement in the Sudan' *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Autumn 1978), 156-157. Shuqayr's account was entitled *Ta'rikh al-Sudān al-Qadīm wa al-Hadith wa Jughrāfiyatuhu* (Cairo, [1903]). Information found in fn. 3 in Murad, 'Mahdist', p. 179.

government. Conditions birthed from the 1879 disappearance of Ismail Pasha's autocracy and Governor-General Gordon's 1880 resignation also served as contributing factors to the growing unrest.<sup>165</sup> Aside from anti-government sentiments, however, it is also worth noting that by the early 1880s the Sudan was already beginning to slip from the regime's administrative grasp. Nomadic and semi-nomadic populations that were most removed from central control began to feel a losing sense of government; 'the sedentary population began to wonder uneasily if the government would be able to maintain at least minimal public security...certain groups began to hedge on their embarrassingly strong commitments to the regime...other groups, bearing old grudges, waited for the time to strike.'<sup>166</sup>

If one cause can be singled out from the rest, however, many scholars of the Mahdiya period have maintained that the revolt was launched because of the government's attempts to abolish the slave trade (though Kim Searcy has recently argued that the Mahdi was responding to the Turkiya's imposition of poll taxes, which was interpreted as a corrupt form of government distinct from his envisioned Islamic state).<sup>167</sup> Sudanese slavery was an old institution that was part of societal structures in the North and South regardless of religion or race. Associated with ethnic warfare within the North and the South, slaves were taken when stronger groups conquered or raided weaker ones. While it started as domestic slavery, slavery in the Sudan turned into gang slavery purposed for supplying European [presumably Ottoman] demand.<sup>168</sup> Muhammed Ali,

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<sup>165</sup> See Pitya, 'History', 48; Murad, 'Mahdist', 157-160; and Mahmoud, 'Mahdist Correctional System', 80.

<sup>166</sup> L. Carl Brown, 'The Sudanese Mahdiya.' In *Rebellion in Black Africa*, ed. R.I. Rotberg. London: Oxford University Press, 1971; 14.

<sup>167</sup> Kim Searcy, 'The Sudanese Mahdi's Attitudes on Slavery and Emancipation' *Islamic Africa* v. 1 no. 1 (Spring 2010), 63. Here she specifically cites P.M. Holt, author of *The Mahdist State in the Sudan*, as emblematic of this scholarship.

<sup>168</sup> Beshir, *Background to Conflict*, 11.



unsure of the loyalty of his Albanian army, wanted a slave army that would neutralize their numerical superiority. As local Sudanese rulers surrendered to his forces Ali urged his commanders to send slaves back to Egypt. During Turco-Egyptian rule the Turks turned to the recruitment of military slaves from Southern and Central Sudan, with the Shilluk, Dinka, and Nuba targeted as the three principal ethnic groups.<sup>169</sup> The slave trade was a major component of Sudan's nineteenth century economy, and by 1877 it was considered Northern Sudan's primary financial enterprise. Few if any in Egypt or the Sudan had a vested interest in abolishing the trade; in the 1860s and 1870s there were an estimated five to six thousand slave traders in Southern Sudan.<sup>170</sup>

Despite the slave trade's lucrative nature the Egyptian government had cause to levy prohibitive measures. With slavery outlawed in the British Empire and most recently in the United States, rising antislavery pressure compelled Egyptian rulers to end the trade. When Sir Samuel Baker was hired to become Governor of Equatoria, his responsibilities included the suppression of the trade in areas under his jurisdiction. Still, Egyptian efforts to eliminate the trade did not appear to reflect an authentic desire. Provincial governors were reluctant to offend Egyptian and Sudanese merchants who were averse to relinquishing the business that funded their livelihood, and administrators merely read proclamations that condemned it rather than implementing effective policies.<sup>171</sup> Though Baker and Gordon enjoyed some success, attempts to suppress the slave trade were largely unsuccessful. Nevertheless, many who were active in the trade felt financially threatened. Egypt occupied and policed specific slave trading areas, and

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<sup>169</sup> Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, 2005; 3 and Khalid, *War and Peace in the Sudan*, 8.

<sup>170</sup> Searcy, 'Slavery and Emancipation', 63, 71.

<sup>171</sup> Searcy, 'Slavery and Emancipation', 71 and Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits*, 3-4.

many on the geographical margins (southern and western Sudan) would later constitute the Mahdi's earliest and fiercest supporters. 'Uthmān Diqna, for example, was an established trader in Suakin in Eastern Sudan before becoming an important Mahdist commander, and some of the most infamous slave raiders—Baqqara Arabs from Darfur—formed the Mahdiya's military core.<sup>172</sup> Despite the generally accepted notion that threats to eliminate the slave trade played a fundamental role in rallying support for the Mahdiya's push to expel the Turco-Egyptian regime, it would be imprudent to locate this as the singular reason behind the Mahdiya's rise to power. To echo L. Carl Brown,

'no monocausal theory will adequately reflect the complex totality out of which the Mahdiya arose. Embittered and resentful slave traders, tribal and brotherhood rivalries, a confused combination of new emerging classes and of old declining groups—all these played an important role in a movement which...was strongly marked and shaped by the venerable Sunni Muslim tradition of Mahdism.'<sup>173</sup>

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Muhammad Ahmad Ibn 'Abdullah [al-Mahdi] was born on Labab Island in Northern Sudan. Educated by prominent *fekis*, 'Abdullah became a pupil of Muhammad Sharif Nur al-Da'im and was initiated into the Sammaniya tariqa. He eventually became a disciple of Shaykh Qurashi wad al-Zayn, and his criticism of contemporary immorality combined with personal zeal and popular messianic expectations to spur his conviction that he was the Mahdi.<sup>174</sup> The conception of a *Mahdi*, or 'divinely guided one', is rooted in early Islamic history and the community's split into Shia and Sunni. Among members

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<sup>172</sup> Brown, 'The Sudanese Mahdiya', 12-13; Khalid, *War and Peace*, 15; Searcy, 'Slavery and Emancipation', 63, 68 [Searcy uses the participation of those who worked in the slave trade as evidence that supports Holt's argument (68)].

<sup>173</sup> Brown, 'The Sudanese Mahdiya', 14-15.

<sup>174</sup> 'Al-Mahdi, Muhammad Ahman Ibn 'Abdullah (1848-1885)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 279.

of both groups arose the idea of a restorer, or future deliverer. While Sunnis did not go far beyond that, the suppressed Shiite minority developed a theory in which a descendent of ‘Ali and Fatimah would appear, bringing righteousness to an ungodly world and rule for a millennium followed by the end of the world and final judgment. While conquerors have appropriated Mahdism for centuries, the movement led by ‘Abdullah in the late-nineteenth century is the latest of note.<sup>175</sup>

In May 1881 ‘Abdullah announced his divine mission and issued a call to fight the regime—the necessary first step towards creating a society governed by Islamic precepts. Support grew rapidly, and with each failed government attempt to defeat the movement the Mahdi’s fame increased. The defeat of British General Hicks Pasha allowed the Mahdi and his followers, or *Ansar*, to gain arms and strategic advantage. By 1884 he controlled most of Turco-Egyptian territory.<sup>176</sup> In his effort to discourage tribalism, encourage religious unity, and distance the movement from the old government, he authorized the burning of pedigree lists and books of law and theology. With the premise that the movement was a universal regime that offered membership or destruction, the Mahdi imposed traditional Islamic laws and modified the Five Pillars in significant ways: loyalty to the Mahdi was essential to true belief, *zakat* (almsgiving) became the state tax, service in jihad replaced the hajj, and the tenets that he was God’s Mahdi and the Prophet’s representative were added to the *shahada*. In late 1884, on the

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<sup>175</sup> P. K. Hitti, ‘Mahdī, Al-.’ *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 2nd ed. Vol. 9. Detroit: Gale, 2003; 48. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. Web. 14 November 2014. [http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3407707019&v=2.1&u=umuser&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=20cbee3d2340d16b2178fcffae2f1d6].

<sup>176</sup> ‘Al-Mahdi, Muhammad Ahman Ibn ‘Abdullah (1848-1885)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 279-280.

heels of roaring military successes and growing fame, he settled in Omdurman to support his followers' siege of Khartoum.<sup>177</sup>

Enter Charles Gordon. Born in 1833, 'Chinese' Gordon earned his moniker after serving in the Anglo-Chinese War and participating in the effort to crush the Taipeng Rebellion. He entered the Sudan in 1873 as Governor of Equatoria and was charged with establishing trade links to the lake region kingdoms and suppressing the local slave trade. Resigning in 1876, he became Sudan's Governor-General in 1877 and resigned three years later. The British government invited Gordon back to Sudan to facilitate the withdrawal of the Turco-Egyptian administration amidst the rising threat of the Mahdist revolt, but he conceived the mission as defending—rather than withdrawing from—the besieged city. He arrived in Khartoum in January 1884. During the lengthy siege Gordon refused to surrender or accept the Mahdi's offer for safe passage out of the country. Despite British relief efforts to reach Khartoum (which was cut off and surrounded by the end of the year), Gordon was killed on 26 January 1885.<sup>178</sup>

Gordon achieved worldwide fame as a Christian hero who had met death in its most glorious fashion: martyrdom. Protestant missions became invested in redressing his murder by bringing the Gospel into land of his ignominious conclusion. Weeks after his death the Church Missionary Society in London proposed the Gordon Memorial Mission to Sudan, and £3000 were immediately assigned to the cause.<sup>179</sup> The project aimed to

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<sup>177</sup> Thomas Ofcansky, 'Chapter 1: Historical Setting' in *A Country Study: Sudan*. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Edited by Helen Chapin Metz (research completed June 1991). [[http://postconflict.unep.ch/sudanreport/sudan\\_website/doccatcher/data/documents/Sudan%20A%20Country%20Study.pdf](http://postconflict.unep.ch/sudanreport/sudan_website/doccatcher/data/documents/Sudan%20A%20Country%20Study.pdf)]. Consulted 28 October 2014; pp. 36-37 and 'Al-Mahdi, Muhammad Ahman Ibn 'Abdullah (1848-1885)' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 279-280.

<sup>178</sup> 'Gordon, Charles (1833-1885).' In *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 182-183.

<sup>179</sup> See Ronald C. Stevenson, 'Protestant Missionary Work in the Northern Sudan during the Condominium Period'. In *The Condominium Remembered: Proceedings of the Durham Sudan Historical Records Conference 1982. Volume II: The Transformation of the Old Order in the Sudan*. Ed. Deborah Lavin.

“perpetuate Gordon’s memory...through the direct proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the races inhabiting the upper basin of the Nile”.<sup>180</sup> While Governor-General Reginald Wingate privately agreed with Bishop Llewellyn Gwynne years later “in deeply regretting Gordon’s action in building a mosque at Wau and by other means encouraging the growth of Islam in those parts”,<sup>181</sup> Gordon’s saint-like depictions in popular British and Christian discourse ruled the day. More than twenty-five years after the Siege Gwynne positioned Gordon’s death as a key element in bringing about God’s Providential plan for the Sudan; “GOD is working out his great plan for the uplifting of the people of this country, and for the spreading of the gospel...for which cause I firmly believe General Gordon died and for which GOD gave this huge territory into the care of the British Race.”<sup>182</sup>

Following the Fall of Khartoum the Mahdi continued to live in Omdurman and suddenly died of typhus on 22 June 1885.<sup>183</sup> In emulation of the Prophet the Mahdi had appointed three caliphs to govern upon his death, but with each supported by their local region rivalry continued until Abdallahi ibn Muhammad emerged as the unchallenged leader. He became known as the *Khalifa*, or successor. Before his ascension to power the Mahdiah was a jihad state with Sharia courts that enforced Islamic law and the Mahdi’s precepts. However, after consolidating power, the Khalifa made significant changes.

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Durham: Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, 1993; 197 and Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Christians among Muslims: The Church Missionary Society in the Northern Sudan’, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2002); 55.

<sup>180</sup> See Sharkey, ‘Christians among Muslims’, 55, where she also takes the quotation from the Church Missionary Society Archives, Birmingham University, G3/E/P1/1900: General Committee Resolution, 13 Dec. 1899.

<sup>181</sup> SAD 27/3/53, 56, 57, 58; Wingate to Gwynne, October 9, 1911.

<sup>182</sup> SAD 27/3/29-31; Gwynne to Canon Gould, February 22, 1911. Curiously enough, this letter was written just months before Wingate wrote to Gwynne expressing his shared disappointment that Gordon had facilitated the construction of the mosque at Wau.

<sup>183</sup> ‘Al-Mahdi, Muhammad Ahman Ibn ‘Abdullah (1848-1885)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 280 and Ofcansky, ‘Setting’, 37.

These included purging the Mahdi's relatives and many of his early religious disciples, instituting an administration, and appointing Ansar as provincial *amirs*. Although he failed to restore Sudan's commercial state, the Khalifa did organize workshops to manufacture ammunition and maintain steamboats.<sup>184</sup>

While the Mahdiya's impact on Southern Sudan varied, general Southern sentiment maintains that the Mahdists merely inherited the oppressive tradition of the Turco-Egyptian regime. Despite this common interpretation, however, people within the South actually joined the Mahdiya to regain their own freedom and drove Ottoman Turks from the South. Nevertheless, when the Mahdists attempted to establish their own colonial-like hegemony Southerners successfully defended their interests. During much of the Mahdiya period most Southern communities regained control over their territories and managed their own affairs. With neighboring communities forming political alliances *jallaba* armies were driven out, curbing their slaving practices. Those slavers who stayed were mainly confined to their camps, and Mahdist influence in the South was generally restricted to garrison towns along the Nile.<sup>185</sup>

It is difficult to overestimate the disreputable position that the Mahdist regime came to occupy both within Christian missionary discourse and European circles. Khartoum—the epicenter of the revolution against the Turco-Egyptian government and seat of the new Mahdist establishment—received particular notoriety. Gordon's (in)famous death there embellished the notion that Khartoum was a critical site in the global religious conflict, particularly given the evangelical discourse about Christ's

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<sup>184</sup> Ofcansky, 'Setting', 37.

<sup>185</sup> See 'Mahdiya' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 281 and Pitya, 'History', 48.

Second Coming, the Antichrist, and the Mahdi.<sup>186</sup> Lord Salisbury saw in the Reconquest an opportunity to war with a country that was particularly disreputable, remarking “[it is] our desire to extirpate from the earth one of the vilest despotisms...ever seen...compared with which the worst performances of the worst minion of the Palace at Constantinople are bright and saintly deeds”.<sup>187</sup>

Gordon’s death galvanized the British public and became a *casus belli* for the Kitchener-led Anglo-Egyptian conquest. The Battle of Omdurman, with its tête-à-tête confrontation between Kitchener and the Khalifa, occurred in September 1898. Framed by Christian commentators as a physical manifestation of the spiritual battle between Christianity and Islam, Kitchener’s victory and the city’s destruction brought a stark degree of finality to the campaign and the Mahdiya, concluding what Sir Auckland Colvin called “a chapter which, even in the history of the Soudan, is unparalleled for horror and human depravity”.<sup>188</sup> The city’s carnage and destruction appeared to justify God’s approval for the British cause and His indictment of Islam. Upon seeing Omdurman Owen S. Watkins, a Wesleyan chaplain attached to Kitchener’s forces, reflected that ‘His wrath came to our minds, for this was a veritable African Sodom...Never in my whole life has sin appeared so evil and disgusting as on that day

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<sup>186</sup> Andrew Porter, ‘Evangelicalism, Islam, and Millennial Expectation in the Nineteenth Century’ in Dana L. Robert, ed. *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Studies in the History of Christian Missions). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; 70; see fn. 53 in Porter, ‘Evangelicalism’, 78.

<sup>187</sup> See Andrew Porter, ‘Evangelicalism, Islam, and Millennial Expectation in the Nineteenth Century’ in Dana L. Robert, ed. *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Studies in the History of Christian Missions). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; David Steele, ‘Lord Salisbury, the “False Religion” of Islam, and the Reconquest of the Sudan’ in Edward M. Spiers, ed. *Sudan: The Reconquest Reappraised*. London, Portland: Frank Cass, 1998; 24, for the explanation on Salisbury. For Salisbury’s quote he cites 4 Hansard, XLV, 32 (19 Jan. 1897) in fn. 79 (32)

<sup>188</sup> See V.G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes Towards the Outside World in the Imperial Age*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969; 216, where he cites for the quotation Auckland Colvin, *The Making of Egypt* (1906), p. 250 (Nelson edn.) (fn. 104; p. 241).

when viewed in its brutal native ugliness...'<sup>189</sup> Watson opined that God's Providence was at work in the victory at Omdurman. Describing the post-battle scene of dead Mahdist soldiers, he borrowed from Deuteronomy 32:35 in making the following statement:

'Look...at the faces of the dead on the battlefield of Omdurman and you will recognize the features of those tribes who...were foremost in slave raiding and slave trading. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay." And the death of these meant the opening of the Sudan to civilization and evangelization.'<sup>190</sup>

By connecting the slaughter at Omdurman to the subsequent missionary endeavor, Watson framed the military operations needed to conquer the country as God's way of blowing the door open to the Gospel. Within this paradigm the subsequent influx of missionaries into Southern Sudan can be properly understood as continuing the war effort with Gospels rather than guns.

#### Pre-1920s Missionary Investment in Southern Sudan

The nineteenth century witnessed both the rise of the evangelical movement and the colonial Western incursions into new regions in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. These realities encouraged many to blend commercial and political impulses with the moral responsibility to spread the Gospel to Muslims and 'heathens'.<sup>191</sup> In Africa, CMS missionaries grew concerned at what they perceived as Islam's breakneck expansion, particularly in the East African hinterland and West African coast.<sup>192</sup> With the mutiny of Sudanese Muslim 'Nubi' mercenaries in Uganda in 1898 and memories of the Nilotic slave trade, there was a tangible concern 'that Islam must not be allowed to penetrate into

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<sup>189</sup> Owen S. Watkins, *With Kitchener's Army: Being a Chaplain's Experiences with the Nile Expedition, 1898*. London: S.W. Partridge & Co., 1899; 207.

<sup>190</sup> Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 96. Deuteronomy 32:35 reads, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them.' (NIV)

<sup>191</sup> Smith, 'Christian missionary views of Islam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries', 357, 358.

<sup>192</sup> Sharkey, 'Christians among Muslims', 54



the Upper Nile where its insidious influence would spread into the new bastions of Christian Africa.<sup>193</sup> With the growing importance that Africa assumed in missionary thought, Southern Sudan began to represent an important region because it was conceived not only as a space relatively untapped by Christianity and Islam but also as a region where Christian or Islamic ‘victory’ hung in the balance; Gwynne, for example, wrote that he had arrived there ‘to start a new mission to try and thwart Islam in its threatened hold on the pagans...unless we can start more stations in these pagan Provinces I am convinced that Islam will triumph.’<sup>194</sup> In a private letter to Gwynne in May 1911 Wingate shared with evident edginess that

‘With regard to the evangelization of Pagan Southern Sudan, you and I have discussed this subject ad nauseam [author’s emphasis]...if you are going to put up a really strong barrier against the advance of Islam you will have to stir up the various Missionary Societies to far greater activity in these Southern districts than they are presently displaying...the Sudan Government is entirely sympathetic to every effort that Missionary Societies will make in this direction’<sup>195</sup>

In this vein the extension of missionary work in Southern Sudan was not only an extension of the war against the Mahdi but also the spread of Islam in Africa more broadly.

From the British perspective, the principle aim driving early Condominium mission work was to spread Christianity in the South while ensuring that mission work in the North would not kindle Muslim backlash or neo-Mahdist feeling. The government insisted that for a time no mission station be established north of the tenth parallel or any

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<sup>193</sup> ACR E/675/6/2; Robert O. Collins, ‘Africa Begins at Malakal’. Paper presented at the Conference ‘Religion and Politics in Sudan’ Centre de Recherches Africaines Paris (22-24 June 1988), 10-11.

<sup>194</sup> SAD 420/3/60; Llewellyn Gwynne to G.F.P. Blythe, 19 October 1913.

<sup>195</sup> SAD 27/3/49-50; Wingate to Gwynne, 17 May 1911.

other part or district that it recognized as Muslim. This policy materialized when Kitchener banned the newly-arrived CMS missionary Gwynne from working in the North. Both Kitchener and Cromer denied missionaries permission to discuss their faith with Muslims, and they furthermore assured religious leaders of their intention to safeguard Muslim institutions and practices.<sup>196</sup> “If free scope were allowed to missionary enterprise [in northern Sudan]”, he reasoned, “it would not only be wholly unproductive...but would also create a feeling of resentment culminating possibly in actual disturbances, which...would almost certainly throw back that work of civilization.”<sup>197</sup>

Amidst the administration’s attitude concerning mission work in the North, it did see the utility of sending them South, where they could serve as proxies of colonial power and minimize government costs of educational development. The government encouraged mission organizations to start mission schools and allowed them the right to evangelize.<sup>198</sup> In the early years several missionary societies entered the Condominium, the most prominent being the Roman Catholics, Church Missionary Society, and United Presbyterian Mission (also known as the ‘American Mission’). To reduce competition Wingate adopted a sphere of influence system in which spaces of operation were designated to each mission. The Roman Catholics worked along the White Nile’s western bank with headquarters at Lul (by 1913 they also worked at Yambio, and Tombura in Zandeland); the CMS operated in the Bahr el Ghazal district and were headquartered at

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<sup>196</sup> See Michael Snape, *The Redcoat and Religion: The Forgotten History of the British Soldier from the Age of Marlborough to the Eve of the First World War*. London: Routledge, 2005; 225; Hassan Makki Mohamed Ahmed, *Sudan: The Christian Design*. [United Kingdom]: The Islamic Foundation, 1974; 62, and Sharkey, ‘Christians among Muslims’, 56.

<sup>197</sup> Cromer to Lansdowne, Cairo, 15 March 1905, submitting Report on Sudan, 1904, by Lord Cromer. FO 78/5430 No. 26, as taken from Voll, ‘Imperialism, nationalism and missionaries’, 40.

<sup>198</sup> Sharkey, ‘Christians among Muslims’, 57.

Malek; the Sobat watershed was given to the Americans, with Doleib Hill as their first station. The Lado Enclave—which will be discussed briefly—became open for all missions. While mission work entailed Bible translation, education, medicine, and industrial work, the overarching and unifying element was evangelization.<sup>199</sup>

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Each organization concentrated evangelistic activities from a mission station, the geographical headquarters of a regional mission enterprise. Acting as the heart of the mission-field corpus, the Gospel could spread outwards from the station to surrounding communities. Before establishing a station missionaries would send a fact-finding team to the area to determine mission suitability, and important factors taken into consideration included communications, demographics, politics, health, and safety. The study of local languages and cultures was a critical part of mission work, and secular elements of the mission enterprise like medical, industrial, and educational work were used with evangelism to attract locals to the Gospel.<sup>200</sup>

The Roman Catholics were the first missionaries to enter the South after the conquest. In 1900 the boundaries of the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Africa were defined as extending from Aswan to Lake Albert, and in December of that year Monseigneur Antonio Riveggio—along with two other priests—established a mission between the Shilluk people in Lul, near Malakal.<sup>201</sup> In 1903 German Bishop Franz Geyer returned to Sudan (he had previously served in the country in 1883) and succeeded Riveggio as Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa. Under his leadership Catholic evangelism was carried out in the Catholic sphere of central and western Bahr al-Ghazal. Three new

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<sup>199</sup> See *Ibid*, 57, Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 131-132, Ahmed, *Design*, 59-60, and Pitya, *History*, 167-168.

<sup>200</sup> Pitya, *History*, 159-160.

<sup>201</sup> Ahmed, *Design*, 55 and 87.

mission stations appeared the following year, and in 1905 British officers in Wau invited the Roman Catholics to open Stack Memorial School there to prepare the children of local chiefs for positions in the colonial regime. In time the school became a full mission station in its own right. In 1910 the Catholics reopened their first mission station in Southern Sudan at Gondokoro, and by the end of 1913 they had opened stations allowing them to work among several ethnic groups, namely the Azande, Ndogo, Balanda Bviri, and Fertit communities. In May 1913 the Bahr el-Ghazal mission was separated from the Vicar Apostolic of the Sudan and became a Prefecture Apostolic headquartered at Wau. Catholic numbers in 1916 tallied twenty-six fathers and fourteen lay brothers.<sup>202</sup> The rising number of conversions reflected early evangelistic success and, perhaps, correlated directly with the increasing number of missions and Christian personnel in the region. In February 1907 Father Paolo Maroni baptized the first eight Christians (six boys and two married women) at Kangnjo, and in 1911 the first ten baptisms were confirmed. By 1913 two to three hundred Southerners had been baptized in Wau, and others joined the Church in Lul, Tonga, Mbili, and Kayango.<sup>203</sup> The Catholics actually refused to accept the sphere system on the premise that evangelism could not be bounded by secular limits, and Gayer even requested the possible doing away of any spheres so that all Christian organizations could work where they wished south of Kodok.<sup>204</sup>

Catholic evangelism in Bahr el-Ghazal—and the choice of Wau for headquarters—appeared to be quite strategic. Wau was Bahr el Ghazal’s provincial

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 55, 56-57, and 87; Philip Pitya, ‘The Role of the Local Church towards the Independence of South Sudan’ in *One Church*, 106-107.

<sup>203</sup> Ahmed, *Design*, 56 and Pitya, ‘Role’, 107.

<sup>204</sup> Ahmed, *Design*, 60-61, and SAD 27/3/68; Gwynne to Baglis, 18 November 1911. For authorship confirmation see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, ‘Llewellyn Henry Gwynne’ [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/gwynnl.xml;query=Gwynne;brand=default#1>]. 13 December 2014.

capital, and as a base for military expeditions to Sudan's Southwestern frontier the town had a concentrated government-military presence. In 1903 the provincial Governor founded Southern Sudan's first Government school at Wau which became an emblem of government-mission collaboration in education. Located 850 miles south of Khartoum, Watson described Wau as 'the largest pagan center in the Bahr el Ghazal district'.<sup>205</sup> The 1906 Annual Report included that the Wau Mission had established a School—presumably the Stack Memorial School—that claimed forty-three boys.<sup>206</sup> Against the backdrop of mission work being done in the area, Islam's presence in Wau appeared to be increasing. Bishop Gwynne remarked in 1911 that Bishop Geyer had stated that Wau had already been so influenced by Islam that the Governor 'discouraged any "propaganda" to challenge the might of Islam amongst the natives at Wau. The Bishop described how by a succession of Mamours, Islam had been placed in an almost unassailable position.'<sup>207</sup> Given these conditions Geyer intended to withdraw all of his missionaries except those working at the technical school there, leaving only the Zande people open to his mission.<sup>208</sup> Despite the seemingly challenging situation, there was no such withdrawal or acknowledgement of 'defeat'. Conversely, Wau came to assume a central place in Catholic mission work in the ensuing decades. It was made the administrative center for the Vicariate Apostolic in 1913, and in time the influential Catholic newspaper *Messenger* would be edited and printed from Wau. In 1974 it became headquarters for the Wau Diocese.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> See Sandersons, *ERP*, 19 and Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 187.

<sup>206</sup> EGYPT. No. 1 (1907). *Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1906*. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, [1907]; 120.

<sup>207</sup> SAD 27/3/68; Gwynne to Baglis, 18 November 1911.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.* and Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 187-188.

<sup>209</sup> Pitya, 'Role', 106-107 and ACR A/93/12/12, 8-9.

The first Protestants to enter the field were the American Presbyterians, with its first four missionaries reaching Doleib Hill under the leadership of John Kelly Giffen on 28 March 1902. This ‘American Mission’ was sent by the United Presbyterian Church as an extension of its work in Egypt, with the Sudan conceptualized as a link between its work in Egypt and Ethiopia. Doleib Hill was located in a Shilluk area, and the Presbyterians invested in educational and medical work among that group and, in Nasser, worked among the Anuak and Nuer.<sup>210</sup> In its early years the Mission was cited by various officials for its non-religious work. In the Annual Report for 1904 Wingate noted that the work of American and Catholic missions was “rather that of civilizing agents than an attempt to at once introduce Christianity...in taking up this attitude, they show their wisdom...the technical instruction which they are imparting...is very beneficial from a Government point of view.”<sup>211</sup> Cromer was impressed after his visit to the Sobat station, remarking like Wingate that its work was “manifestly conducted on those...common-sense principles which...are strongly characteristic of American Mission work in Egypt. No parade is made of religion...the work of conversion, properly so-called, can scarcely be said to have commenced.”<sup>212</sup> Giffen believed that the best way to prepare for Christian teaching was to gain insights into Shilluk customs, win their confidence, and instill basic Christian morals. Cromer attributed his treatment of the Shilluk in allaying their

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<sup>210</sup> Extract from Cromer’s official 1903 report, as taken from Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 224; Ahmed, *Design*, 61 [see fn. 26 on p. 88 for Giffin information], Pitya, ‘History’, 149.

<sup>211</sup> EGYPT. No. 1. (1905). *Reports by His Majesty’s Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904*. London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, [1905], 140-141.

<sup>212</sup> Extract from Cromer’s official 1903 report, as taken from Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 224. In its report ‘Cromer Praises Americans’, *The Washington Post* reported that ‘Earl Cromer...speaking at a banquet here to-day, paid a tribute to the work of the American missionaries in the Soudan, where the natives were learning that the foreigners visiting them were no longer slave dealers, but the bitter opponents of slavery...’ ‘Cromer Praises Americans.: Warm Tribute Paid to Missionaries in the Soudan’ *The Washington Post*, 30 January 1903.

suspicions,<sup>213</sup> and Wingate similarly noted that the Doleib mission was “apparently much appreciated by the local Shilluks.”<sup>214</sup>

The groundwork for Church Missionary Society in Southern Sudan was laid in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Omdurman, when Dr. F.J. Harpur of Old Cairo’s CMS hospital asked if his Society could send a mission to Sudan. The request—given British fears of Muslim backlash—granted the request with the stipulation that they could not work among Northern Muslims but rather non-Muslim Southern communities instead. Because the CMS was primarily concerned with converting Northern Muslims it was not pleased with the decision to be sent to Southern Sudan. Due to this reluctance CMS missionaries began their work in Southern Sudan five years after the Catholics and four years after the Presbyterians.<sup>215</sup> In Fall 1905 it opened a mission station in Malakal and in the Dinka area near Bor, on the Nile’s east bank. Llewellyn Gwynne led a party up the White Nile to Mongalla, seven hundred miles south of Khartoum and located near modern-day Juba. The mission consisted of three clergymen, a medical man, an agriculturalist, and a carpenter, and in time they opened a school, clinic, and began work in the Dinka language. By 1908 three stations had been opened in Dinka territory, and with the arrival of more missionaries in 1912 two additional stations were established (one at Lau among the Cheech Jieng and another at Yambio among the Zande).<sup>216</sup>

Unlike their Presbyterian counterparts the CMS placed an early emphasis on evangelism. Planting a school at Yambio near the Congolese border, the normal Sunday congregation there numbered two hundred but blossomed to over five hundred on Easter

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<sup>213</sup> Extract from Cromer’s official 1903 report, as taken from Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 224.

<sup>214</sup> As quoted in EGYPT. No. 1 (1907), 120.

<sup>215</sup> Stevenson, ‘Protestant Missionary Work’, 197 and Pitya, *History*, 143, 145-146.

<sup>216</sup> Ahmed, *Design*, 61, 62;

Sunday. A brick church capable of accommodating 1,500 people was built at the station, and the printing press produced Gospels in Zande and other languages.<sup>217</sup> The CMS combined this evangelistic impulse with an emphasis on education. In 1917 Archdeacon Gibson and his wife set up a station among three Bari groups at Yei. Fourteen Yei-area schools—each built by local Christians—also served as churches, illustrating the link between education and evangelism. In 1920 a Cathedral was erected in Juba and became the Gordon Memorial Mission’s Southern Sudan headquarters. Perhaps the most prized fruits of CMS efforts—converts—began to emerge with the first baptized convert at a CMS mission in 1916. The following year the first three Dinka converts were baptized, and in 1920 Gwynne confirmed his first Southern Sudanese, Daniel Deng Atong, who went on to become a priest.<sup>218</sup>

British correspondence offered conflicting assessments of early CMS work. Wingate noted that despite the CMS’s ‘excellent’ work at its Malek station there were ‘two Europeans in charge...I cannot understand why the C.M.S., which has fussed so much in the past about establishing Mission stations in the Sudan, should equip their only Existing station so inadequately.’<sup>219</sup> The 1914-1919 Annual Report for Egypt and the Sudan stated that though the Society had established two or three district schools in Mongalla Province, it had not yet opened its central school that had been planned for several years (though it did acknowledge that several mission societies in the South had

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid, 65;

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, 64, 65, and fn. 38 on p. 88.

<sup>219</sup> SAD 300/3/10-12; Wingate to Eldon Gorst, March 1911 [for date range see Durham University Library Sudan Archive, ‘General Sir Reginald Wingate’, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/wingate.xml;query=reginald%20wingate;brand=default#1>]. Consulted 6 December 2014.



been adversely affected by the war).<sup>220</sup> Nevertheless, the CMS was generally commended for its work with the Dinka. Citing the establishment of a CMS station at Malwal (near Bor) in January 1906, Cromer stated that ‘They appear to be gaining the confidence of the Dinkas...I am informed that the missionaries have made considerable progress in acquiring a knowledge of the Dinka language, and that the medical assistance which they are rendering to the inhabitants is producing an excellent effect.’<sup>221</sup> Like Wingate nearly a decade earlier the aforementioned 1914-1919 Report acknowledged ‘excellent work at Malek. They have also a school at Mongalla and another at Yei; the latter gives promise of success as the upland natives are more wideawake and adaptable than the riverains. Mr. Shaw has also opened a new school at Opari...and has about thirty pupils.’<sup>222</sup>

Missionaries faced numerous difficulties in their encounters with communities in the South during the early twentieth century. One of the greatest challenges was the pejorative connotation given to all foreigners—that they were predators bent on exploitation and enslavement. The Shilluk, who were afraid of the Catholic missionaries because they reminded them of their former European slave-trading oppressors, set two mission huts on fire in July 1901. The priests were left without shelter, with one father writing that “When Father Tappi and I started the first mission among the Shilluk at Lul, they did not want us, they hated us and twice attempted to kill us.”<sup>223</sup> General trepidation of white people and its relevance to mission work was evidenced in one story involving a King of the Nyam-Nyam (Azande) people in Bahr al-Ghazal. In his December 1908 diary

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<sup>220</sup> EGYPT No. 1. (1920.) *Reports by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan for the Period 1914-1919*. London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1920; 132.

<sup>221</sup> EGYPT. No. 1 (1907), 120.

<sup>222</sup> EGYPT No. 1. (1920.), 120.

<sup>223</sup> Quote taken from Ahmed, 55. Other preceding information regarding Shilluk trepidation for missionaries can be found on Ahmed, 55.

entry Yacoub Pasha Artin wrote that the King had entrusted the education of one of his sons to the Government. The son, who found himself among Sudanese of other backgrounds—but each of them Muslim—decided to become a Muslim himself. As the area from which he hailed was within the American Mission sphere, his conversion to Islam spurred ‘a great hue and cry’ against the Government on the premise that it was recruiting children from the province in the Presbyterian sphere to Islam. Nevertheless, the king’s negative perception of white missionaries appears to have been a primary rationale for sending his son to the Government school in the first place:

‘this savage negro king has perceived that the white Christian missionaries despise him and his people, and therefore he made up his mind to confide his son’s education to the Government—which treats him as a chief—and to the Moslems serving the Government—who sympathise with him. If his son becomes a Moslem he will be little estranged from him, whereas if he becomes a Christian the father fears that he will acquire the contempt professed by Christians for blacks such as he.’<sup>224</sup>

As a final point on early mission work in Southern Sudan, it is important to note that Christian evangelism was perceived as a matter of internal security. In his letter to the High Commissioner of Egypt, Gwynne remarked that ‘if the Pagan tribes did become Moslem (and the experience of African experts is that they soon become very fanatical Moslems) the balance of power would be upset in...the Sudan...the pagans are in the majority. It is from these tribes that Lord Kitchener drew his best fighters...’<sup>225</sup> In this sense the presence of Christianity in Southern Sudan was interpreted as a kind of

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<sup>224</sup> This quote and the broader story concerning the king and his son are taken from Artin, ‘Khartum Palace, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1908.’ In Yacoub Artin, *England in the Sudan*. Translated from the French of the Author by George Robb. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1911; 150-151. See SAD 27/3/68; Gwynne to Baglis, 18 November 1911, where Gwynne equates Nyam-Nyam with Azande.

<sup>225</sup> SAD 28/12/12-13; Gwynne to E. Allenby. See also DULSCC, ‘Gwynne’ [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/gwynnl.xml;query=Gwynne;brand=default#1>]. 15 December 2014.

preventative condition to avoid seditious behavior. It is also crucial to remember the belief held by Cromer and Kitchener that Northern and Southern Sudan were uniquely different and that, as such, missionary work in each region be predicated on that premise.<sup>226</sup> Thus, mission work from the onset played a critical role in actualizing and reinforcing conceptualizations of North and South as being inherently different socially, culturally, and religiously. As these missionaries operated under Condominium oversight, ‘Missionaries...complied with, and benefited from, colonial policies that helped to reify the north and south, and divide northern and southern peoples.’<sup>227</sup>

### The Equatorial Corps

It is widely recognized that the formation of the Equatoria Corps was the most deliberate plot to shield Southerners from Arab and Islamic influences and encourage Christianity in the South. By recruiting local Black soldiers and shielding them from potential Islamicizing influences (namely the Egyptian Army), the administration could achieve the dual goals of stemming Islam’s spread while maintaining order among ‘uncivilized’ people. The desire to Christianize men who were or could be trained into valiant soldiers is perhaps best embodied in Watson’s reflection on the sacrifices made by Mahdist soldiers at Omdurman: ‘As you read of their self-forgetful courage...the fearless charges which they made in the face of the pitiless fire of the British...the exclamation will be forced to your lips, “What magnificent Christians these men might have made!”<sup>228</sup> If people living in the South could have their souls saved by the Gospel, their minds stimulated by education and literacy, and lives enhanced by improved health and

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<sup>226</sup> See, for example, EGYPT. No. 1. (1905). *Reports by His Majesty’s Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1904*. London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, [1905] , where Cromer dissects Egypt and Sudan into three ‘zones’ (Egypt, Northern Sudan, and Southern Sudan) with regards to their respective religious milieus and, consequently, their relation to possible mission work (139-140).

<sup>227</sup> Sharkey, ‘Christians among Muslims’, 57.

<sup>228</sup> Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 96.

industry, Southern male bodies could be molded into a disciplined soldiery. That English and Christianity were encouraged in the Corps while Islam was forbidden<sup>229</sup> illustrated that something more long-term was being conceived: the idea that otherwise disparate Southern communities could be linked by a shared language and religion.

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In the fight to stem Islam's tide contemporary opinion held that the Egyptian Army was the chief nemesis that needed to be confronted. Dr. H. Karl W. Kumm, who after studying the spread of Islam in Nigeria played a key role in founding the Sudan United Mission, opined that the British government assisted Islam's transmission amongst 'pagans' in Bahr el Ghazal through the military. Though the military was recruited from non-Christian, non-Muslim communities, once the men enlisted they were forced to swear allegiance to the Khedive, received circumcision, and were made Muslims.<sup>230</sup> Other Islamic elements permeated military structure: Friday was the day of rest, soldiers' children were educated by a Muslim *malam*, and the Koran was taught. Kumm further noted that those Muslims who were dismissed from the Army naturally brought their faith back with them to their local communities.<sup>231</sup>

In many respects the June 1910 transfer of the Lado Enclave spurred the formation of the Equatorial Corps. Although Gordon had made Lado the capital of Equatoria the Mahdiya effectively isolated it, with Mahdist forces preventing steamers from reaching the town. By the time Mahdist forces arrived in Lado in 1888 the town was

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<sup>229</sup> Collins, 'Africa Begins at Malakal', 9.

<sup>230</sup> See M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; 116; Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 188, and Yacoub Pasha Artin, 'S.S. "Omdurman," 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1908.' In Artin, *England in the Sudan*, 164.

<sup>231</sup> H. Karl W. Kumm, *From Hausaland to Egypt, Through the Sudan*. London: Constable and Co., Ltd, 1910; 4-5, 268.

empty. After the Congo Free State became a personal possession of Belgium's King Leopold II, he annexed almost half of the Southern territory from the Western Nile bank to the Congo. Several ethnic communities on the west bank (including the Azande, Moru, Dinka Agar, and Bari) were amalgamated into Belgian possessions. In May 1890 the British recognized Leopold's authority over the Enclave in exchange for certain trading rights, but in accordance with a subsequent agreement between the two countries the Lado Enclave was set to be transferred to the Sudan Government upon Leopold's death.<sup>232</sup> Wingate did not want to see Islam or Arabic as the Enclave's lingua franca.<sup>233</sup> In March 1911 Wingate suggested to Eldon Gorst, Consul-General of Egypt from 1907 to 1911, that a territorial system be used:

'When we first came into possession last June there was a considerable influx of recruits which we much required to make up the strength of the XIVth Sudanese, but for some unexplained reason the supply has now altogether ceased and I cannot get anyone to give me any definite reason for this...I am rather inclined to think that the system which prevails in Sudanese Battalions, of turning all recruits into Moslems...has something to do with it, and this leads me to the consideration of the desirability of...replacing our Regular Troops by some Territorial system which would have the advantage of enabling us to tell all volunteers who joined...that there was no chance of their being transferred out of the Province...reorganization would afford of getting rid of the Moslemizing influence in the shape of Egyptian Officers and fanatical Sudanese N.C.O.'s, and very gradually dropping the Moslem conditions which prevail in all Sudanese Battalions of the Egyptian Army.'<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Daly, *Empire*, 254-255, 'Lado Enclave' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 257; Pitya, 'History', 48-49 and EGYPT. No. 1 (1911). *Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1910*. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, [1911], 76.

<sup>233</sup> Daly, *Empire*, 254-255.

<sup>234</sup> SAD 300/3/2, 9, 10; Wingate to Gorst, 1 March 1911. See also Daly, *Empire*, 116

Professed religious impulses aside, there were several advantages to using locally-recruited troops. They would be less expensive, speak the language of their stationed district, know the country better than outsiders, and ‘could “be paid, fed, and clothed according to local requirements’.<sup>235</sup> Because Equatoria Province bordered Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and the Congo, it was in the administration’s interests to secure Southern Sudan’s borders.<sup>236</sup> Such reasons notwithstanding, the looming fear of Mahdism was an important engine behind the idea. Occasional Mahdist flare-ups occurred in the early Condominium period, with Sennar Province in Northern Sudan appearing to be particularly volatile. The 1910 Annual Report stated that two incidents were precipitated there by the appearance of Halley’s Comet, which people connected with the comet that had heralded the Mahdi’s arrival.<sup>237</sup> The Annual Report for 1914-1918 reported that Mohammed Sayid Hamid, a nephew of the Mahdi, led a small ‘fanatical outbreak’ in Sennar Province. Having escaped government supervision he amassed a party of loyalists and proclaimed that he was the prophet Isa ‘empowered to destroy the Government and set himself up in its place’. Forty were killed and eight wounded before he was captured and hanged.<sup>238</sup> While the majority of Mahdists silently expressed their resentment, a determined minority tried to forcefully topple the Condominium government. A Mahdist rising occurred almost every year with the exception of World War I, though only the 1908 al-Kamlin revolt and another in Nyala in 1921 constituted any real threat to

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<sup>235</sup> Daly, *Empire*, 117.

<sup>236</sup> Scopas S. Poggio, *The First Sudanese Civil War: Africans, Arabs, and Israelis in the Southern Sudan, 1955-1972*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; 30.

<sup>237</sup> EGYPT. No. 1 (1911), 75.

<sup>238</sup> EGYPT No. 1. (1920.) *Reports by His Majesty’s High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan for the Period 1914-1919*. London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1920; 96, 121-122.

government. Even if Condominium administrators exaggerated the neo-Mahdist threat,<sup>239</sup> it is evident that fears of a possible uprising played a significant role in encouraging the idea that an institution like the Equatorial Corps was needed. These fears were combined with the perception that Muslim soldiers would be unreliable in the event that they were called upon to suppress other Muslims. Governor of Equatoria R.C. Owen, for example, was careful not to observe Sunday in his Province because “bigoted” Muslims in Sudanese Battalions might cause trouble if forced to work on Fridays.<sup>240</sup> Indeed,

‘The British regarded the Equatorial Corps as a force to be used against any recrudescence of Mahdist rebellions in the North where British administrators could depend upon one British battalion and had deep reservation about the loyalty of the Anglo-Egyptian army upon which they were dependent to rule...[and] whose reliability they had cause to question after the mutiny in 1900. From the British point of view the army was susceptible to Mahdist or Egyptian subversion despite the fact that most of the troops were in fact African and not Ansar.’<sup>241</sup>

In the 1911 Annual Report Kitchener reported the first steps of the new policy’s implementation, noting that the formation of a locally recruited force in Mongalla had begun for exclusive service in that province. He conveyed hope that the system would be extended to Bahr el Ghazal and curiously noted the policy’s positive medical benefit: ‘replacement of Egyptian by Soudanese in the southern and more unhealthy districts is progressing, with the result of an improvement in the health of the troops and a proportionate increase in efficiency...’<sup>242</sup> Kitchener’s note on improved health could be read as an allusion to the stereotype that Egyptian troops not only disseminated Islam but

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<sup>239</sup> Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, ‘Mahdist Risings against the Condominium Government in the Sudan, 1900-1927’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1979), 440.

<sup>240</sup> Deng D. Akol Ruay, *The Politics of Two Sudans: The South and the North, 1821-1969*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1994; 38.

<sup>241</sup> Collins, ‘Malakal’, 9.

<sup>242</sup> See EGYPT. No. 1 (1911), 44-45 (quote is taken from 45).

disease as well. Watson, for example, cited one unsourced statistic that villages near military centers contained 99% of all cases of immorality's 'attendant diseases' treated by medical missionaries, while distant villages from such outposts barely had any such incidences. This could be read as a suggestion that the Army was responsible for both spreading Islam and sexual depravity, as 'Immorality widens the circle of influence.'<sup>243</sup> Note also Chaplain Owen Watkins' earlier connection between Islam and immorality when he characterized Omdurman as a 'veritable African Sodom'—Sodom being a Biblical exemplar of lasciviousness and sexual sin. The inference that Islam bred moral infection and encouraged the degeneration of bodily behavior exemplified that the body was interpreted as a site of religious contestation.

In three years' time the local recruitment policy had been implemented in Yambio (where an Equatorial Company had replaced the 12<sup>th</sup> Sudanese) and at Tembura, where another Company took over in 1915.<sup>244</sup> The administration's socializing objectives were clearly reflected in the Corps' cultural and linguistic makeup. The unit was comprised of Southern Sudanese troops and used English as the language of command. Christianity was encouraged and Islam practically forbidden; no *fuqara*—Muslim legal scholars or religious teachers that were historically instrumental in the spread of Islam and Sufism in the Sudan—were to be found in the Corps.<sup>245</sup> Despite Wingate's 1911 action to combat Islam by adopting Governor Owen's proposal for a non-Muslim army in the South, seven years elapsed before a Southern Province was completely garrisoned with Equatorial troops (at Mongalla). Until the replacement of Muslim troops with Equatorial Corps

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<sup>243</sup> Watson, *Sorrow and Hope*, 188, 189.

<sup>244</sup> Daly, *Empire*, 117.

<sup>245</sup> See Collins, 'Malakal', 9. For information on the *fuqara* see 'Feki' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 155-156.



troops in 1917, government-aided Islamic influences had a relatively unobstructed field in the South. Until the mid-1920s and arguably until 1930, official policy did not do much to halt its spread and, furthermore, was not always hostile to its presence in the South.<sup>246</sup> Nevertheless, when the last batch of Northern troops departed from Mongalla on 7 December 1917, the Governor reported that he had “removed the more fanatical, super religious Muslim soldiers, jallaba (peddlers) and riff-raffs...hoping that the authorities...will see that they don’t return and...keep any old soldiers in Omdurman and generally northern pleople [sic] from...settling anywhere in the province.”<sup>247</sup> His plea to successor C.S. Northcote entailed an overt and ominous reminder of why it is was necessary to keep Northern merchants out: “if a Jihad [sic] is ever started in the Sudan and Northern Africa, it would be a great thing if the countries south of the sudd were free from it and if we could link up with Uganda which is practically entirely Christian and so have an anti-Islam buffer...in this part of Africa”.<sup>248</sup>

The Equatoria Corps was distributed throughout the three Southern provinces and headquartered at Torit (in Latukoland in Eastern Equatoria). Torit was a prudent location not only because of its easy accessibility to East Africa but also because the Latuko ethnic group was renowned for their military acumen. They had fiercely resisted British rule in the first decade of the twentieth century and, after their resistance, ethnographic studies indicated their enthusiasm for joining the army. In Torit the Corps was composed of Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Companies. Small ethnic groups from Eastern Equatoria (including the Immotong, Acholi, and Lango) and Western Equatoria’s Moru, Baka, Mundu, and Avukaya largely comprised No. 1 Company and part of No. 2 Company. Though they

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<sup>246</sup> Sandersons, *ERP*, 424 and Ruay, *Politics*, 37.

<sup>247</sup> Ruay, *Politics*, 38.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

never constituted the majority of rank and file, the Latuko represented the largest group in No. 2 Company. Most soldiers in Co. No. 3—posted in Bahr al-Ghazal (Wau)—were Dinka, while Company No. 4 in Upper Nile Province (Malakal) was made up of Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk.<sup>249</sup> The Latuko majority in No. 2 was, according to Barnaba Wani, attributed to its being ‘an “elite force” that patrolled “the cattle-rustling border areas with Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia.”<sup>250</sup> The formation of the Equatoria Corps was an element of the British policy of dividing the army according to ethnic and regional lines: they believed that developing strong ethnic imbalances in the army would encourage more politically reliable organizations, and people would be attracted by opportunities provided by the army. Any local uprising could be addressed by the nearest troops (the Sudan Defence Force would be needed against the Nuer, for example, in 1927-28).<sup>251</sup> The army was not excluded from the 1922 Closed Districts Order policy which intended to exclude Northern Sudanese from districts that included Equatoria and Upper Nile, and with the army remaining divided ethnically and territorially each area ‘developed its own politico-military entity.’<sup>252</sup> Scopas Poggo has suggested that the Corps’ localized, ethnic nature may have had the long-term unintended effect of perpetuating inter-ethnic strife and impeding a sense of communal Southern Sudanese identity.

‘Officials had made no attempt to encourage the movement of ethnic groups from one territorial space to another. This meant that old rivalries or hostilities between neighboring ethnic groups persisted. And so the various Southern ethnic groups, who remained largely illiterate, had no sense of a common nationalist perspective or political aspirations for

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<sup>249</sup> Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 30, 31; Ahmed al-Awad Mohammed, ‘Militarism in the Sudan: The Colonial Experience.’ *Sudan Notes and Records* 61 (1980): 21.

<sup>250</sup> Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, citing interview with Barnaba Wani.

<sup>251</sup> Mohammed, ‘Militarism in the Sudan’, 17, 19, 20.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid*, 21.

an independent Southern Sudan at the start of the [1955] mutiny.<sup>253</sup>

Sudan Defence Force (SDF) troops—of which the Equatorial Corps were a part—were trained like those in the British Army; each military area had a training center, and after recruits had attended this for four months that were absorbed into their units. Tactical units were comprised of Companies of roughly 150-200 men. The Corps' responsibilities consisted of helping the government maintain law and order, controlling gun-smuggling across the borders, preventing conflicts between nomads and farmers, and protecting wild game (particularly elephants hunted for ivory).<sup>254</sup> In the early years of the Condominium British officers from the King's African Rifles were borrowed to serve in the region, and cooperation existed between the KAR and the Equatoria Corps (particularly the Torit garrison). Equatoria Corps soldiers would participate in World War II, fighting alongside the British against the Germans and Italians in Africa. Until the 1955 Torit Mutiny the Equatoria Corps constituted the only permanent garrison in the South.<sup>255</sup>

Lt. Col. Walter A.H. Forbes, who served as Bimbashi of the Equatorial Corps from 1932-1936,<sup>256</sup> provided insights into life within the Corps. He recounted that troops at Aweil were recruited locally and comprised primarily of Dinka (with a few Zande). Companies were not separated by ethnicity, and different ethnic groups, he believed, got

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<sup>253</sup> Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 46-47.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid, 20 and Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 31 (citing interview with Robert Collins).

<sup>255</sup> Beshir, *The Southern Sudan*, 52; Erisa Penesi, *The living History And the Hidden Graves*, SAD [Sudan Archive Durham] 851/13/26 [p. 24]; Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 40, 42, 47; Mohammed, 'Militarism in the Sudan', 17.

<sup>256</sup> Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, 'Forbes, Walter Arthur Hastings' [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/forbeswa.xml;query=Walter%20Hastings;brand=default#1>]. 14 May 2015.

along well with each other.<sup>257</sup> Typically recruited from the areas in which they were going to serve, Southerners were attracted to military service in part because ‘if you were a poor man without any cows (if you came from a Nilotic family), your main object was to get some money in order to buy some cows so that you could get married, because the bride price of your wife was cows. That was an attraction anyway to the Nilotic tribes.’<sup>258</sup> Not recollecting any border trouble, Forbes stated that they were mainly asked to help the administration if there were any rioting or inter-ethnic fighting (though he could not remember having to restore such order). He noted the Roman Catholic missions were particularly helpful, ran great schools, and that they had great relations with them. Forbes stated that each member of his Company followed their own ethnic religion, and while there may have been a few Mission boys Christianity was not much thought about in the group. Citing the discouragement of Islam in the South, he could not recall having encountered any Muslims.<sup>259</sup>

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Given the socio-religious impulses that spurred the creation of the Corps and its central role in launching the Torit Mutiny, the question of what Corps members learned about their historical role and purpose from their military training is important to consider. In one respect it is difficult to address in the absence of testimony from Corps veterans regarding history lessons they may have received during their service. For those Mission boys who served in the Corps, one can examine the history lessons they would have received in mission schools (mission school education is closely examined in the following chapter). And yet, there is one particular way in which history’s influence on

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<sup>257</sup> SAD 863/3/10 [Forbes interview with Douglas Johnson]

<sup>258</sup> SAD 863/3/11

<sup>259</sup> SAD 863/3/13, 17, 19-20.

the Corps can perhaps be best detected; that is, in the legacy of the slave trade. In the years leading up to the Mutiny there was concern that with the impending takeover of national government by Northern Sudanese that the South would be ‘enslaved’ again. Indeed, the deep and historically-rooted aversion to exploitation from ‘outsiders’ is evident in many examples highlighted in the Chapters Three through Six (pertaining to the years before and during the First Sudanese Civil War). The Mutiny was, as I argue later, not just a military revolt against an order to be transferred to the North but rather part of a larger desire to prevent bad history—namely enslavement—from occurring again. I believe that it is in this vein that one must remember the close proximity that the Turco-Egyptian and Mahdist eras had to the Corps’ establishment in the early twentieth century. If the fathers of many Southerners could ‘remember vividly the days of slavery’ as late as the early 1960s,<sup>260</sup> it is highly likely that those Southerners recruited for the Equatoria Corps would have had intimate knowledge of slavery and its impact on their communities. Furthermore, the Southern Policy could have conveyed the notion that the Corps and the lands it served was and should remain ‘Black’ and ‘African’. Taken together, one could argue that the nature of recruitment and service in the Equatoria Corps cultivated an *esprit de corps* that promoted a strong sense of kinship and connection to local populations and the regions that they served. With the legacy of slavery known throughout the South and, consequently, almost certainly among Corps members, it is not that surprising that the Corps was at the forefront of a movement to prevent a repeat of bad history.

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<sup>260</sup> William Anderson, ‘The role of religion in the struggle in the Sudan’ [SAD 795/6/11 (p. 413) for quote and SAD 795/6/12 (p. 416) for biographical information; for title and date range see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, ‘Roland C. Stevenson’, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/stevnrc.xml;query=Stevenson;brand=default#1>]. 14 May 2015.

## Conclusion

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw sweeping change and transformation in Southern Sudan. Comprised of a multitude of languages, cultures, and ethnicities, the Turco-Egyptian regime not only represented modern imperial authority but also foreign, enslaving oppression in the region. Understandings of Northern Sudan as firmly Islamic (as opposed to the ‘pagan’ South) were reinforced by the rise of the Mahdiya in the 1880s. Anglo-Egyptian victory in the Mahdist War sent shockwaves throughout the Nilotic Sudan, and as the new Condominium government sought to maintain peace and stability in the North it adopted a covert strategy to establish Southern Sudan as a Christian bulwark against the spread of Islam down the Nile. In addition to the resuscitation of modern mission work in the South (which had begun in the mid-nineteenth century), perhaps the most observable manifestation of this policy was the establishment of the Equatorial Corps.

Each of these realities constitutes, in their own ways, launching pads for the development of religious nationalism in Southern Sudan in the ensuing decades. The Condominium’s ‘Southern Policy’ famously operated on the premise that protecting the South from absorption into an Arab-Islamic milieu necessitated an educational system that respected, encouraged, and preserved indigenous languages and cultures. In time Southern mission schools were critical sites of cross-ethnic networks and evangelism, with graduates becoming leading members of a burgeoning Christian, English-speaking elite. The ‘Christian’<sup>261</sup> Equatorial Corps became a potent symbol of government-mandated North-South division and ignited the 1955 Torit Mutiny.

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<sup>261</sup> Robert O. Collins, *Civil Wars and Revolution in the Sudan: Essays on the Sudan, Southern Sudan, and Darfur, 1962-2004*. Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2005; 140.

The Condominium government had quite calculated goals for the ‘raw material’ referenced by Burleigh at the beginning of the chapter. The early twentieth century witnessed the establishment of influential missionary, educational, and military structures; institutions that would, in the coming decades, play formative roles in Southern Sudanese pursuits of political empowerment. The following chapter focuses on one such institution—the mission school—and its nature, objectives, and impact in the South in the decades leading up to the Mutiny.

## Chapter Two

### Creating Subjectivities: Education and the Dictates of the Southern Policy, 1920-1956

‘If we can obtain and hold the interest of the people, and understand their emotional background we have them like clay in our hands to fashion their character and their intellect as we will... If we lay our foundations now...preserving the national characteristics and customs in a system that grows from within, we have the fairest prospect ever presented to workers in the African field.’<sup>262</sup>  
–A.G. Hickson

‘The refusal to eat and live together is based on inter-tribal differences, jealousies, deep-seated hatreds and customs...At present there is no unity, no common purpose, no loyalties, no sharing and no political aspirations of the right kind. Somehow, in the face of this, we must prevent them from becoming individualists, all out for their own interests: we must prevent the appearance of an educated class which will turn its hand, one day, to the worst and most selfish type of politics.’<sup>263</sup> –John Parry, 1947

While the first two decades of Condominium rule witnessed the establishment of missionary and administrative structures in the South, the following decades saw the more direct implementation of sociopolitical and religious aims. Continued efforts to

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Archival designations are SSNA [South Sudan National Archive, Juba] and SAD [Sudan Archive Durham, Durham University]

<sup>262</sup> SSNA Box ZD 29, Folder ZD.17.E [Summer 2012 designation], A.G. Hickson, ‘Education in the Southern Sudan. Record of Proceedings at an Educational Conference Held at Juba’ (April 1, 3-4, 1933), 7, 9.

<sup>263</sup> J.I. Parry, “From Mr. J.I. Parry.” *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* No. 6 (December 1947), 19. For Parry’s occupational history (i.e. CMS teacher at Yambio) see “John I. Parry” Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, [http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/parryji.xml;query=J.I.%20Parry;brand=default#1]. Accessed July 29, 2014.



‘shield’ the South from Islam were coupled by the monitoring of contact between people from the Northern and Southern region and educational efforts aimed at encouraging local vernaculars and English. These actions were done, in the vein of Hickson’s quote above, to preserve Southern Sudan’s ‘African’ characteristics. Southern Sudan was on its way to being conceived as an altogether separate entity from the North.

This chapter concerns the roles of linguistic and educational policy as foundational elements of the ‘Southern Policy’, a Government plan to isolate Southern Sudan from the North and develop it as an ‘African’, Christian, English and vernacular-speaking sphere.<sup>264</sup> This is done by focusing on elementary vernacular schools and two of the region’s top institutions: Loka’s Nugent School and the Rumbek Secondary School. I examine what students learned and the lengths to which schools encouraged and discouraged ethnic divisions. At Loka and Rumbek, students’ ideological development and networking helped form a cadre of English-speaking, South Sudanese elite that went on to lead the South as politicians, freedom fighters, and clergymen. In the midst of burgeoning efforts to encourage a Southern, regional consciousness, ethnic self-consciousness remained and was reinforced by different mission and Condominium infrastructures. In this way ethnic consciousness was contemporaneous with regional identity and, in various instances, conflicted with mission and Condominium measures to bridge ethnic differences. Thus, when placed within the broader narrative of Southern Sudanese nationalism, schools served as arenas where conflicting processes were at

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<sup>264</sup> For descriptions of Southern Policy see Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, [2005], introduction; William Anderson, Roland Werner, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment: The History of the Sudanese Church Across 2000 Years*. 1<sup>st</sup> reprint [2001]. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000 and Ashraf Abdelhay, Busi Makoni, Sinfree Makoni & Abdel Rahim Mugaddam, ‘The Sociolinguistics of Nationalism in the Sudan: the Politicisation of Arabic and the Arabicisation of Politics,’ *Current Issues in Language Planning* Vol. 12 No. 4 (2011); 468. [DOI:10.1080/14664208.2011.628079].

work; where a growing sense of regional identity and community co-existed with the resources, realities, and obligations of ethnicity.

#### Emergence of the Southern Policy

Through a series of policy measures the Condominium government reinforced its understanding of Northern and Southern Sudan as distinct spheres. In 1920 a Commission was formed in an attempt to find a suitable administrative system for the South, and this led to the issuing of the Milner Report. Although the Report was not adhered to, it served as a precedent to what became known as the ‘Southern Policy’. As the South was not easily accessible from the North, the Milner Report recommended that the Sudan be divided into two countries. In addition, it recommended in the immediate term that the Governors of the Southern provinces not attend annual Governors’ meetings in Khartoum (unless they were required to do so); rather, it was recommended that they have their own meetings in the South.<sup>265</sup> The Milner Report was followed in October 1922 by the Passports and Permits Ordinance,<sup>266</sup> which stated that only certain Northern Sudanese—namely rich merchants, servants, and soldiers—would be allowed to work and live in the South while Arabic and Arab dress were discouraged. In an effort to further eliminate Muslim influence trade licenses for manufactured goods were given to Christian Copts from several foreign countries.<sup>267</sup> With the establishment of ‘closed districts’ in 1922 anyone wishing to enter Southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, or other restricted area required a special permit. While this aimed to control the movement of people, Northern *jallaba* merchants were of particular interest; missionaries in East Africa claimed that *jallaba* merchants were bringing Africans to Islam wherever they

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<sup>265</sup> See Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*, 7.

<sup>266</sup> Wawa, 8.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

went. In this sense it is impossible to divorce such legislation from religious sentiments described in the first chapter.<sup>268</sup>

In January 1930 the Civil Secretary wrote a Memorandum that laid the basis for the ‘Southern Policy’. Guided by the dictates of Indirect Rule, it aimed to prevent the entry of Northern and Arab traders and administrators into the South. The ultimate purpose in doing so was to encourage the development of an indigenous administration and leadership in the South, dividing the Condominium into Northern and Southern administrative principalities. Although the continued work of Muslim and Arab traders and British reliance on Northern/Egyptian officials mitigated the Policy’s effectiveness, Southern education shifted towards the use of vernacular languages and English as mediums of instruction within a Christian framework. This shift in the educational system was coupled with the introduction of native courts. Chiefs’ courts charged with handling minor offences were created. In addition to its divisive aims, the Southern Policy was part of a larger British desire to maintain peaceful governance and encourage development on a minimal operating budget. The chiefs’ systems, for example, relieved District Commissioners from the responsibility of elementary cases. Thus the Southern Policy not only placed Southern Sudan on a separate course for national development but also laid the foundation for the systemic inequalities and underdevelopment that persisted in the South and contributed to Southern grievances on the eve of independence in 1955.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>268</sup> Anderson et al, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 268.

<sup>269</sup> For the information and implications of the Southern Policy included in this paragraph, see Report of the Sudan. *Southern Sudan Disturbances August 1955. Report of the Commission of Enquiry. 1956*; 14; Andrew Wheeler, ‘Gateway to the Heart of Africa: Sudan’s Missionary Story’ in *Gateway to the Heart of Africa: Missionary Pioneers in Sudan* (Faith in Sudan No. 5). Ed. Franciso Pierli, Maria Teresa Ratti, and Andrew Wheeler. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1<sup>st</sup> reprint 1999 (used 1999 version; first published 1998); 17; and Wawa, 8.

Chiefs' courts were part of a "Native administration" policy that exemplified the Condominium's insistence on reinforcing ethnic identity. Adopted in the 1920s, "Native administration" in the Sudan was part-and-parcel of the larger British strategy of Indirect Rule wherein indigenous traditional leaders were used to govern and supply labor and tax.<sup>270</sup> The logic guiding Native Administration was that much of the routine administration could be done through local authorities using traditional structures and law. In the South there were two main types of administration: one for pastoralists and another for sedentary agricultural communities found mainly in Equatoria and Bahr el Ghazal's ironstone plateau. Courts dealt mainly with cattle cases and were empowered to collect fines and taxes.<sup>271</sup> John Lee and Percy Cordiat, District Commissioners who each had good relations with the Nuer, selected respected people that could function as administrative "chiefs", and by 1923 administrative chiefs were being equipped with local courts and police to enforce emerging versions of government-sanctioned customary law.<sup>272</sup> While some scholars believe that the British—despite promoting Native Administration—eroded ethnic custom and authority in the South, others argue that they talked with locals about how they should be represented and often chose authority figures. Chiefs made sure that ethnic customs were respected and indigenous religious diversity in the South was encouraged.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Anders Breidlid, Avelino Androga Said and Astrid Kristine Breidlid, eds. *A Concise History of South Sudan: New and revised edition*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2014; 148-149 [quote comes from 148] and Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce* (African Issues). Revised edition. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2011; 15.

<sup>271</sup> Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*, 12-13 and Edward Miner, 'Native Administration in the South and the Beginnings of the Nasir Station' *Gurtong* [<http://www.gurtong.net/Governance/ConstitutionLaws/CustomaryLawsofSouthSudan/NativeAdministrationintheSouth/tabid/348/Default.aspx>] Consulted 17 July 2015.

<sup>272</sup> Miner, 'Native Administration in the South'

<sup>273</sup> *A Concise History of South Sudan*, 150, 159.

The lengths to which the Condominium government—through the Native Administration—attempted to encourage ethnic customs could also be seen in its educational practices. Amid concerns that mission education divorced students from their ethnic customs and reduced their effectiveness as ethnic leaders, the policy tended to discourage education in some areas (particularly among pastoralist people). To be sure, education did have a practical use in this paradigm—as clerks literate in the vernacular were needed to keep a record of court cases, some boys were educated in their own languages at mission stations. In more sedentary communities like Western Bahr el-Ghazal and parts of Equatoria education occupied an important role. More sons of chiefs were educated in Equatoria than any other province, and literate products in Equatorian schools provided recruits for the civil service, police and army. While a late awakening in Southern education occurred after 1946 (when it was decided that the entire Condominium was going to be granted independence), decades of earlier neglect meant that there were fewer people in the South experienced in modern administration and commerce than those in the North upon independence.<sup>274</sup>

Outside of the educational milieu, the Condominium made efforts to demarcate and enforce divisions between the Dinka and Nuer during this period. Douglas Johnson has noted that despite the tendency to frame the Dinka and Nuer as incessant combatants, Nuer-Dinka contacts in the Sobat and Zeraf valleys reveal a complex set of relations whereby Nuer kinship was extended through intermarrying with Dinka. Following the Nuer conquest of Dinka territory in the nineteenth century, some Nuer communities even established closer relations with neighboring Dinka communities than they did with more distant Nuer. The spread of hostilities between the two groups were inhibited, and by the

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<sup>274</sup> Johnson, *Root Causes*, 15.

end of the century some religious leaders encouraged the growth of a Dinka-Nuer community.<sup>275</sup> With the arrival of the Anglo-Egyptian regime, however, the administration attempted to separate Nuer and Dinka into distinct political units, aggravating tensions between some of their neighboring settlements. In the late 1920s the government was persuaded that the only way to deter conflict between the two was ‘the complete separation of Nuer from Dinka, the reinforcement of the tribal boundary by a “No Man’s Land”, and the further support of “Dinka integrity” by the repatriation of all Dinka living among the Nuer to their Dinka “homeland.”’<sup>276</sup> Although the separation policy failed because of the strength of Nuer-Dinka links,<sup>277</sup> it was nevertheless an important instance in which the Condominium was invested in policing ethnic boundaries.

Finally, the Southern Policy precipitated economic underdevelopment in the South while Northern and Central Sudan were afforded educational and economic advantages.<sup>278</sup> Prior to the end of the First World War official attention towards the South was geared towards eliminating the slave trade and suppressing ethnic conflict, and while a few Arab merchants controlled the South’s limited commercial activities, missionaries short on staff and funding provided limited social services. When Arab administrators were replaced and Arab merchants expelled, the South’s economic contacts with the North were practically cut. As it was not possible in the years ahead to replace them with traders from the South, the process of developing a money economy there was hampered.

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<sup>275</sup> Douglas Johnson, ‘Tribal Boundaries and Border Wars: Nuer-Dinka Relations in the Sobat and Zaraf Valleys, c. 1860-1976’ *The Journal of African History* Vol. 23 No. 2 (1982):183-184, 202-203.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*, 199-200 (Johnson cites for the quotes “Police operations subsequent to Patrol S.8”, CRO [Central Records Office, Khartoum; see fn. 20 in same article] Civsec 5/3/12. C. A. Willis, “Nuer Settlement 1929”, 28 June 1929, CRO Civsec 1/3/8. Wyld, “Report on Duk Raid.”)

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid*, 203

<sup>278</sup> Oluwadare Aguda, ‘Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics’ *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Jun. 1973), 10.

That practically all Northern officials who had been serving in the South were transferred up North undermined the administration's efficiency.<sup>279</sup> Amid these circumstances British officials in the North and South were engaged in 'a continual struggle...as those in the former resisted recommendations that northern resources be diverted to spur southern economic development.'<sup>280</sup> However, in April 1944 the Governor-General's Council approved an aggressive plan for Southern Sudan's educational and economic development. Perhaps the greatest success of the renewed push for economic development was the Zande Scheme, which began in 1947 and employed several thousand Azande in growing, spinning, and weaving cotton. Though it flourished, the civil war forced production to cease in 1965.<sup>281</sup>

For Southern Sudan, then, the 1920s through independence (1956) was a period marked by increased isolation from the North and the widening disparity of educational and economic development with the North. In addition to policing the boundaries between North and South, the Condominium also found it prudent to police those separating the Dinka and Nuer, the largest ethnic groups in the region. The following section continues exploring matters concerning the 'Southern Policy' and ethnicity by delving into linguistic policy—an important milieu in which each of these elements were addressed in great consequence.

### Linguistic Policy in the Condominium South

The implementation of separatist linguistic policies in the 1920s and 1930s was the fruit of increasing cooperation between the Condominium and missionary societies.

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<sup>279</sup> United States Library of Congress (USLC), 'Britain's Southern Policy' [<http://countrystudies.us/sudan/16.htm>] Consulted 7 May 2015 and Mohamed Omer Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict*. London: C. Hurst and Co., 1968; 50, 52, 53-54

<sup>280</sup> USLC, 'Britain's Southern Policy'

<sup>281</sup> Beshir, *The Southern Sudan*, 54-56 and Peter Russell and Storrs McCall, 'Can Secession Be Justified? The Case of the Southern Sudan' in Dustan M. Wai, ed. *The Southern Sudan: The Problem of National Integration*. London and Portland: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1973: 110.

In 1921-24 the Phelps-Stokes Commission traveled throughout Africa to study education and give practical guidelines. It recommended that governments and missions needed to cooperate with one another in providing education. Though governments had more financial resources and should set the educational standards, missions—who had the experience and knowledge of African languages and cultures—had to make education their principle priority.<sup>282</sup> While Islam continued to represent a formidable foe in the eyes of missionaries and Government administrators, the heightened attention on education was a pivotal turning point in Southern mission history.

The process of achieving Church-government cooperation was not easy. Until 1920 the Condominium had not invested much money in education, and by 1922 it had left the responsibility of education in the Nuba Mountains and Southern Sudan to missions. Nevertheless, in the spirit of the Commission's findings the Government hoped to set the educational standards and provide financial help while missions did the work. The CMS's Archibald Shaw was suspicious that many colonial officers disliked mission schools' evangelistic and religious proclivities. He, in turn, did not want CMS education dictated by the government. While the American Presbyterian Mission was also initially suspicious, it had by 1928 agreed to ask for subsidies. In contrast to Protestant trepidations regarding closer government cooperation, the Catholics believed that the government had a duty to help the Church with education.<sup>283</sup> The first major steps in cooperation were a series of education conferences, held mostly at Rejaf, in which mission and government educationalists were the chief participants. The first such conference was held in 1927, and in the same year government inspectors began their

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<sup>282</sup> Anderson et al, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 269; also see p. 270-271.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid; 270.



visits to mission schools. Offering a close—though filtered—view of the operation and quality of the schools, these inspection reports provide invaluable information. The 1927 Conference was followed by the formative Language Conference of 1928.<sup>284</sup>

On 30 October 1927 J.G. Matthew, the Secretary for Education and Health [among others], wrote to the leaders of the CMS, Verona Mission, American Mission, and Sudan United Mission. With the subject line ‘Rejaf Language Conference 1928’ Matthew stated that the week-long Conference was slated for April and aimed to compile a list of Southern languages and dialects. This Conference would make recommendations on languages that should be adopted for educational purposes and for which areas. Matthew attached a Memorandum on ‘the Language Problem of Southern Sudan’.<sup>285</sup> The Memorandum referenced the European experience and the lessons it could have for Southern Sudan. Citing Saxon England (with regards to dialect) and most parts of Europe during the Middle Ages (with regards to language), it stated that the reduction of spoken language to writing did not stymie the pre-existing process of unification. It postulated that if it were possible to exclude the use of foreign language in the South “it is probable that with political unity the same process would be witnessed”, with ethnic groups likely imposing their languages on others until one indigenous language dominated.<sup>286</sup> Expressing the expectation that English would be used in intermediate schools and that it would, circumstances permitting, become the South’s administrative language, the Memorandum acknowledged that such conditions would encourage a desire to learn how to read and write in English. In the meantime, however, the reality that many in

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid; 271-272.

<sup>285</sup> South Sudan National Archives [hereafter SSNA] Box TD 42, Folder SCR.17.J.1 [August 2013 designation]; J.G. Matthew, ‘Rejaf Language Conference 1928’ No. E.H.Etc.17.J.9 (October 30, 1927), pp. 1, 5.

<sup>286</sup> SSNA Box TD 42, Folder SCR.17.J.1 [August 2013 designation] (‘The Language Problems of the Southern Sudan’), 4-5.

government and living in government centers were unfamiliar with local languages necessitated the immediate demand for a common means of communication—a debased form of Arabic.<sup>287</sup>

The Arabic mentioned in the Memorandum is known colloquially as Juba Arabic (or, as Cherry Leonardi employed for her article on the dialect, ‘South Sudanese Arabic’<sup>288</sup>). South Sudanese Arabic originated as a military pidgin in the nineteenth century, when the Turco-Egyptian conquest pushed slave-raiding further south and traders established fortified stations across Bahr el Ghazal and Equatoria. Developing into a language of local government and trade, Leonardi has argued that the dialect’s spread was related to processes of local state formation and increased areas of civic participation.<sup>289</sup> It has been argued that Juba Arabic’s linguistic structures are distinct from vernaculars and Arabic, ‘reflecting innovative restructuring by its nineteenth-century speakers.’<sup>290</sup> This is not, however, to ignore the vernacular influence on South Sudanese Arabic. While its major lexicon is Arabic, Jonathon Owens has noted that there is an observable Bari influence. Shuichiro Nakao’s recent research suggests that other vernacular language influences reflect the extent of local interactions around stations.<sup>291</sup> Comments made a Bari politician to Leonardi illustrate the historical construction and vernacular influence of Juba Arabic: “The Baris began to learn the language of the traders, Arabic. Intelligent Baris who learned a bit of Arabic also became translators.

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid, 6-7.

<sup>288</sup> Cherry Leonardi, ‘South Sudanese Arabic and the Negotiation of the Local State, c. 1840-2011’ *Journal of African History*, Vol. 54 Iss. 3 (November 2013), pp. 351-372.

<sup>289</sup> Leonardi, ‘South Sudanese Arabic’, 351, 353, 356.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid, 356. Here Leonardi references Jonathon Owens’s argument.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid, 357.

There was this mixing up of trade and soldiers coming to the village. The Arabic language in Juba has a lot of Bari words...”<sup>292</sup>

The Memorandum’s language concerning the use of Arabic in Southern Sudan connected with broader missionary concerns that Arabic, with its links to Islam, would encourage conversion to that faith. While acknowledging the notion that Arabic used in the schools (based on the premise that it would become the South’s dominant tongue), it refuted this idea in part because ‘it loses sight of the fact that Southern Arabic...is totally unfit to be used for educational purposes...it is only a clumsy instrument for the most simple and elementary ideas comparable to pidgin English.’ Acknowledging that many would couple support for Arabic as the South’s language with opening the door for Islam, it continued that it would “Arabicise” the South and ‘introduce the Northern Sudanese outlook which differs widely from that of the Southern people’.<sup>293</sup> One illustration of the dialect’s scope and distinction from standard Arabic can be found with British Captain Lyth of the Equatorial Corps. In 1942 Lyth announced that he was translating certain Christian texts into “Mongaltese<sup>294</sup> pidgin Arabic” for the purposes of usage in military services and sale in Juba. Lyth’s justified this decision on the premise that Mongaltese was the only language that the Corps knew and used.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid, 357 [Leonardi cites interview with Bari man in Juba, 26 Aug. 2008 in fn. 28]

<sup>293</sup> ‘The Language Problems of the Southern Sudan’; both of the quotes and associated information come from pp. 7-8.

<sup>294</sup> Until 1936 Southern Sudan was comprised of three provinces: Mongalla, Bahr al Ghazal, and Upper Nile. That year Mongalla and Bahr el Ghazal were amalgamated into Equatoria ‘with a view to pursuing the objectives of the Southern Policy and eventually to bringing the whole Southern area under a single combined headquarters of all branches of Government which would be semi-independent of Khartoum.’ Beshir, *Southern Sudan*, 58. Due to administrative difficulties, however, in 1945 Equatoria was re-divided into Equatoria and Bahr el Ghazal (Beshir, *Southern Sudan*, 58-59).

<sup>295</sup> NRO Equatoria Province (EP) 2/14/57, El Bimbashi RE Lyth, Equatorial Corps, Sudan Defence Force, Torit, to Equatoria Province Governor Parr, 17 May 1942 and 31 Mar. 1942, as taken from Leonardi, ‘South Sudanese Arabic’, 363. Lyth was not allowed to use or sell the booklet (363).

The 1928 Rejaf Conference spurred several important developments. The government pledged to help missions in producing school books in the South's major languages, and the Conference advocated for the introduction of vernacular languages in elementary schools. Six languages—Bari, Dinka, Nuer, Latuka, Shilluk, and Zande—were chosen to be used in vernacular education. As orthographic work had to be done in these languages, linguist Dietrich Westermann helped with critical decisions. The spelling adopted became known as the "Rejaf Orthography". Westermann was a member of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, which contributed the spelling that several Sub-Saharan African languages adopted. According to IALC linguists the objective of this orthographic reform was to systematize African alphabets to the point that different languages could be written with the same phonetic letters, resulting in an alphabet that could be employed across the continent. Westermann's participation and the effort to make the South's major languages orthographically related to other Sub-Saharan languages can be read Condominium attempts to align the South with 'Black Africa'. Education Secretary Matthew announced that English would replace Arabic as the South's official language, while Juba Arabic was rejected in favor of English and local vernaculars as administrative languages. The policy proposed a program in which the first two years of schooling would be conducted bilingually, and by grade three, be conducted the exclusive use of English. Missions welcomed this decision.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 272 (for 'Rejaf Orthography' quote); Anikó Hatoss, *Displacement, Language Maintenance and Identity: Sudanese Refugees in Australia* (IMPACT: Studies in Language and Society, 1385-7908; Vol. 34). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013, 65; and Derek Peterson, *Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya*. Portsmouth: Heinemann (Social History of Africa), 2004; 125. Peterson notes that Protestants and Catholics had different theologies affecting their viewpoints on reading God's Word (122); 'Protestants expected their readers to read the Word through their individual, cognitive work...In contrast, Catholic

Insulating the South from the proliferation of Arabic was part of the government's stated plan in January 1930 to 'build up a series of self contained racial or tribal units with structure and organisation based, to whatever extent the requirements of equity and good government permit, upon indigenous customs, traditional usage and beliefs.'<sup>297</sup> By that point English command words had already been introduced into the Equatorial Corps and provincial Police Forces, but Khartoum's Civil Secretary's Office stated that more was required. More specifically, it was suggested that increased effort be made in ensuring that men used English as their primary mode of communication exclusively of Arabic, which would mean opening English-language classes—for which mission schools were cited as desired instructors—and efforts by authorities to ensure that men used English when local vernaculars could not be used.<sup>298</sup> As a compelling aside, Southern Governors were informed in 1931 that while English teachers for Equatorial troops could be recruited from mission schools, they were only mandated to teach English—evangelism would have to occur outside of their linguistic duties.<sup>299</sup>

Given the earlier discourse about building the South as a religious barrier against Islam, the encouragement of English—along with Christian evangelism and the preservation of 'African' cultures—entered the triumvirate of strategies that administrators and missionaries identified in building Southern Sudan's distinction from the North. The following sections illustrate that linguistic policy in Southern schools encouraged unity and, in other instances, aggravated ethnic tensions.

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evangelism and ecclesiology turned on the vocalized exchange between God and the priest, and between the priest and the hearer...If Catholic discipline turned on the chastening and instructing voice of the priest, Catholics were correspondingly suspicious of the license that Protestants gave to their "readers" to interpret the Bible.' (122-123)

<sup>297</sup> SSNA Box TD 42, Folder SCR.17.J.1 [August 2013 designation] CS.1-C-1. Civil Secretary's Office, 'Memorandum' (January 25, 1930), p. 1.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid, 3-4 (both for quote and the preceding information concerning English)

<sup>299</sup> SAD 913/1/1; listed under 'Box 10, Piece 51 46.A.1. Vol. I Missions-General', with '[Tape 7A]'

Inside the School: The Politics, Nature, and Social Impact of Education

Linguistic work—a crucial element of Southern Sudanese education—was the work of cultural translation. Lamin Sanneh and Andrew Walls have argued that Protestant missionaries’ evangelistic strategy was built on the premise that missionaries built upon, rather than supplant, the old religion. Driven by Paul’s discourse on the “Unknown God” in Acts 17, ‘Protestant missionaries set out to identify, name, and preach about unknown Gods...they established the architecture of the old religion and related the new Christian religion to the vernacular vocabulary.’<sup>300</sup> Nineteenth-century Catholic missionary writings in the Sudan illustrate that Protestants were not alone in attempting to connect indigenous religions and understandings of God with Christianity. Franz Morlang, who joined the Sudan Mission in 1855 and served for five years among the Bari, noted ‘a vague idea’ of God and awareness of ‘some inkling of the Great Flood’.<sup>301</sup> One of Morlang’s contemporaries, Anton Kaufmann, found that the Creation story could represent a suitable link between mission preaching and indigenous belief:<sup>302</sup>

‘Both the Cic and the Bari say: “God created all men in a state of grace and justice, and they lived with Him in Paradise. But several became bad, God then lowered them from Paradise to the earth by means of a rope. The good were able to clamber up the rope again and regain Paradise...As time went on, however, the rope broke and now no one can climb to Paradise again...’...This gives them a remote idea of man’s...happiness before sin was committed.’<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Derek Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972*. New York: Cambridge University Press (African Studies; 122), 2012: 7. See also Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism*, p. 6 concerning Paul and the “Unknown God” and discussion on ‘Genealogies of Conversion’, where he cites Sanneh’s and Walls’s argument.

<sup>301</sup> ‘The Journeys of Franz Morlang East and West of Gondokoro in 1859’ in Richard Hill and Elias Toniolo, eds. *The Opening of the Nile Basin: Writings by Members of the Catholic Mission to Central Africa on the Geography and Ethnography of the Sudan, 1842-1881*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975; 112 (first quotation), 120 (second quotation)

<sup>302</sup> Anton Kaufmann, ‘The White Nile Valley and Its Inhabitants’ in *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, 170-171 [for information on Kaufmann see 140]

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid*, 171.

Two early Dinka Christians drew links between their indigenous beliefs and Judeo-Christian tenets. Daniel Ferim Deng Sorur was enslaved as a child with his mother at Khartoum in 1871. Eventually taking refuge in the Catholic Mission, he was accepted by Bishop Daniel Comboni, baptized, and ordained as the first Dinka Catholic priest in 1887.<sup>304</sup> According to Marc Nikkel, Sorur in his 1887 *Memories of the Dinka* interjected a Christian concept—presumably that of Hell—when he wrote that “sacrifice is made so that the evil spirit (*Jiong-dit*) does not take the soul of the deceased to the house of fire (*pan de mac*)”.<sup>305</sup> Salim Wilson, born Atobhil Macar Cithiec, was born in 1859. Abducted and purchased by several masters, he was among those liberated by Romolo Gessi in 1880. At twenty-one years of age he decided to enter the service of CMS missionary Charles Wilson, who was coming from Uganda. He accompanied Wilson on a journey back to England, where he attended school and eventually confessed his Christian faith. Feeling called to be an evangelist, Wilson attended Hume Cliff Missionary Training College and earned fame as “the black evangelist of the north.”<sup>306</sup> He recognized connections between the ancient Hebrews and the Dinka and examined their blood sacrificial rites, appeal to one Creator, and their patriarchal and priestly

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<sup>304</sup> ‘Daniel Ferim Deng Sorur’ in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From the Beginning to 2006*. SCBC General Secretariat. Khartoum; 24 and Daniel Deng Farim Sorur ‘A Dinka Priest Writing on His Own People’ in *The Opening of the Nile Basin*, 196.

<sup>305</sup> Marc Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity: The Origins and Development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Faith in Sudan No. 11): 92 (who takes the quote from ‘Memori scritte dal R.P. Daniele Sorur Pharim Den.’ *Nigrizia* V (1887) 146-52. On 92 Nikkel states that an English translation appears in Toniolo & Hill, *Basin*, 196-203.)

<sup>306</sup> Quotation found in Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 95 while 94-95 were used for broader description on Wilson.

traditions. According to Wilson both the Hebrews and Dinka had “extreme faith...in the Supreme Being’s power to help to victory and to deliver [them] from danger.”<sup>307</sup>

African theological studies has generally presumed that Africans’ conversion to Christianity was not that difficult since their religions (or “African traditional religions”) already knew of the Sacred and recognized God, thus universalizing the concept of the Sacred. Paul Landau, when writing about the Khoikhoi word *tui-qua* (translated as “God”), stated that<sup>308</sup>

‘Missionaries’ view of God and tuiqua as interchangeable terms serviced their view that God was a real presence independent of human interaction...it is not, however, defensible to view the God-concept as unitary, universal, and inhabiting vast and discontinuous cultures...African analogies to Western religion were elicited, named, translated, and systematized, out of the whole of Africans’ activity and thought—by Africans and missionaries both—in order to produce Africans’ Christianity...’<sup>309</sup>

*Nhialic* became the Dinka word missionaries translated as ‘God’. The term is often used to refer to the Dinka “Supreme Being” and comes from the locative form of *nhial*, which refers to “sky”, “above”, or “up”. *Nhialic* is considered to be just and all-powerful, and Dinka invocations connote a masculine, personal identity. Often manifesting through natural forces, *Nhialic* is accepted by Dinka as a universal being capable of providing blessing and suffering.<sup>310</sup>

Dictionaries produced during the Condominium are illustrative of missionary attempts to transform vernaculars into conduits for Christian revelation. Dictionaries also reveal insight into the ways that missionaries sought to fashion political subjectivities.

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<sup>307</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 95 (where he cites for the direction quotation Wilson, *I Was a Slave* [c.1939; see Nikkel 94 fn. 126], 12).

<sup>308</sup> Paul Landau, “Religion” and Christian Conversion in African History: A New Model’ *Journal of Religious History* Vol. 23 No. 1 (Feb. 1999), 8, 12-13. [‘African traditional religion(s)’ on 12, ‘God’ on 8]

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid*, 20 22, 25

<sup>310</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 31.



The 1929 Nuer-English dictionary compiled by American Mission missionary Ray Huffman is one such example. The spellings of some words were given to Huffman by Dietrich Westermann, who had worked with a Nuer man at the 1928 Rejaf Conference. *Kwoth*, or *kuth*, was the name for God while *tut gar* was the name of a Nuer omnipresent god. Unlike the Christian appropriation of the Dinka term *Nhialic* to refer to the Christian God in hymns, an important difference is noted between the Nuer's omnipresent god and the God of the missionaries. *Rol* signified possession or country, with examples given (*Rol Bunyni Abbysinia*, *Rol Ker Dinka Land*, and *Rol Rip Egypt*) illustrating the exclusion of Sudan and the notion that—by including the Dinka—land occupied by ethnic groups could constitute countries as well. *Turuk* and *Turukni*—‘light colored foreigner’—was clearly rooted in the legacy of the Turco-Egyptian regime, while the designation *jalab* and *jalabni* for ‘arab merchant’ could be read as an historical vestige of Arab slavery. Omissions are perhaps as insightful as those words that were included: absent terms included king, state, nation, Islam, Arab, and Jesus.<sup>311</sup>

Fr. A. Nebel's 1936 *Dinka Dictionary with Abridged Grammar* is also instructive. The Verona Fathers (of which Nebel was a part) borrowed many Latin words in their effort to translate concepts that were not found in Dinka. While the CMS saw Biblical translation as its main priority, the Verona Fathers focused their linguistic efforts on producing Dinka liturgical, educational, and linguistic materials.<sup>312</sup> *Nhialic* was designated as ‘God’ and was directly associated with ‘Church’, or *lawη Nhialic* or *yon Nhialic*. ‘Sin’, listed as *adumwom*, was further specified as referring particularly to

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<sup>311</sup> Ray Huffman, *Nuer-English Dictionary*. Berlin: J.J. Augustin in Glickestadt and Hamburg, 1929. [[http://www.archive.org/stream/nuerenglishdicti00huffuoft/nuerenglishdicti00huffuoft\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/nuerenglishdicti00huffuoft/nuerenglishdicti00huffuoft_djvu.txt)] Consulted 28 January 2015.

<sup>312</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 29-30.

fornication and spoiling someone's property. With regards to more political terms Nebel did not include words for 'state' or 'nation' but included 'king' as *mwor ηak nhom*; *beny ηak nhom*. While the absence of 'Nuer' and 'country' are notable, Nebel did list the words 'foreigner' (*ran thai, alei; cyëp*) and 'tribe' (*thai; dor*).<sup>313</sup>

Perhaps the most illustrative dictionary during the Condominium period was Father J. Kiggen's 1948 *Nuer-English Dictionary*. A missionary for the St. Joseph's Society for Foreign Missions, Kiggen's definitions provide a compelling view into the evolution of religious and social terms since Huffman's Nuer-English dictionary that was published almost twenty years earlier. Like Huffman he included *kuth* for God 'or Spirits' and *rool* for country. Unlike Huffman, Kiggen did not include countries like Ethiopia and Egypt as illustrative examples but instead ethnic lands (*Rool Naath, TËat* = Nuer, Shilluk country). While Kiggen did not include the subject terms *Turuk* and *jalab* as Huffman had, *Mulki* signified 'Arab'. In quite notable ways Kiggen often included Arabs in definitions connoting difference and oppression. With *LËËiË* ('disavow', 'disown', or 'do not mix') came the phrase 'the Arabs and the Nuer don't mix', and with *PËËiË* ('to rob, plunder, take force by, carry off') came 'the Turks dragged away the Nuer by force in times gone by'.<sup>314</sup> In his definition for *WathË* ('to be a lover of fighting, to be brave, to be a hero, heroic') Kiggen provided *JËn wathË cerË Turuk* ('he makes himself like a white man'), reinforcing the racial connotation of being an Arab or Turk while perhaps attempting to also convey a link between Arabs and martial prowess. The phrase also infers that racial identity was linked with behavior and mutable (by being based in part by willful action). In addition to such framings of the Arabs, the Dinka also occupy a

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<sup>313</sup> A. Nebel, *Dinka-Dictionary with Abridged Grammar*. Verona: Missioni Africane, 1936; 23, 47, 52, 66, 105-106, 122 [all in English-Dinka section]

<sup>314</sup> J. Kiggen, *Nuer-English Dictionary* (1948); 165, 171, 207, 252-253, 278, 324.

noteworthy place in Kiggen's illustrative examples. Under the very definition of Dinka (*Jan*) came the phrase *Ci jin a jan* ('you are not a Dinka'), perhaps conveying to Nuer readers a foundational reality. This presumption of difference was reinforced in the illustration given for the genealogical term *Loŋth* ('race', 'descent', 'generation', 'group'), which referred to 'the Dinka race'. In this vein race is framed as being connected to genealogy but not skin color—the Dinka, while not 'white' like *Turuk*, nevertheless comprise their own racial grouping. In the description for *Pŋŋiŋ* Kiggen paired his description of Turks forcefully dragging the Nuer away with 'my cattle were stolen by Dinkas', and Dinkas were further placed in an antagonistic position in the description of the word *Mud* (noun for 'spear', among other definitions) with the associated phrase 'they went to war with the Dinkas'.<sup>315</sup> In these ways Nuer readers would have been exposed to associations of Arabs and Dinkas in definitional descriptions of social/racial difference and predatory behavior.

Before moving on to certain religious idioms in Kiggen's dictionary, it is useful to note that his text conveyed a close association between slavery and oppression—two words that hold great weight in descriptions of Northern Sudan's historical relationship with the South. *Loony* is the word for 'slave' while *Loonyŋ* is the verb for 'oppress, treat badly, unjustly'. With *Loonyŋ* came the illustrative phrases 'you are my slave...he is the slave to sin',<sup>316</sup> denoting that oppression and slavery could be experienced in a material and spiritual sense. This duality is highlighted in my chapters concerning the First and Second Civil Wars, when Arabs were described as demonic forces and connotations between the material realm and spiritual warfare were made.

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<sup>315</sup> Ibid, 124, 186, 206, 252-253

<sup>316</sup> Ibid, 184

Finally, Kiggen presented descriptions of God that painted Him as actively working in the physical realm. *Kien* denoted ‘thoughtfulness for others’ and ‘providence’ and had as accompanying phrases ‘the Providence of God is there...it is due to the Providence of God’. The idiom *KiinÉ du.Ór eka*, which means ‘to provide for and look after, put in order, take to heart’ was coupled with a description that inferred that God was a caring, fatherly figure: ‘God provides for his people...the father looks after his children’. Jesus’s mother Mary was also attributed with providential powers. With the definition for *KuaanÉ* (‘to intercede or plead for, justly or unjustly’) he included the phrase ‘Mary our Holy Mother intercedes for us sinners.’ Kiggen reinforced an understanding of God’s familial intimacy with his people in the descriptive phrase that he included for the first person plural subject pronoun (‘we’) *KÓn*: ‘we are the children of God’.<sup>317</sup> In these ways dictionaries were pedagogical resources for fashioning political subjectivities, conveying sensibilities concerning other racial or ethnic groups, and—in Kiggen’s text—describing God’s relationship with his people.

The first hymns in Sudanese Christianity were composed in the 1920s. Calculated borrowings from Dinka cosmology into Christian hymns illustrate the ways in which language translation employed familiar idioms and stories to make the Bible (and Christianity more generally) more accessible. Such borrowings can be explained by missionaries’ conception of theology. The first hymns were translations of European hymns, and among the Nuer at Nasir hymn-singing started in the 1920s with Sunday night gatherings at a missionary’s house. Young Christians who were encouraged to craft praise-hymns to chiefs and great Dinka traditional figures composed Christian hymns that

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<sup>317</sup> Ibid, 143, 144, 150, 154

drew from their traditional thinking.<sup>318</sup> Catholic priests tried to spread the notion that they were *Nhialic*'s people who had come to spread *Nhialic*'s Word. This presented contradictions, however, when for example the Word they espoused instructed monogamy.<sup>319</sup> Nevertheless, as former mission student Bona Malwal perceived, connections between the two systems could be made: 'Each of the extended systems in which father and son participated were, in Bona's young mind, an integrated whole. Just as his father was a political *cum* religious authority, so Bona sensed the union between academic progress, national political structures and Christian identity.'<sup>320</sup>

With respect to the desire to preserve local languages while establishing English, the project of instilling English was in its early stages not wholly successful. In October 1936 R.K. Winter—Secretary for Education and Health<sup>321</sup>—stated to the heads of Southern Missions that it was generally believed that boys who completed the Intermediate School Course did not usually achieve a standard reflecting ten years of schooling. Two reasons were identified: lack of trained teachers and English's use in Intermediate Schools before a boy had an adequate understanding of it. To this letter Winter attached copies of a note entitled 'A Survey of Post Elementary School Education in the South' prepared by the Resident Inspector and approved by Winter.<sup>322</sup>

The Inspector's report noted the difficulty of teaching English to boys who did not have a common language to reference when explanations were needed, as well as the strain on a student who had to endure an entire school day in a foreign language that they

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<sup>318</sup> *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 356-357

<sup>319</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 188.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid*, 198. See also 196-197 for discussion on connecting the two systems.

<sup>321</sup> Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, 'Christopher William Machell Cox', [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/coxcwm.xml;query=R.K.%20Winter;brand=default#1>]. Consulted 31 January 2015.

<sup>322</sup> SSNA Box TD 43 Folder 17.J.2 [August 2013 designation], 17.A.2/4. R.K. Winter, 'Sent to Heads of Southern Missions' (26 October 1936), p. 1.

barely comprehended. Their interest might be lost if focus was made on language at the expense of obtaining new knowledge, and an unfair expectation of the student to think in a language that he might not fully grasp was ‘now beginning to be recognised.’ To obviate this difficulty the report broached Swahili was a preferable medium to English. The debate over Arabic, English, or Swahili as the preferable medium was not limited to Southern Sudan but occurred throughout British East Africa. Mission students in Kenya, for example, learned Swahili—the language of the local colonial administration—while few learned English, the language in which colonial policy was debated.<sup>323</sup> In Uganda the British similarly thought about imposing Swahili as a lingua franca for education in their effort to construct an East African Federation. When Ugandan political brokers argued in favor of their vernaculars (which they considered to be endangered by Swahili’s encompassing influence), the British retreated from their plans.<sup>324</sup> With respect to Southern Sudan the Inspector opined that with Swahili’s appropriation in East African schools, its status as ‘an African language’ considered more readily understandable than English, and the effort to make it East Africa’s lingua franca, Swahili could be taught in Southern schools: ‘If the attempt to make English the lingua franca of the South is seriously made and meets with success...English...will be nearer that of Swahili in East Africa though English will still remain a more difficult language to learn...for it to be used as the medium of instruction.’<sup>325</sup> While Swahili was not instituted as an educational medium in Southern Sudan, a comment by Education Inspector G. Janson Smith

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<sup>323</sup> Peterson, *Creative Writing*, 121-122.

<sup>324</sup> Many thanks to Derek Peterson for his editorial feedback concerning Swahili in British East Africa.

<sup>325</sup> SSNA Box TD 43 Folder 17.J.2 [August 2013 designation], ‘A Survey of Post-Education School Education in the South.’ (21 October 1936), 2 [attached to Winter’s letter, p. 21 in folder]

illustrates the transmission of Swahili to the South. Writing about his August 1941 visit to Okaru Smith made the following note:

‘During the boys football period I was surprised to hear various encouraging remarks being shouted in Swahili...I enquired how these words came to be known and was informed that they had been picked up from East African soldiers in Juba. They have now become a ‘snob’ language of the school very much in the way that odd words of French and German are used by the ‘bloods’ of a Prep. School.’<sup>326</sup>

This anecdote not only speaks to the circulation of language and information throughout the region but also the ways in which people in the South—by participating in East African cultural forms—could make claims to membership in an African, rather than Arab, community. The denigration of Arabic may have added fuel to such claims, as Malwal stated that “There were teachings in some of the Christian missionary schools in the South which used to portray Arabic...as a bad language compared to English or Italian. There were times when talking Arabic in any school in the South could be punished by dismissal...”<sup>327</sup>

With minor clerical posts filled primarily by the sons of soldiers and educational duties delegated to missionaries, there was no common curriculum guiding various mission educators. Nevertheless, a general picture into the subjects that were taught can be ascertained. In Comboni technical schools in Bahr el Ghazal, for example, girls learned religion, needlework, domestic science, music, English, Arabic, and hygiene. Their male counterparts received lessons in carpentry, gardening, and bricklaying. Some

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<sup>326</sup> SSNA Box EP 381 Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation], ‘Some Notes on a Visit to Okaru’ (28-29 August 1941), 2.

<sup>327</sup> Bona Malwal, *People and Power in Sudan: The Struggle for National Stability*. London: Ithaca Press, 1981; 35. As taken from Abdelhay, et. al., ‘Sociolinguistics’, 468.

received clerical training.<sup>328</sup> The overarching emphasis on religious enculturation can be found in the fact that mission-educated boys would ‘be exposed to a Christian vision of the world order, and could be hoped to represent collectively an ideological curtain between the south and the Islamic northern Sudan.’<sup>329</sup> Inspection reports convey the centrality of Christian texts in education; Christian, non-Biblical texts included Sacred History, Prayer Book (containing the Sunday Gospels), Catechism—SPCK [1933], and Prayers & Hymns [1938].<sup>330</sup> The Bible was foundational for literacy and baptism. At each CMS mission station Scripture constituted the bulk of the literature translated in Dinka, and prerequisites for baptism included ownership of the vernacular New Testament, Old Testament Readings, a Prayer Book, and basic reading ability.<sup>331</sup> The following is a sample listing of Scriptural texts included in 1930s inspection reports for the Nagie and Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular Schools (EVS):

Luke (in Karamojong)  
Genesis (in Karamojong)  
John (Tapothe)  
Matthew (Tapothe)  
Chapters of Ruth  
Exodus  
Mark (Bari)  
John (Bari)<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> *A Concise History of South Sudan*, 155, 156-157.

<sup>329</sup> John W. Burton, ‘Christians, Colonists, and Conversion: A View from the Nilotic Sudan’ *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Jun. 1985): 361.

<sup>330</sup> See SSNA Box EP 380 Folder 46.C.3.2.A, Hickson, ‘Torit Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 1 May 1936), 2 and Hickson, ‘Nagie Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 30 March 1939), 1.

<sup>331</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity: The Origins and Development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Faith in Sudan No. 11). 131.

<sup>332</sup> For the boxes and folders used to compile this list, see SSNA Box EP 384 Folder EP.46.C.1 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Nagie (Kapoeta) Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 4 May 1936), 1, Hickson, ‘Nagie Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 30 March 1939), 1, Hickson, ‘B.C.M.S., Nagie, Toposa. Report of the School work for the year 1939.’, 1; SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 2[?] November 1932), 1 and Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary School’ (visited 18-19 March 1935), 2.



Bible reading and instruction constituted a considerable part of a typical school day and week. An April 1940 report from the Nagie EVS stated that three Scripture Repetition periods were held each week (in addition to five customary Scripture periods), resulting in approximately one in three periods devoted to Scripture in a given week.<sup>333</sup> A report of school work at Nagie from the previous year stated that each day one period was devoted to Scripture and thirty minutes devoted to verse memorization. Teaching was done from the Gospels and the Book of Exodus, with Biblical translations used as Reading materials.<sup>334</sup> A 1935 report from the Yei EVS stated that

‘The only Reading material...are a Primer Extracts from the Old Testament, the Psalms, The New Testament and Lives of missionaries etc. The Old and New Testament are in regular use, nearly all boys have the latter and a fair number the former. These books are expensive but boys have purchased them.’<sup>335</sup>

The high degree of Biblical knowledge among students was illustrated in Education Inspector A.G. Hickson’s observation of Torit’s EVS Class III, which apparently knew Bible stories too well to be tested for reading comprehension.<sup>336</sup>

Hickson, noticing the abundance of Biblical texts in mission education, noted that religious and secular education was woefully imbalanced. ‘At the Torit outschool Religion and reading only is taught...Little but religion is taught at other schools’, he observed in 1935. ‘More secular instruction[s] in the outschools will be very much

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<sup>333</sup> SSNA Box EP 384 Folder EP.46.C.1, Hickson, ‘Notes on a visit to the B.C.M.S. Elementary Vernacular Boys School at Nagie near Kapoeta’ (1 April 1940), 1.

<sup>334</sup> SSNA Box EP 384 Folder EP.46.C.1, Hickson, ‘B.C.M.S., Nagie, Taposa. Report of the School work for the year 1939’, 1.

<sup>335</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.2 [August 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Yei Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 21 May 1935), 2.

<sup>336</sup> SSNA Box EP 380 Folder 46.C.3.2.A, Hickson, ‘Torit Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 1 May 1936), 2.

welcomed.<sup>337</sup> In his report of a visit to the Akot E.V.S he wrote that ‘There is still a tendency to overstress scripture subjects in written work and for this the lack of secular literature is a good deal responsible’.<sup>338</sup> While the British were primarily concerned with training officials who could support the administration, missionaries prioritized the conversion of indigenous groups and established vernacular schools not primarily to preserve the languages but rather because of the government-imposed condition for mission work. As missionaries purposed schools for evangelism,<sup>339</sup> the execution and implementation of religious instruction in those schools is key to understanding the ways in which they sought to produce students with Christian subjectivities.

The association between God and mission school students manifested itself in curious ways. Nikkel notes that in perceiving the association between Christianity’s *Nhialic* and school, rural Dinka Bor referred to the Christian God as *Nhialic Thakool*, or “God of the School.” As baptized school boys often spent years at a mission station (at each CMS mission station students attended a four-year elementary vernacular school), they were not only thought to have been adopted by the missionaries but to have come under God’s influence. Upon returning to their communities schoolboys were often told that they had “become *kɔc Aciek*”, or “people of Creator.”<sup>340</sup> The perceived mystical power that mission school afforded Sudanese students is further evidenced by Jacob J. Akol, who wrote in his autobiography that

‘The general conclusion was that school children were top wizards... although the term “wizard,” is normally derogatory and intended as such, it was not taken seriously

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<sup>337</sup> Hickson, ‘Torit Elementary Vernacular Boys School’ (visited 2 May 1935), 2.

<sup>338</sup> SAD 664/12/43, [Hickson], ‘Akot Elementary Vernacular School, Report of Director of Education, Southern Province,’ Visit 21-22 April, 1937, as taken from Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 131, fn. 144.

<sup>339</sup> Hatoss, *Displacement*, 66.

<sup>340</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 131-132. Nikkel cites interview with Bullen Bol from London, 1993, and each of the quotes come from Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 131-132.

in the normal sense of the word...Only Manyoth and I in that crowd understood there was nothing magical about writing and reading<sup>341</sup>

Perhaps the most public display of mission students' connection with the Christian God came in the practice of naming. In the early 1930s it was a Catholic mission rule that converts be given saints' names, and CMS converts had to choose a Biblical name of their liking. Hickson opined that the Italian (Catholic) Mission vernacularize the spelling of Christian names like the CMS and avoid adopting the English forms. Insisting that official correspondences list indigenous and Christian names, he questioned the utility of addressing 'Southern employees by their christian names to the exclusion of their native names.'<sup>342</sup> On one hand the adoption of a Christian name was a public display of inward change, but Hickson's sentiment that Christian and indigenous names be used could have been informed by the desire to ensure local communities that conversion did not mean complete social withdrawal. In short, there was hope that one's 'Africanness' would not be sacrificed at the altar of Christian conversion.

To this end Hickson noted that education was intended to be adapted to ethnic life and that 'The background of tribal life and its loyalties should not be forgotten.'<sup>343</sup> The training of indigenous teachers was seen as a crucial element in ensuring students' connections with their community and culture. Hickson noted that children should be taught to value and enrich their heritage rather than despise it, and that this could not be done if a teacher had lost touch with their people.<sup>344</sup> To this end the option of having a Normal School use English as the language of instruction was opposed in part because

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<sup>341</sup> Jacob J. Akol, *I Will Go the Distance: The Story of a 'Lost' Sudanese Boy of the Sixties*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2005; 99.

<sup>342</sup> SSNA Box 372 Folder EP.46.A.1 [Summer 2012 designation], A.G. Hickson, 'Christian Names—English form or Italian' (22 June 1933), 1.

<sup>343</sup> Hickson, 'Review of Education Progress', 17

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid*, 29

‘The whole setting and the language of the school would be foreign tending to bring about that separation from his people and village which we are anxious to avoid in the teacher.’<sup>345</sup> The outschool, situated within the village, allowed students easier access to their home communities and arguably a better chance at retaining their usual way of life. Hickson compared the utility of the elementary vernacular school to the outschool by stating that the EVS was the best means of producing a man capable of accepting new responsibilities and adapting to a new way of life while the outschool was the best means of gradually uplifting a people.<sup>346</sup>

Descriptions of mission school Geography and History lessons are particularly insightful in gauging the worldviews and intellectual development of students. In Hickson’s educational review that was circulated prior to a 1933 Educational Conference, it was noted that all schools taught reading, writing, and arithmetic while one or two had done only a little teaching in Geography and History. By then Part I of a Geography-History “Notes” Book had been translated in most of the language groups which were already used in schools.<sup>347</sup> When addressing the matter of relating the EVS curriculum to ‘native life’, Hickson noted that ‘The Geography-History he learns deals first with his tribe and district; its history, organisation and natural surroundings: when his attention is directed further afield it is still with things near home that he makes comparison.’<sup>348</sup> Inspection reports reflect varying degrees of Geography-History instruction in the 1930s and ‘40s. In Hickson’s report from a 1933 visit to Kajo-Kaji EVS, he noted that its Class IV knew the general lines of Sudanese Geography and History. With regard to the Class’s

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<sup>345</sup> Ibid, 41

<sup>346</sup> Ibid, 44, 45.

<sup>347</sup> Hickson, ‘Education in the Southern Sudan’ (April 1, 3-4, 1933), 11, 16. Info on “Notes” book taken from 16.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid, 26 [both quotations taken from 26].

writing composition, ‘interesting native stories and local history have been written and will be preserved. The class cannot yet express its ideas readily but is progressing.’<sup>349</sup> In his report of a visit to Rejaf East EVS later that year Hickson noted that questions on Samuel Baker and Emin Pasha ‘were fairly well answered.’<sup>350</sup>

Reports from the Sacred Heart Intermediate School are particularly revealing. One 1933 report listing test results stated that some of the boys mentioned that the Roman Empire fell because the Romans had turned to ease and luxury, while others pointed to the Empire’s division into Eastern and Western sectors. All were noted as understanding the tumult that followed. Concerning their knowledge of Geography, ‘Only one boy mentioned Arabs, all the others talked only of tribes South of Malakal and the only difference in way of living noted was that the people fished and used canoes...It is evident that the knowledge of Uganda, the Northern Sudan and Egypt is very slight.’<sup>351</sup> In his 1937 report of his visit to the school Hickson noted students’ responses to the question of which country they would most like to live in and why. “My own country” elicited seven responses, based on the reasoning that it was their native country and that it had a suitable climate. Other boys chose Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Uganda—cattle and wealth fueled these selections. When eleven boys from Class VI were asked to write about a great man that they had learned about in their History

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<sup>349</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 21-22 November 1933), 2 (quote and other info concerning KK EVS taken from p. 2). Two years later it was reported that the Kajo Kaji Elementary School used a Bari language Geography-History I book. See SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary School’ (visited 18-19 March 1935), 2. The following year Hickson stated that Geography-History I was read successfully in the upper classes of the Kajo Kaji E.V.S. (see SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3, Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular School’ [visited 26-27 November 1936], 1.)

<sup>350</sup> SSNA Box EP 378 Folder 46.C.1.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Rejaf East Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 1 December 1933), 1.

<sup>351</sup> SSNA Box EP 381, Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation]; ‘Results of a Test-Class VI. Sacred Heart Intermediate School.’ (November 30, 1933); p. 1.

lessons, Caesar and Napoleon were among three figures (along with Francis Drake) listed as receiving multiple selections.<sup>352</sup> Revelations gleaned from Geography-History classes were contrasted by comments inferring the progress that needed to be made. Reporting on his March 1936 visit to Kajo Kaji Vernacular School, Hickson noted that little local history was known in the outschools as opposed to knowledge of local geography.<sup>353</sup> When he visited the Torit EVS in May 1936, he noted that in Class III the Sacred History was read but Geography History books were not yet available.<sup>354</sup> Such realities perhaps proved Hickson's concern that religious education was being emphasized at the expense of secular education.

Perhaps the most important elements that emerge from mission school inspection reports before are the observations concerning inter-ethnic interaction and division. Generally speaking, mission schools often had student bodies comprised of members from various ethnic groups. 'The Elementary Vernacular School at a mission station is a Boarding School', said Hickson at the 1933 Educational Conference. 'The boy is taken away from his home and brought under other influences. He is brought into contact with boys from other villages perhaps from other tribes and his outlook is broadened...he gains new knowledge which awakens new desires'.<sup>355</sup> In 1937 Okaru's Sacred Heart Intermediate School had sixty-two students comprised of twenty Bari, eleven Latuko, ten Acholi, eighteen Madi, and three Moru. It was reported three years earlier that the school's ethnic groups were mixed up in the dormitories, with a school uniform

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<sup>352</sup> SSNA Box EP 381, Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation]; A.G. Hickson, 'Sacred Heart Intermediate School. Okaru Visited November 26 and 27<sup>th</sup> 1937.' No:-RIL/B-A-3/37; 2.

<sup>353</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, 'Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular School' (visited 12 March 1936), 3.

<sup>354</sup> SSNA Box EP 380 Folder 46.C.3.S.A [Summer 2012 designation], A.G. Hickson, 'Torit Elementary Vernacular School' (visited 1 May 1936), 2

<sup>355</sup> Hickson, 'Review of Education Progress', 44.

consisting of a plain white shirt and shorts. With approximately ten boys under each head boy it is possible that each head boy had members of various groups under him.<sup>356</sup> At around the same time the Kajo Kaji EVS had a similarly diverse student body, with three ethnic groups represented (the Kuku, Kakwa, and Madi).<sup>357</sup> The ethnic makeup of the Yubu EVS in October 1944 showed how the diversity at Okaru could be contrasted by a school with an overwhelming ethnic majority, as the Yubu school had three ethnic groups but was 80% Zande.<sup>358</sup>

Despite the potential pedagogical conundrum that a class with students with a diversity of linguistic backgrounds presented, it appears that this condition created opportunities—and the necessity—to learn and conduct classroom business in a common language. The Catholic Normal School at Torit, for example, used Latuko as its vernacular despite the fact that the school was intended for Latuko, Bari, Acholi, Madi, and Dongotono teachers. In a note on teacher training at the 1933 Educational Conference Hickson stated that ‘This is a very interesting experiment and it appears that a working knowledge of Latukho [sic] can be gained by other tribes in about three months. Possibilities with other tribes are thus opened up.’<sup>359</sup> At Kajo Kaji EVS, where several ethnicities were represented, Hickson noted that Bari was the language of instruction throughout and likewise did not present challenges to the other groups.<sup>360</sup> A priest at the

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<sup>356</sup> SSNA Box EP 381 Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, ‘Sacred Heart Intermediate School Okaru (visited 22 and 24 November 1934), 3 and Hickson, ‘Sacred Heart Intermediate School Okaru (visited 16 March 1937)’, 1.

<sup>357</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation] Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary Vernacular School (visited 26 and 27 November 1936)’, 1.

<sup>358</sup> SSNA Box EP 383, Folder EP.46.C.5.4 (Summer 2012 designation), H.G. Ramshaw, ‘Report on Yubu Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 28 October 1944, dated 30 November 1944), p. 1.

<sup>359</sup> Quote and other information on the Torit Normal School are taken from Hickson, ‘Review of Education Progress’ 40.

<sup>360</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 (Summer 2012 designation), Hickson, ‘Kajo Kaji Elementary School [visited 18 and 19 March 1935]’, 1.

Torit Catholic mission opined that using English as a medium of instruction encouraged more interest and competition among schoolboys of different ethnicities, resulting in English being ‘learnt almost by the way.’<sup>361</sup> His comments regarding Janson-Smith’s proposal for an all-Lotuho boys’ school illustrate the desire for a common language to facilitate social unity among those of different ethnic groups and similar faith:

‘I do not agree to the proposal...to try a school for Lotuho boys only...I should like freedom to be recognised to boys of any tribe or religion to enter a catholic mission school. Anyone is welcomed into a Catholic school, but Catholic children are discouraged from attending non-catholic schools. And owing to this duty of ours to look after the education of the non-Lotuho catholic children in Torit, a school in English is quite necessary.’<sup>362</sup>

Student organizations represented extracurricular spaces in which students of various ethnic groups could engage in inter-ethnic cooperation. In the report on his November 1940 visit to the Kajo-Kaji E.V.S. Janson Smith remarked that nearly all the Christians belonged to the Boys Brigade. Founded by William Smith, James R. Hill, and John B. Hill in Glasgow in 1883, it was fashioned in the Muscular Christianity tradition and had as its aims ‘The advancement of Christ’s Kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness.’<sup>363</sup> Smith reported that Brigade meetings occurred on Wednesday afternoons and the boys participated in company drill, marching, games, wrestling, and boxing.<sup>364</sup> By the mid-1930s an Okaru Catholic Old Boys Association had

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<sup>361</sup> SSNA Box TD 101 Folder TD.46.C.1, [Saznaglia?], ‘Catholic Mission Torit’ (19 June 1946), 1.

<sup>362</sup> SSNA Box TD 101 Folder TD.46.C.1 (Summer 2012 designation), [Saznaglia?], ‘Catholic Mission Torit’ (19 June 1946), 1.

<sup>363</sup> Donald M. McFarlan, ‘First For Boys: The Story of the Boys’ Brigade 1883-1983’ (quote taken from p. 6, other info concerning Brigade taken from 4, 5). [<http://www.boys-brigade.org.uk/ffb.pdf>]. Consulted 17 December 2014.

<sup>364</sup> SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.2.3 [Summer 2012 designation] G. Janson Smith, ‘Visit to Kajo Kaji E.V. School’ (12-16 November 1940), 2.



been formed with the purpose of keeping alumni in touch. With branches in Torit and Juba, a 1935 school report noted that it was ‘hoped to have a club room where they may meet.’<sup>365</sup> In a letter that was published in the April 1942 of *Messenger* newspaper, Senior Seminarian Arkanjelo Ali conveyed to the Editor that another Old Boys group had been established in Bussere. Baptized in 1928, Ali completed the course of study at Bussere’s Minor Seminary and attended philosophical and theological courses at Gulu. Writing from Arua, he expressed pleasure in reading about an Old Boys meeting at Okaru and inquired as to whether a similar meeting could be arranged for the Old Boys at Bussere:<sup>366</sup>

‘it would be interesting and advantageous for all. The New Boys would get acquainted with the Old Boys and a bond of friendship would thereby spring up, strengthened and kept up afterwards by correspondence. The Old Boys would tell the School pupils about the experiences of their after-school life; thus preparing them for the future... Various topics might be discussed and practical conclusions reached concerning the well being of the soul and of the body, of the family and of the country.’<sup>367</sup>

*Messenger* reported on ‘Old Boys Meetings in Juba and Wau’ in August 1945 and an ‘Old Boys Meeting at Juba’ in the September 1946 edition.<sup>368</sup> Protestant and Catholic chaplains formed Christian action societies that were similar to the Young Men’s and Woman’s Christian Associations. Catholic associations included the Legion of Mary, Catholic Action, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and Young Catholic Students.<sup>369</sup> Thus,

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<sup>365</sup> SSNA Box EP 381 Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation] Hickson, ‘Sarced [sic] Heart Intermediate School. Okaru’ (visited April 30, 1935), 1.

<sup>366</sup> Arkanjelo Ali, ‘Letters to the Editor’ *The Messenger* (April 1942), 11 and ‘Arkangelo Ali Konogo’ in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, 25.

<sup>367</sup> Arkanjelo Ali, ‘Letters to the Editor’ *The Messenger* (April 1942), 11

<sup>368</sup> Philip Legge Pitya, ‘History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan, 1898-1964.’ Diss., Boston University Graduate School, 1996; fn. 225 on p. 584 and 783.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid*, 602 [fn. 266]

through these organizations a sense of community and networking could be maintained outside the school confines.

Despite opportunities encouraged by mission schools to foster inter-ethnic engagement, students still found reasons to consider their ethnic cultures as important enough to maintain and defend. Though this issue will be further addressed in the section concerning the Rumbek and Nugent schools (which each had multi-ethnic student bodies), inspection reports infer that reasons for maintaining ethnic identity included the pragmatics of eating and general aversion to having to learn another ethnicity's language. There were suggestions that self-segregation across ethnic lines occurred organically among students and, in other instances, was directly encouraged by missionaries. Hickson observed that boys at the Sacred Heart school—though mixed up in the dormitories—ate with members of their ethnic group due to the difficulty in preparing food in the traditional manner everyone was accustomed to in their particular group.<sup>370</sup> It was elsewhere reported at Okaru that the Latuko and other ethnic groups despised the Bari, though this was reported not to be the case at Torit Normal School.<sup>371</sup> Bari-Latuko tension was perhaps also evidenced through expressed aversion to learning a particular language. In a May 1938 report for the Rejaf EVS, it was noted in the 'outschools' section that Rejaf boys were not attending the Normal School because of language. More specifically, 'The Baris Jib at having to learn Latuka, no doubt saying if they have to learn another language English is the one they want.'<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> SSNA Box EP 381 Folder EP.46.C.3.5 [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, 'Sacred Heart Intermediate School Okaru (visited 22 and 24 November 1934), 3.

<sup>371</sup> SSNA Box EP 380 Folder 46.C.3.2.A [Summer 2012 designation], Hickson, 'Torit Normal School' (visited 11 December 1936), 3.

<sup>372</sup> SSNA Box EP 378 Folder EP.46.C.1.3 [Summer 2012 designation], J. Hartley, 'Rejaf Elementary Vernacular School' (visited 3 May 1938), 1.

There was also the matter of mission boys ostracizing themselves (or being ostracized) from their communities on account of their education or association with a mission. Although emphasis had been placed on the need for schools to produce Government employees, a member of the American Mission cited the Shilluk as one group who were inclined to believe that being placed in Government posts amounted to disassociation from the ethnic group (and, by inference, government employment was fragmenting communities).<sup>373</sup> Archdeacon Archibald Shaw noted that Dinka boys who returned to their communities after four years of school were looked down upon by other Dinkas ‘because by their absence at school they had lost part of the progressive tribal life and instruction.’<sup>374</sup> A October 1940 letter from the District Commissioner of the Eastern District to the Governor of Equatoria detailed the divisive prejudice that educated, Christian Topotha had with their less-educated, non-Christian counterparts: ‘It is not entirely the pagan and uneducated Topotha who ostracize the literate and Christian Topotha. The fault often lies with the educated or the Christian who disdain to associate with the illiterate unclothed pagans and frequently dispise [sic] them...’<sup>375</sup>

Amid missionary efforts to cultivate a sense of community among students, there is sentiment that some missionaries encouraged division among ethnicities through prejudicial treatment. Many Dinka mission school graduates resented what they perceived to be negative, unequal treatment from European teachers.<sup>376</sup> Bona Malwal, for example, noted “...the generally prejudicial attitude of the Catholic church, particularly the Comboni Fathers, to the Dinka as a people...European Christian missionaries

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<sup>373</sup> See SSNA Box ZD 29, Folder ZD.17.E [Summer 2012 designation], ‘Education in the Southern Sudan. Record of Proceedings at an Educational Conference Held at Juba’ (April 1, 3-4, 1933), 1, 2, 10, 20.

<sup>374</sup> Hickson, ‘Review of Education Progress’, 21.

<sup>375</sup> SSNA Box EP 384 Folder EP.46.C.1 [Summer 2012 designation], District Commissioner, Eastern District to Governor Equatoria, 28 October 1940; 2.

<sup>376</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 203; For broader review of uneven treatment see Nikkel, 203-204.

generally find the Dinka too independent-minded for their liking, much less submissive than the other tribes”<sup>377</sup> Christina Parek noted missionaries’ unequal treatment given to those of different ethnic groups. “Italians particularly, they are not treating the Dinka equally like the Equatorian peoples, the Zande, the Bari, or whatever”, she noted. “when something happened to a Dinka boy or Equatorian boy, they fought in a quarrel...the Equatorian will be punished...and the Dinka boy will be sent away [expelled] immediately. They say Dinka are very strong-minded.”<sup>378</sup>

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Schools were purposed for educational, social, and religious purposes. In emphasizing the use of vernaculars and English over Arabic, education was intended to preserve the region’s ‘Africanness’ and defend it against Arab and Islamic influences. The heavy emphasis on religious instruction over those of other subjects spoke to missionaries’ first priority in education—the conversion and development of people in Southern Sudan into faithful, Biblically-literate Christians. While spaces like the Boys Brigade and Old Boys Clubs most likely offered spaces for cross-ethnic engagement, students also chose to eat among their own ethnicities and refused learning another language. Thus, respect to education’s impact on ethnic politics, African decisions to bridge or reinforce ethnic boundaries and identities appears to have varied. This duality would also be illustrated at the highest levels of Southern education.

#### The Nugent and Rumbek Schools

Khartoum’s Gordon Memorial College became an incubator of Sudanese nationalism by shaping a generation of Northern Sudanese, Muslim, Arabic-speaking thinkers. The College provided access to jobs in the colonial government, a strong

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<sup>377</sup> B. Malwal, 1992, as taken from Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 203.

<sup>378</sup> C Parek, interview, London, 1991, as taken from Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 204.

literary education in Arabic and English, and access to new communication technologies like typing and printing. With students chosen from among elite Muslim families it was akin to other schools in British Africa like Makerere College that cultivated nationalists from within the school's ranks.<sup>379</sup> In many respects the CMS Nugent School (or Loka Intermediate School) served similar purposes in Southern Sudan. Students chosen for the Nugent School joined an institution that comprised students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and their political trajectories solidified their status as Southern Sudan's social, political, and intellectual elite. These realities notwithstanding, issues of tribalism and ethnic division persisted within the school and threatened the unity that administrators sought to cultivate. That tribalism was a concern in one of Southern Sudan's arenas for producing regional leaders reflects the reality that nationalism was never able to completely eradicate ethnic division. Thus, the Nugent School is a critical site for investigating the development of Southern Sudan's leadership and the ways in which division manifested at the elite level.

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The CMS Nugent School was founded in 1920. Opening first at Mountain Rejaf (south of Juba), by 1927 it had transferred to Loka. Hickson noted that training was intended for boys who would be later posted for responsibility away from their villages, and for a time it was—along with the Catholic missions at Bussere and Okaru—the only intermediate school for boys in the South. Each year the two best students finishing mission elementary school were elected to attend the Nugent School, and boys recruited

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<sup>379</sup> Heather J. Sharkey, 'Colonialism, Character, Building and the Culture of Nationalism in the Sudan, 1898,' in James D. Le Sueur, ed. *The Decolonization Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003; 218, 222, 231-232.

by government officials also attended.<sup>380</sup> Some Loka boys were sent to Uganda's Nabumali school for further study in the hopes that they became school masters. By 1947 education in Southern Sudan changed considerably, with the first Southern senior secondary school opening in Upper Nile and the Ater school's conversion to the intermediate level (bringing the number of such schools to four).<sup>381</sup> By the late 1940s CMS teacher John Parry likened the situation at Loka to one in which boys across Europe had one institution of higher education in the entire continent. He continued that this 'Europe' had no roads, rail, or air communication, creating a situation in which students had no previous contact with each other and met for the first time at said school; 'Now Loka is that institution', he briefed. After attending village school for two years and primary school for three, about five boys from each ethnic area were chosen each year to attend Loka to be trained to lead their communities as agriculturalists, teachers, administrators, and the like.<sup>382</sup>

A typical day at the Nugent School began at 6 am, when a drum was beaten. After fifteen minutes a bell sounded to start five strictly policed minutes of private prayer. At 8:30 students were called into an assembly hall, where the Headmaster conducted a short service and made announcements. Students then went to class, with forty-minute lessons bookended by five minute breaks and a fifteen-minute morning break. Lunch was at 1 pm

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<sup>380</sup> See SAD.851/12/18 and/or 19; Erisa Penesi, 'The living History And the Hidden Graves. Part One', pp. 11-12, L.S. Sanderson and G.N. Sanderson [contributor], *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan 1899-1964*. London: Ithaca Press; Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1981; 103; Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 132 and SSNA Box ZD 29 Folder ZD.17.E [Summer 2012 designation], 'Education in the Southern Sudan. Record of Proceedings at an Educational Conference Held at Juba' [April 1933], 2 and A.G. Hickson, 'Review of Education Progress', 13-14. Penesi states that the school was transferred to another location in 1927—Mountain Goubiri—but attempts to verify this location have hitherto proved unsuccessful. See SAD.851/12/18.

<sup>381</sup> SAD.851/12/18 [18 and/or 19]; Erisa Penesi, 'The living History And the Hidden Graves. Part One', pp. 11-12.

<sup>382</sup> Parry, 'From Mr. J.I. Parry', 18-19. For Parry's biographical information see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, 'John I. Parry' [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/parryji.xml>]. Accessed 21 May 2014.

and the last two lessons began at 3 pm. After the bell ending afternoon classes rang, schoolbags were taken to the dormitories and students played football and other games. Sports ended before a 6pm roll call and brief prayers. After parade they returned to their dorms, ate dinner, and at 9pm they retired for the evening.<sup>383</sup>

Meteorologist John Carmichael recorded an encounter with a Loka product which made a lasting impression: ‘we were astonished to hear a beautiful Oxford accent greeting us...turning we found a youth...dressed with shirt and white shorts supported by an old school tie. We had quite a chat with him’.<sup>384</sup> This ‘beautiful Oxford accent’ reflected the emphasis placed at Loka on communicating in English; indeed, English was the only language used at the school. Loka alum Joseph Lagu remembered that fun was made of the newcomer who struggled to speak English, and though their mistakes provoked laughter teasing apparently helped them pick up the language quicker. Newcomers were asked to tell stories in English to practice and the senior boys—in return for the amusement provided by the newcomers—helped by correcting their mistakes.<sup>385</sup> Aside from any philosophical purposes the use of English at Loka—as it was at the Rumbek Secondary School—was much likely the most practical way for students who spoke different vernaculars to communicate with one another.<sup>386</sup> In addition to fulfilling this practical purpose, it is evident that English increased one’s social standing. Lagu noted some knowledge of English helped qualify one as a ‘Mundu’ in the eyes of locals. A term applied to the ruling or affluent elite, ‘Mundu was also applied to those

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<sup>383</sup> Joseph Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State: From Hope to Ruin*. Omdurman: MOB Center for Sudanese Studies, Omdurman Ahlia University, 2006; 48-49.

<sup>384</sup> SAD.994/4/31[at some point between December 30, 1936 and March 8, 1937]

<sup>385</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 48-49.

<sup>386</sup> See Tagelsir H. Elrayah, ‘Arabic and English in Sudan, 1821-1985’ *Islamic Studies* Vol. 38 No. 4 (1999): 609 and Liza Sandell, *English Language in Sudan: A History of its Teachings and Politics*. London: Ithaca Press, 1982; 66-67 (where she cites her May 1981 interview with William Crighton).

southern Sudanese...who attained some prestige above the ordinary people. Knowledge of some English, pidgin Arabic, possession of a bicycle and a bush shop qualified a local as Mundu.<sup>387</sup>

In the midst of serving students from a range of ethnic backgrounds, 1940s inspection reports repeatedly noted instances of ethnic division. Clergyman B.J. de Sarum, addressing several government and mission units, stated that cross-ethnic cooperation was crucial for the country's progress: 'the greatest of all lessons that these boys have to learn is to understand and get on with boys of other tribes. This is vital for the unifying...of the country...for inter-tribal prejudice is real and deep-seated and a...serious hindrance to progress.' To this he added that Southern ethnic groups had strong inter-tribal prejudice and that the first outward expression of group loyalty was force.<sup>388</sup> Headmaster G.F. Earl opined that ethnic strife at the School was rooted not in the student body but rather in the make-up of the faculty. In 1945 the Sudanese staff consisted of four Moru, one Madi, and one Kakwa, and Earl attributed the imbalanced composition of Moru as 'a big disadvantage' during a Dinka-Moru fight 'which might have been averted entirely had there been a Dinka teacher.' He continued that the Nuer, who used to be implicated in almost every inter-ethnic fight, were peaceful throughout the year and that when the aforementioned fight occurred they acted as peaceful patrols until the tension subsided. He attributed their pacific change to a teacher from Nasir, Fr. Mikaele Car Knott, leading him to conclude that 'Clearly the solution to the periodic Nilotic outbreaks of fighting is the presence on the staff of respected leaders of their own

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<sup>387</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 21.

<sup>388</sup> B.J. de Sarum, 'The Nugent School, C.M.S. Loka. (Report for the year 1945)', December 16, 1945, in SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.1.12 [Summer 2012 designation], 4 and 7. For clerical occupation see 'De Sarum, B (fl 1929-1955) Clergyman' The National Archives, accessed 29 July 2014 [<http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/searches/subjectView.asp?ID=D1499>].



tribes. Efforts should be made to recruit a properly balanced staff as soon as the teachers are available.<sup>389</sup>

John Parry, CMS teacher at Yambio, wrote a letter from Loka intimating that lack of a lingua franca was another obstacle to achieving social cohesion among the student body. Parry noted that their knowledge of English was not strong enough to bind them together as a social unit, leading them to revert to vernaculars once they left the classroom. He also decried that they did not mix and instead broke off to eat, talk, and make friends within their own ethnic groups. Furthermore, when one of its members received disciplinary action the entire group would generally get upset.<sup>390</sup> In an article published two years later Parry expressed that helping the boys become Sudanese rather than members of tight-knit tribal entity was a big problem, but that this had to be overcome so that they could be challenged to do more for their own people (as co-nationals).<sup>391</sup> Amid such talk that effort needed to be made to overcome ethnic divisions the football pitch appears to have been one space in which competition between ethnicities was actually encouraged. Inter-ethnic football was organized along house lines “between pupils as different as Greeks and Icelanders”. These matches, however, had to be temporarily abandoned because of their ferocity.<sup>392</sup> These matches are illustrative on multiple counts. From the mission perspective they could be read as an attempt to

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<sup>389</sup> SSNA Box EP 379, Folder EP.46.C.1.12 [Summer 2012 designation] G.F. Earl, ‘The Nugent School. C.M.S. Loka. Report for the Year 1946.’ (January 31, 1946); 1.

<sup>390</sup> Parry, ‘From Mr. J.I. Parry’, 19. For Parry’s occupational history (i.e. CMS teacher at Yambio) see “John I. Parry” Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/parryji.xml;query=J.I.%20Parry;brand=default#1>]. Accessed July 29, 2014.

<sup>391</sup> J.I. Parry, “C.M.S. Nugent School, Loka” *Sudan Diocesan Review* No. 4 Vol. 1 (October, 1949), 32.

<sup>392</sup> J.A. Mangan, ‘Ethics and Ethnocentricity in British Tropical Africa’ *The International Journal of the History of Sport* Vol. 27, No. 1-2 (January-February 2010), 368 [for the quotation Mangan cites in fn. 32 G.F. Earl, ‘A School’s Opportunity in the Southern Sudan’, *Church Missionary Outlook* (July 1937), p. 154.]

mitigate inter-ethnic tension by allowing students to express their ethnic solidarity in a refereed, controlled environment. On another level, the matches can be read as prime opportunities for students to seize an occasion—whether as participants or spectators—to feed their ethnic pride. de Sarum perceived that competing within the School was also beneficial for fostering unity and noted that for 25 years Moru had competed against Dinka and Nuer against Zande, resulting in members of those groups liking and understanding one another and forming strong friendships. This kind of rapport, he concluded, laid the foundation for mutual trust and understanding across tribes.<sup>393</sup> In these ways showings of ethnic solidarity ranged from fights, communal angst over the punishment of one of its members, to competitive football matches.

Some offered statements reflecting the belief that Christianity could (or should) bridge ethnic tension and foster harmony, illustrating an intersection of ethnic and religious politics. In his report for the school in 1944 de Sarum included an anecdote in which a Nuer chief, having compiled an excellent record in school, became the target of a vengeful Dinka. The Dinka eventually brought charges against him in Teacher's Court, and although the Chief was found guilty on one count and punished 'the Nuer, after his beating, asked to remain behind, knelt down, and prayed for the Dinka, that he might not hate him but win him for Christ.'<sup>394</sup> Parry suggested that only Christ's power could deal with the situations they had encountered at Loka, and that the economic, political, and moral instruction the boys received would be for naught if their hearts were not surrendered to Christ. With his emphasis on the school as a microcosm of the country, perhaps he envisioned Christianity as being capable of mitigating issues like tribalism

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<sup>393</sup> de Sarum, 'The Nugent School, C.M.S. Loka. (Report for the year 1945)', 4 and 7.

<sup>394</sup> SSNA Box 379, Folder EP.46.C.1.12 [Summer 2012 designation] B.M. de Sarum (9.5.45), 'The Nugent School, C.M.S. Loka (Report for the Year 1944)', 3-4.

throughout the region.<sup>395</sup> His concerns notwithstanding, Parry noted that the students did learn to look beyond the tribal conception and towards a sense of nationhood; ‘The school tradition is one of real practical loyalty to the conception of the Sudan as a nation...in the life of the school we try to follow the present trend for self government using elections, committees, for carrying out most of the school activities and discipline.’ Social activities included a debating society and a football squad which was noted one year for beating teams from Yei, CMS Yei, the Royal Air Force and Juba (three times) for an unbeaten record.<sup>396</sup>

Observers also noted that the Loka students shared growing interest in national politics and its impact on the South’s future. H. Brian Bullen, who visited the Nugent School in 1947, recorded a series of fascinating observations. After noting that the students had been lectured on the recently-proposed Sudan Advisory Council for the South and North, Bullen noted that he and lecturer Bill Baker found pleasure in the students’ ‘uncalculated frankness’ and lack of sycophancy, voicing direct criticism where they felt it was due. He stated that during the post-lecture questioning it was evident that nearly all of the boys were against national union; ‘these boys are the future leaders of the South, and they completely mistrust the wily Northerner’. Citing the boys’ eagerness for political guidance and attempts to understand the Advisory Council’s suggestions, he opined that they had false ideas concerning Sudan and world politics.<sup>397</sup> Headmaster Earl

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<sup>395</sup> Parry, ‘From Mr. J.I. Parry’, 19-20.

<sup>396</sup> For Parry’s quotation see Parry, ‘C.M.S. Nugent School, Loka’, 32, and for the information on the debating and football teams see B.J. de Sarum, ‘The Nugent School, C.M.S. Loka. (Report for the year 1945)’ (16 December 1945) in SSNA Box EP 379 Folder EP.46.C.1.12 [Summer 2012 designation], 9.

<sup>397</sup> SAD.864/2/18-19, 32, 36. See also Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/bullenhb.xml;query=H.B.%20Bullen;brand=default#1>]. Accessed 14 May 2014.

provided the following evaluation of the increased level of political mindedness at the school:

‘The independence of the Sudan, the equality of South and North, ‘progress’, and ‘higher education’ are the chief tenets of what with some is practically a religion now: nothing else can arouse the same degree of fervor...it needs guidance lest it become unreasonable...repression would be disastrous.’<sup>398</sup>

In notes concerning Loka in 1945, one commentator noted that the Sudanese staff and boys there sensed the ‘unsettlement common throughout Africa’ and continued that the boys were resentful that was little was being done for them. In addition to this, however, was the fact ‘the teachers were not happy because they had become infected with the idea of the white man trying to keep down the black man.’<sup>399</sup>

The Nugent School’s enduring impact on Southern Sudan’s political landscape can be found in the graduates that became members of the emerging intelligentsia. In a 1954 issue of the *Sudan Diocesan Review* Headmaster Christopher Cook noted that the measure of the School’s success could be ascertained in the fourteen Lokian graduates who were Members of Parliament, as well as five ordained clergymen.<sup>400</sup> By the mid-1970s it counted eight of the eleven Ministers of the first Southern Regional Assembly, including Abel Alier (the first President of the Southern Sudan Regional Government’s High Executive Council) who ‘acknowledge[d] their debt to the School for their Christian up-bringing.’<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> SSNA Box EP 379, Folder EP.46.C.1.12 [Summer 2012 designation] (G.F. Earl, ‘The Nugent School. C.M.S. Loka (Report for the Year 1946) (January 31, 1946)’), 4.

<sup>399</sup> SAD.804/11/79 (signed by ‘C.L.C.’ on 804/11/80)

<sup>400</sup> Christopher Cook, “The Nugent School—Loka.” *Sudan Diocesan Review*, No. 20, Vol. 8 (October-December 1954), 27.

<sup>401</sup> See SAD.816/25/24; ‘Towards Maturity: Slide set commentary showing The Growth of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan’ and ‘Alier, Abel (1933-)’ [co-authored by Scopas S. Poggo] in Robert S. Kramer,

At the Loka School, then, inter-ethnic tension, emerging cross-ethnic camaraderie, and political consciousness each manifested themselves. One of the most important realities to keep in mind from that historical juncture was that amidst growing anger directed against the North and the possibility of inter-ethnic community, varying degrees of tribalism remained. That many Nugent graduates assumed political leadership positions further evinces the fact that division was not limited to a particular class or stratum. More than simply representing the upper echelon of society, the Nugent School encapsulated issues that were sweeping communities throughout the South. The Rumbek Secondary School (RSS) showed that the Nugent School was not the only institution where inter-ethnic unity, tensions, and political sentiments could be found.

Rumbek was an Agar Dinka town in the CMS sphere, located thirty miles north of Akot. Emerging as a prominent administrative center, the CMS began a school there at the request of local Christians. In 1948 the interdenominational Rumbek Secondary School became the government's first Southern secondary school. An inter-ethnic, English-education school with a superior academic standard, the CMS accepted a government invitation to appoint a chaplain there. The school's schedule included chapel services, prayer meetings, and hymn singing that complemented Scripture Union and Christian Endeavour programs. Religious programming there appears to have had an inauspicious beginning, with one chaplain 'writing that "spiritual coldness seemed to lie over all." Some students felt the Christian meetings were "a waste of time...they did not come to this school...to be preached at!"<sup>402</sup> Like the Nugent School the Rumbek

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Richard A. Lobban, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 61.

<sup>402</sup> The information listed above is adapted from Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 145 and John Howell, 'Politics in the Southern Sudan' *African Affairs* Vol. 72 No. 287 (Apr. 1973); 168. Nikkel cites Noel White,

Secondary School contained students from throughout the South. In January 1954 the *Messenger* published the examination results for admission to the School, with the sixty possible positions being distributed among Intermediate Schools in each of the three provinces. Nineteen came from Loka, seventeen from Okaru, ten from Tonj, nine from Atar, and five from Bussere.<sup>403</sup>

Subjects taught at Rumbek during Lagu's time there included English language and literature, Science, Geography, Math, Arabic, History, Arts, and Christianity (Protestant and Catholic). Following afternoon lessons students played sports as was customary at Loka; the difference at Rumbek, however, was that there was practice for the yearly games with Juba Training Centre and the Mundri or Buser Teaching Training Colleges. Those who had demonstrated ability had to represent the school on their teams.<sup>404</sup> Sport was just one space where students could participate in an extracurricular activity. Those who grew groundnuts—voluntary work was encouraged and the school purchased groundnuts—formed the Young Farmers Association, and other clubs included the Photographic Society.<sup>405</sup>

Rumbek was a hotbed for new political ideas, loyalties, and leaders,<sup>406</sup> and the Rumbek School contributed to this environment by being a space in which rhetorical skills and political awareness were encouraged. The pre-bedtime period was spent in discussions and arguments about topics like religion, politics, and social matters (though school policy did not encourage religious arguments, Lagu recalls that it was not strictly enforced and such arguments did occur). Religious arguments may have occurred

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Rumbek Secondary School *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* 4 (Autumn 1953) for the 'spiritual coldness' quotation.

<sup>403</sup> 'Bahr el Ghazal Province' *The Messenger* (15 January 1954), 12.

<sup>404</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 54, 56-57.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid*, 53-54.

<sup>406</sup> Howell, 'Politics', 168

because the Rumbek School, along with the Juba Training Centre, were the first places where boys from rival Catholic and Protestant mission schools met. Protestants and Catholics observed worship and special Christian holidays in their respective chapels. Aside from discussions pertaining to religion, political discussions occurred freely outside of classrooms and dormitories. These discussions even occurred between students and Northern Sudanese teachers. Lagu noted that when he returned for his third year the presence of Northern Sudanese within the School's administration and faculty increased, heightening the level of political emotion in the region and the School specifically.<sup>407</sup>

‘This was a most unexpected and unwelcome development... This change in the school was part of the influx of northern administrators in the south, and appeared to be a new colonization... We students did not look at those northern teachers with friendly eyes. Political debates between students and teachers were rampant and heated.’<sup>408</sup>

An October 1954 report in the *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* offered compelling insight into the ways that Rumbek secondary schoolboys were (and could be) influenced by conditions elsewhere in East Africa. Rev. and Mrs. Noel White wrote that personal interactions ‘have made it clear that the colour bar and the troubles in Kenya are deep, festering sores in the hearts and minds of these boys’. These feelings combined with propaganda that the British were responsible for keeping the South back, ‘add[ing] fuel to the fire.’ The Whites continued with this assessment of the schoolboys’ general perception of whites:

‘though the missionary has brought the message of Jesus, he is a white man and must share the blame. The educated boy reads widely and without discrimination. He retains stories of horrors done to his fellow countrymen, and even

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<sup>407</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 54-55, 57

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid*, 57

gets them first-hand from his friends who have visited Kenya.<sup>409</sup>

The Rumbek boys' decision to recognize Kenyans as co-recipients of white racism and the awareness in Loka of tension elsewhere in Africa foreshadowed similar recognitions Southerners would make during the First Civil War. During those years appeals would be made to other African nations in the name of Pan-Africanism and Black solidarity on the premise that Southerners' suffering at the hands of 'Arab masters' from the North was analogous to other episodes of racial oppression on the continent. Strict, race-based social stratification would have made these students sympathetic to the perception that white Churchmen—their contributions notwithstanding—were co-participants in maintaining a 'color bar.' Angelo Tutuo, the first Zande priest, would liberally employ that term when describing his mistreatment from the Verona Fathers (see Chapter Six) and Hilary Logali—a Rumbek alum who became Secretary-General and Vice President of the Southern Front—offered the following description of the racial dynamics at play:

'The social structure was: first the British, followed by the Greek merchants then came the Northerners and lastly Southerners. Even the Northern uneducated merchants were considered higher than the educated Southerners. The groups did not mix. Southerners and the British only met in the church on Sunday...the British taking the front pews and the Southerners sitting on the back ones.'<sup>410</sup>

When Sudan became independent the Rumbek school was one of only two secondary schools in the South (along with one located at Juba). Each school was started 'in a desperate attempt to enable Southerners to participate in public life in an

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<sup>409</sup> "From the Rev. and Mrs. N.L. White" *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* Vol. 2 No. 6 (Autumn 1954), 10 (see also 9 and 11).

<sup>410</sup> Logali, unpublished autobiography, SAD.890/1/43 [presumably p. 39]; 'Logali, Hilary Paul (1930-1998).' in Richard A. Lobban, Jr, Robert S. Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85). Third Edition. Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002; 169.



independent Sudan.<sup>411</sup> Like the Nugent School, the Rumbek Secondary alumni roll reads like a Who's Who of mid-twentieth century Southern Sudanese leaders: Anyanya leader Joseph Lagu attended before being admitted to Khartoum Military College in the late 1950s; Hilary Logali was among the first Southern students at the school in 1947; Lawrence Wol Wol, who became the primary representative of the Southern resistance movement during the First Civil War, was a student activist at the school; and Seraphino Wani Swaka, who graduated from Rumbek, became the key Anyanya representative in East Africa.<sup>412</sup>

### Conclusion

Education was the primary instrument used to execute the 'Southern Policy'. Schools were a critical infrastructure in which 'African', Christian, English-speaking and Biblically-literate subjectivities were cultivated at a time when Northern Sudan was the unquestioned citadel of Condominium power. It is true that missionaries tried to instill subjectivities and 'preserve national characteristics and customs' while, to the Ministry of Interior's later chagrin, contributing to a British policy of 'evolving towards a separate Southern entity'.<sup>413</sup> And yet, this Southern 'entity' comprised sundry ethnic groups, and students from a range of ethnicities encountered each other at schools with varying degrees of amity. Thus, while education served as an infrastructure of erudition and cross-ethnic interaction, ethnicity not only maintained its importance in the midst of an emerging regional consciousness but also, in certain moments, constituted an identity that precipitated conflict. In this way ethnicity was reinforced as a meaningful social identity

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<sup>411</sup> Anderson, Werner, and Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 358.

<sup>412</sup> See Pitya, 'History', 57, 414, 425, and 432.

<sup>413</sup> 'Memorandum on Reasons That Led to the Expulsion of Foreign Missionaries and Priests from the Southern Provinces of the Sudan.' Ministry of the Interior, March 5, 1964; as taken from *The Black Book of the Sudan: On the Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan, An Answer*. Italy, 1964; 14.

even as an emergent, ‘Southern’ political consciousness began to emerge in spaces like the Nugent and Rumbek schools. The Nugent and Rumbek schools represented educational sites where boys from throughout the South participated in cross-ethnic student bodies and received the best education that Southern Sudan had to offer. As evidenced in part by the reactions to happenings in Kenya and the 1947 Juba Conference (which begins the following chapter), these schools were also sites of increasing political awareness and opinion. To this end it is perhaps not surprising that many Loka and Rumbek alumni became active leaders of Southern Sudanese political, military, and religious life in the cataclysmic years to come. While students continued to find meaning in their ethnic identities and, on occasion, went lengths to defend them against others, these institutions also served as sites an awareness of a shared ‘Southern’ identity that transcended ethnicity emerged. And yet, the contemporaneous and emotive natures of these identities—and the momentary frictions that occurred—foreshadowed their complicated interplay in the decades to come.

The following chapter examines non-educational infrastructures that encouraged a ‘Southern’ identity.

### Chapter Three

#### Infrastructures of Belonging and Dissent: The Liberal Party and *Messenger* Newspaper, 1932-1956

‘The headmaster...diclosed [sic] to the students that...an agreement was going to be signed in Juba. He went on to say, that, subject of the agreement...the southern Sudanese to choose one of the three objectives...(I) To join with the Northern Sudanese Arabs. (2) To join with the East Africans of Uganda. (3) To remain alone as an Independent state. Before the man could finish...there came an angry general wild shouts into the air by the whole school. Away-Away with the Arab North.’<sup>414</sup> –Erisa Penesi

Erisa Penesi was born in 1932. After attending the CMS Elementary School in Maridi he matriculated at the Nugent School from 1946 to 1950. In his unpublished autobiography ‘The Living History and the Hidden Graves’, Penesi recalled childhood experiences which included Loka students’ reactions the 1947 Juba Conference (described later in this chapter).<sup>415</sup> Following the reaction listed above he noted that the headmaster opined that it would be better for the Southern Sudanese to join with the Arab North; if unity worked the South would continue peacefully and, if not, it could easily decide to go the other route. Before leaving the headmaster instructed students to write a general composition on the topic of joining the Arab North or African South. According to Penesi the majority wrote in favor of joining the African south; ‘the Juba conference...is fit to be compared with a competition of running a race...between a man

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<sup>414</sup> Sudan Archive Durham [hereafter SAD] 851/12/20 [Erisa Penesi, *The living History And the Hidden Graves. Part One*. Unpublished biography (p. 13)]

<sup>415</sup> For this biographical information on Penesi, see the SAD Online Catalog, ‘Erisa PENESI’, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/penesie.xml;query=851/12/20;brand=default#1>]. Accessed 1 May 2014.

of...forty and a boy of...twelve. Because the said agreement was like the sighning [sic] a contract between a minor and a full matured person.<sup>416</sup>

Like other regions of the imperial landscape, the end of the Second World War accelerated the movement towards political sovereignty in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. After four and a half decades of linguistic, military, educational, and religious projects, formal arrangements spurred the momentous jump from Condominium to nationhood. While some welcomed the prospect of national unity, others—as evidenced by the Nugent students—were less than enamored with the proposition. During the postwar years people in Southern Sudan increasingly acted out of a self-awareness as ‘Southerners’ while ethnic identity continued to represent an important social marker. While Southern schools aimed to encourage the preservation of ‘African’ cultures and ethnicities while fostering a sense of cross-ethnic community, people were also encouraged to appropriate a regional and racial identity category; ‘Southern Sudanese’.

While the previous chapter focused primarily on education, this chapter concerns non-educational infrastructures by which people in Southern Sudan came to know themselves as political subjects. It is, more specifically, concerned with the ways in which the term ‘Southerner’ emerged among activists as an increasingly-appropriated and politically useful identification among other available identities. Two engines involved in the development of a ‘Southern’ consciousness were the Catholic Mission’s Wau-based *Messenger* newspaper and, in the midst of significant political change, the possibility of self-government. *Messenger* not only fashioned an imagined community of readers but also created a kind of distancing affect from ethnicities. Readers, through the newspaper,

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<sup>416</sup> See SAD.851/12/20-21 [Penesi, *The living History And the Hidden Graves*, pp. 13-14]. For the specific quote see SAD/851/21 (p. 14)

could learn about and investigate different cultures in the region from an analytical, spectator-like gaze. At the same time, contributions from writers across ethnic lines reflected the more regional forum that the paper served. Sweeping change in the political spectrum compelled people to organize parties, represent local constituencies, and claim representation at the national level. As people in the South became increasingly knowledgeable of political happenings throughout the Condominium (and driven principally by Sudanese from the North), the Liberal Party became not just their most prominent elective advocate but also the loudest proponent for Southern regional autonomy. In this way a ‘Southern’ identity was an actionable strategy with which to marshal the collective needs of those who had been isolated and disadvantaged by the Southern Policy.

While some desired a united Sudan free from Anglo-Egyptian colonialism, others feared the prospect of national power being placed in the hands of Northern Sudanese, the traditional ‘oppressors’ associated with slavery. By highlighting the multiple ways people entered, responded to, and tried to affect changes in national politics, this chapter pushes against the popular historiographical tendency (typified by the title of Yosa Wawa’s *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*) to construct a teleological view of Southern Sudanese history. Rather than following a linear course, nationalism involves the evolution, consolidation, and reconfiguration of often competing agendas, viewpoints, and ideologies. Thus, while tracing the ideological development of Southern identity-formation and political separatism, it is imperative to give reference to the ways that some figures, like Hilary Paul Logali, initially welcomed the prospect of a united nation.

Just days before the Juba Conference convened, policeman Patrisio Lojok referenced Noah and his sons Ham and Shem when describing the differences between North and South. ‘If you are a Catholic or a Protestant...get your Old Testament...and start reading it from the distraction of the World by God when sending the deluge. After Abraham’s producing 3 sons, our Great; Great Grand father Cham, but the Mundukurus descended from Sem’.<sup>417</sup> These words were included under Lojok’s heading “the North for the Northerners and the South for the Southerners”. Kenneth Okeny has noted that this heading reflected Corporal Lojok’s argument that the divisions separating North and South were so firmly entrenched that sticking together would be impossible.<sup>418</sup> In his allusion to the Table of Nations from Genesis 10, Lojok’s claim that Southerners were descended from Cham (Ham) and Northerners from Sem (Shem) blended political, religious, historical, and—perhaps most importantly—national identities. By claiming that Northerners and Southerners were descended from different sons, Lojok was not only making the political argument that they constituted different *nations* but also, in another important sense, conveying that Northerners and Southerners had ancestral ties. Furthermore, the suggestion that all Northerners were descended from the same ancestor (Shem) and Southerners from Ham appears to counter the notion of ethnic kinship. How could Bari and Nuer, for example, constitute separate ethnicities if members from each

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<sup>417</sup> SAD.519/2/6-9; Letter by P.C. Patrisio Lojok probably to Governor of Equatoria Province through the D.C. of Juba, June 9, 1947, as taken from Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, [2005]; 38. “Mundukuru” and “Minga” are terms that Southerners occasionally use to refer to Northerners and appear to reflect anti-Northern contempt. See Peter Russell and Storrs McCall, ‘Can Secession Be Justified? The Case of the Southern Sudan’ in Dustain M. Wai, ed. *The Southern Sudan: The Problem of National Integration*. London, Portland: Frank Cass and Company Ltd., 1973; 105.

<sup>418</sup> Corporal Patrisio Lojok to Governor Equatoria Province, 9 June 1947. EP/SCR/1.A.5/1., NRO [National Records Office], as cited by Kenneth Okeny, ‘Historical Basis of Southern Sudan’s Demand for Self-Determination’ *Ufahamu: a Journal of African Studies* 22 [1994] (1-2): 95. See also Wawa 38 for Lojok’s document.

group shared the same ancestral progenitor? Such Biblical insertions like Lojok's, then, not only showed the layered dimensions to claims of communal identity and regional differences but also foreshadowed other Biblical and spiritual insertions that would be made in the war years to come.

Following the August 1955 Torit Mutiny, the longstanding thought that framed the South as a Christian sphere joined anti-Northern political sentiment to become pillars on which the citadel of Southern nationalism would stand.

#### The *Messenger* as Southern Engine

Although the creation of the Liberal Party was the most significant expression of Southern political agency on an organizational level, the flowering of political interest among people from various backgrounds was no less monumental. The *Sudan Monthly Record* noted that in Upper Nile Province the Shilluk and Dinka were experiencing more political activity 'than ever before', while reports from Equatoria noted that political matters had aroused attention throughout the province 'as never hitherto...For the first time, indeed, the political emphasis has shifted from the northern to the southern Sudan.'<sup>419</sup> People fueled by desires to ensure their place in national decision-making and shield themselves from potential subjection expressed anger at systemic inequalities and institutional racism. In time the newspaper would become an important forum for Southerners to not only express their interests and grievances but also define themselves as distinctly Southern Sudanese and African subjects.

A number of factors have influenced the development of Sudanese newspapers since the earliest days of the Condominium. All Sudanese governments, distrustful of the newspaper's political influence, have exercised great control of who can publish and

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<sup>419</sup> [signed by] H. Colville-Stewart, *Sudan Monthly Record* No. 265 (December 1952-January 1953) [February 19, 1953] 5, 16.

what can be printed. Sudan's vastness and the limitations of transport have also historically presented challenges for newspaper circulation, and added to these difficulties is high rate of illiteracy outside of the riverain capital areas: in 1942, for example, only 4% of the population was literate.<sup>420</sup> Nevertheless, during the Condominium era several newspapers arose in Southern Sudan. With the establishment of typographies and typographical schools, Catholic missionaries in the 1930s produced the first periodicals. The first of these was the English-language *Messenger*, which was followed by several vernacular papers: the Zande *Ruru Gene* (The Straight Road), the Dinka *Agamlong* (Believer of the Message), the Ma'di *Lelego* (The Star), the Bviri *Banga Nguco*, and the Bari *Rosario* and *Kasereketi*. As these periodicals tried to maintain contact with former students they had a pastoral goal, but in publishing locally-written articles on administrative matters—particularly after the Juba Conference—they encouraged the formation of a politically-conscious readership. The use of newspapers as educational mediums in Southern schools dates back to at least the mid-1930s, when boys and teachers in the Torit Elementary Vernacular School wrote material for the Latuko-language 'Star' newspaper. 'Star' was duplicated in Juba and issued bi-monthly.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> 'Media' [article co-authored by Chuck Galli] Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban Jr., and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 291.

<sup>421</sup> Joaquim Jose Valente de Cruz, 'A New Era of Peace': St Comboni's Dream of a Developed and Free South Sudan and the Commitment of His Followers to Fulfil It' in John Ashworth, ed. *One Church From Every Tribe, Tongue and People: Symposium on the Role of the Church in the Independence of South Sudan*. Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference (SCBC). Papers presented at a Symposium held at Nyakuron Cultural Centre and St Theresa's Cathedral Juba, South Sudan 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2012; 47-48; Roman Deckert, 'The history of the Sudanese press: Background to conflict' in 'The Sudanese press after separation—Contested identities of journalism' Media in Cooperation and Transition gGmbH (MICT). [<http://www.sudantribune.com/IMG/pdf/sudanstudie2012.pdf>]. 2012; p. 8; Mark Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity: The Origins and Development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians (Faith in Sudan No. 11)*. Limuru: Paulines Publications Africa, 2001; 263; SSNA Box EP 380 Folder 46.C.3.2.A (Summer 2012 designation), A.G. Hickson, 'Torit Elementary Vernacular School' (visited 2 May 1935), p. 2.



The urgency for Western-educated converts to start a dialogue between indigenous religions and cultures with Christianity was reflected in articles written by Christian students and civil servants between 1946 and 1950. These pieces were published by missionaries in their denominational and diocesan papers. Official church periodicals included the *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* (CMS), *Sudan Diocesan Review* (Anglican), and *Messenger* (Catholic). Although the Closed District Ordinance had long inhibited the Southern press's ability to contribute to public discourse about the Sudan's future, post-1947 articles showed a heightened degree of awareness and commentary. One such issue was poor quality of education in the South. In her 1952 contribution to the *C.M.S. Nugent School Magazine*, Elisa Bororete commented on the fact that despite Sudan's push to self-government and self-determination most people in the three Southern provinces were ill-informed of these changes. The reason for their ignorance, Bororete opined, was a lack of education. She continued that 'I personally thing [sic] that there is a danger of we Southern Sudanese not being given the right kind of education at all. Many schools are being opened in the South, but if the ways of teaching are not good, they will be a waste of time.'<sup>422</sup> When in the 1950s the American Presbyterian Mission opened a new station at Malakal, one of its first tasks was to build and equip Spearhead Press. One of its first projects was the production of *Light* magazine, which had as its manager future Southern activist Mading de Garang. By the mid-1950s schools had been encouraged to write their own magazines, with four volunteering to do so: Rumbek Secondary School, Juba Training Centre, and the Intermediate Schools at Atar and

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<sup>422</sup> Elisa Bororete (Baka), "Thoughts About Education in Southern Sudan" *C.M.S. [Loka] Nugent School Magazine* 1952, 24.

Loka.<sup>423</sup> With the escalation of the Civil War most of the Church-owned newspapers stopped publishing in early 1964, but this did not eliminate journalistic efforts from Southern Sudanese in Khartoum. The *Vigilant* was founded in 1965 as the Southern Front Party's organ but was banned two years later on charges of sedition. The secessionist Sudan African National Union published *The Explorer* for three years as well as the *Voice of Southern Sudan*. While other newspapers were published, delivery to Southern towns by air was infrequent.<sup>424</sup> As I show in the following chapters, newspapers served as critical spaces for advocates of Southern liberation to highlight anti-government sentiment and celebrate the South's 'African' identity in the first years of Sudanese independence.

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Their significance notwithstanding, each of the aforementioned newspapers was preceded by the *Messenger*. Of the newspapers produced in Southern Sudan, *Messenger* stands out for its longevity, prominence, and Southern contributions of a sociopolitical nature. The Sudanese Government's Annual Report for 1932 included in its report for Bahr el Ghazal that 'The Roman Catholic Mission showed enterprise in starting a monthly newspaper in English. It combines religious teaching with articles of instructional value and topical interest.'<sup>425</sup> That year *Messenger* was founded by Fr. Eduardo Mason of the Catholic Verona Fathers. An educational fortnightly printed at

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<sup>423</sup> Cruz, 'A New Era of Peace', 47-48; Deckert, 'history', 8; Philip Legge Pitya, *History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan, 1898-1964*. Diss. Boston University Graduate School, 1996; 575; William Anderson, Roland Werner, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment: The History of the Sudanese Church Across 2000 Years*. 1<sup>st</sup> reprint [2001]. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000; 353; and undated, untitled document beginning with 'Almost five years ago...' (1) in School of Oriental and African Studies [hereafter SOAS], CBMS.ICCLA Box 33 (536), Folder 'K. Sudan 1954-59', p. 2.

<sup>424</sup> Deckert, 'The history of the Sudanese press: Background to conflict', 9-11.

<sup>425</sup> Sudan No. 1 (1933) *Report on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the Sudan in 1932*. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office. 1933; 97.

Bussere (near Wau), the newspaper linked scattered Christian communities throughout the Condominium. It contained eight pages of content, and correspondence columns with Catholic and non-Catholic participants served to familiarize people with Catholic teaching on everyday issues. Malakal's Mill Hill Fathers offered regularly literary contributions, and the Catholic Herald contributed photo clichés. *Messenger* showed a commitment to fostering inter-ethnic understanding in a variety of ways: editors published English translations of vernacular songs, Shilluk writers discussed their beliefs about the *Reth* and compared it to their belief in Christ, and Bari writers reported their use of the title *Mor* (which means “the great mystical unifier King”) for Jesus.<sup>426</sup>

Like the Latuko-language paper ‘Star’ the *Messenger* also had a presence in Southern schools. The newspaper of Catholic schools, it was cited as being used by Class II Zande readers at the Yubu Elementary Vernacular School, where Inspector of Education H.G. Ramshaw reported in October 1944 that students read the newspaper in Zande.<sup>427</sup> Contributors included both Italian and Sudanese, lay and ecclesiastical (see list below). Several members of the pioneering cadre of Sudanese Catholic priests (Jerome Bidai Siri, Gabriel Dwatuka,<sup>428</sup> Arkangelo Ali, and Angelo Tutuo) contributed, and Joseph Oduho—who became a leading figure in the Sudan African National Union during the First Civil War—authored a piece on ‘Senior Education’ published in October 1948. Rather than merely circulating throughout the Southern Sudan, the expansive reach

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<sup>426</sup> For “unifier King” quotation see Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation*, 353. For all other information described since fn. 16, see Comboni Archives Rome [hereafter CAR] A/93/9/6, ‘Editor of Catholic Paper Expelled from Sudan’ [Jan. 1963], p. 1; ‘Appendix “C”’: Documents from the (So Called) Missionary Press Which Deal with the Religious Situation in the Sudan’ in *The Black Book of the Sudan: On the Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan, An Answer*. Italy, 1964; 174; and Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 263.

<sup>427</sup> SSNA Box EP 383, Folder EP.46.C.5.4 (Summer 2012 designation), H.G. Ramshaw, ‘Report on Yubu Elementary Vernacular School’ (visited 28 October 1944, dated 30 November 1944), p. 1.

<sup>428</sup> ‘Gabriel Dwatuka’ in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From the Beginning to 2006*. Second Edition. SCBC General Secretariat—P.O. Box: 6011 Khartoum; 28.

of the paper is evidenced by an advertisement in its November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955 edition. Claiming to be ‘The Only Paper of the Southern Sudan’, it stated that it was sent to more than fifteen countries on three continents, including the Belgian Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rhodesia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Vatican City, British Guiana, and the United States.<sup>429</sup>

*Messenger* readers could not only look to the paper for general news from Sudan but also specific information regarding certain ethnic groups. Indeed, the newspaper’s ethnographic agenda can be gleaned from some of the titles of articles that appeared in pre-Mutiny *Messenger* editions. Note the mix of European and Sudanese authors, illustrating the degree to which those within and outside of a particular ethnicity assumed authority to discuss matters pertaining to it:

- Fr. S. Santandrea, ‘Southern Sudan Folklore—The Bongo In the Central District (Wau) of the B.G.P.’ (Jun. 1934)
- Fr. E. Mason, ‘Southern Sudan Folklore—A Shilluk Fable’ (Feb.-Mar. 1937)
- Fr. A. Nebel, ‘Southern Sudan Folklore—Life History of a Dinka’ (May 1937)
- Jerome Bidai, ‘Tribal Investigation—To the Zande Readers’ (Mar. 1942)
- Fr. C. Broggini, ‘The Belanda’ (May 1946)
- Fr. E. Mason, ‘The Controversy Over The Belanda’ (May 1946)
- Joseph Ayok, ‘Dinka Education’ (Dec. 1947)
- Kwajok, ‘Dinka Education’ (Dec. 1947)
- Mathew L. Jambite, ‘Notes on Moru Customs’ (Sept. 1948)<sup>430</sup>

An example of the way in which the *Messenger* was a source with which to learn the history and cultural characteristics of a given ethnic group can be found in the May 1946 edition, which included a section on the Belanda. Offering definitions and descriptions,

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<sup>429</sup> *The Messenger*, 1 November 1955; 160.

<sup>430</sup> The Ayok, Kwajok, and Jambite articles are cited in Pitya, ‘History’, fn. 337 (445), fn. 228 (586), 773.

author Fr. C. Brogginini shared why Bor and Bviri were not of the same ethnic group.<sup>431</sup> In an adjacent article entitled ‘The Controversy Over the Belanda’, Mason discussed the Belanda language and race, sharing that ‘The two Belandas do not belong to one race; they belong to entirely different racial groups: the Sudanic and the Nilotic.’<sup>432</sup> He continued that the Bviri language was akin to the Ndogo but still retained words revealing their Bor origin. The name used for God (or Spirit) was *Joki* (similar to the Luo-Shilluk *Juok*) rather than the Ndogo equivalent *Mbiri*, which is closer to the Zande *Mbori*.<sup>433</sup> And yet, notwithstanding the content that focused on specific ethnicities, Messenger published an article (adapted from *Ruru Gene*) by Tarcisio Migido that presented Christianity as a new community of belonging to be sought after. A teacher at the Mupoi Normal School, he wrote: ‘you should leave charms altogether. Pagans will find some excuse in their utter ignorance...But what reasonable excuse can a Christian have? The custom of your tribe?...now your new tribe is christianity, and unless you are born again...you will not be able to enter Heaven.’<sup>434</sup>

For its multilayered dimensions and implications regarding religious and ethnic politics, Migido’s conflation of tribe and Christianity are extraordinary. To begin, there is the inference that one’s ethnicity is as exchangeable as religion (just as one can convert into or out of Christianity, one can join and leave an ethnicity). Though the term ‘pagan’ and ‘charms’ are used, ‘tribe’ is not employed as antithetical to Christianity; rather, Christianity—as a community of belonging—is itself understood as being tribal. Thus, while Migido establishes an understanding that one must depart from the ignorance of

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<sup>431</sup> C. Brogginini’s ‘The Belanda’, *The Messenger* (May 1946), 28.

<sup>432</sup> E. Mason, ‘The Controversy Over the Belanda’, *The Messenger* (May 1946), 28.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>434</sup> Tarcisio Migido, ‘To Charm...’ *The Messenger* (February-March 1937): 16. [adapted from *Ruru Gene*]

pagans and charms and be born again, he does not associate Christianity as a progression from being ‘ethnic’ or ‘tribal’—after all, he positions Christianity itself as a tribe. The title of Francis Vokoso’s article published in *Messenger* later that year—‘Your Tribe and Yourself: Christian Tribal Life, Tribal Civilization’—would appear to support this idea.<sup>435</sup> Furthermore, the notion that Christianity presented a ‘new tribe’ not only suggested that it was a religion that competed with indigenous belief systems but also hints at the question of Christianity’s relation to ethnic identity. Could Christianity, as suggested by some British figures in the previous chapter, unite otherwise disparate groups of people (in this case ethnic groups)? The fact that the paper published so much on ethnic groups might suggest that unity under a Christian framework could exist amidst a host of social and cultural differences. This idea was expressed in an editorial that will be illuminated momentarily.

Despite the temptation to read the *Messenger* as a newspaper that focused predominantly on the ethnic particularities and distinctions, articles addressed salient issues not just within the missionary sphere but also more general matters concerning the Condominium:

- Editor, ‘The Dangers of Education (Western)’ (Jan./Feb. and Jun. 1945)
- Editor, ‘Is One Religion As Good As Another?’ (Oct. 1945)
- Ilario Labagna, ‘African Education’ (Sept. 1946)
- Ernest Ali Jubara, ‘Why to Educate Women’ (October 1946)
- Combonians, ‘Conference on Southern Policy at Juba.’ (Jul., Aug. 1947)
- Gabriel Duatuka, ‘My Opinion About Girls’ Education’ (Sept. 1947)
- Santino Abuhum, ‘Girls’ Education in Africa’ (Sept. 1947)
- Editor, ‘Linguistic Research in the South.’ (Oct. 1947)
- Francis Vokoso, ‘Why Corrupt Our Language?’ (Jan./Feb. and April 1948)
- Joseph H. Oduho, ‘Senior Education’ (Sept. 1948)
- William G. Gbendi and Tarcizio Ahmed, ‘School-Fees’ (Sept. 1948)<sup>436</sup>

<sup>435</sup> Title taken from Pitya, ‘History’, 783.

<sup>436</sup> These titles are taken from Pitya, ‘History’, fn. 337 (445), fn. 35 (489), fn. 271 (605), 767, 768, 783.

Readers could find histories of particular missions, information on Zande settlement, the growth of Juba, and results of a Wau Football League title match.<sup>437</sup> One could also find regular updates from and news concerning mission school Old Boys (see last chapter, which includes Fr. Arkangelo's Ali article about building a connection between Old Boys and current students). Ali's article was preceded years earlier by a letter to the Editor from St. Anthony's Old Boy Ippolito Fei. Published in 1937 issue, Fei sent greetings and shared that he and a colleague were happily employed in the Telegraph Office; 'we feel very pleased with it', he stated. 'God willing, we shall succeed in our work.'<sup>438</sup> Fei then proceeded to share the nostalgic feeling that the newspaper invoked. 'I read it with great pleasure...and almost felt that I was at St. Anthony's again. Having read the paper through I found that to be able to receive it monthly I must pay five piasters for my yearly subscription...I request you kindly to send me a copy every month'.<sup>439</sup> Richard Ukele, an Old Boy of the Bussere school, wrote to the editor thanking him for favors done during his schooldays and requested monthly *Messenger* editions; 'Now that I live in a far off country I would be delighted to hear all the news of my native district.' The Editor responded that the newspaper would be sent and word that 'All Bussere boys send you their kindest regards. Best wishes...and may Our Lord bless your newly started career.'<sup>440</sup> Intended to be more than just a space where Catholic school Old Boys could contribute, *Messenger* attempted to cultivate a broader community of active readers and

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<sup>437</sup> See following issues of *Messenger*; 'The History of Our Missions—Kayango' (June 1934), p. 39; A. Violini, 'The History of Our Missions: Lul' (February-March 1937): 17; 'Zande Settlement' (May 1946): cover page; 'The Growth of Juba' (May 1946); 26, and 'Bahr el Ghazal Province' (15 January 1954), 12. Pitya's bibliography, on p. 782, lists a plethora of *Messenger* articles devoted to mission histories. They vast majority, though not all, concerned locations in Southern Sudan.

<sup>438</sup> Ippolito Fei, 'Letters to the Editor' *The Messenger* (February-March 1937), 14.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>440</sup> Both Ukele's letter and the editor's response were published in 'Letter to & From the Editor', *The Messenger* (May 1937), 32.

contributors. For example, in 1936 it held a crossword puzzle competition and—after announcing the two winners—wondered ‘why many other readers never compete. Have a try at it; even if you miss the prize, the knowledge you thus require will reward you amply.’<sup>441</sup> In 1946 Mason invited African readers to provide input on a controversy on whether the Bor belonged to the Nilotic race and others to the Sudanic, Ndogo-speaking race.<sup>442</sup> In these ways the community of readers—however divided by race or ethnicity—could be informed about the same Southern Sudanese region in which they worked, lived, or had a general interest.

Perhaps the most important element of *Messenger*’s content leading up to the Mutiny was its coverage and assessment of national political happenings. The March 1953 edition published ‘An open Letter to Our Northern Friends’ outlining the Catholic Church’s position on political developments. While it maintained a non-partisan position, it rebuked the notion that Southern opinion was dictated by missionaries and the assumption that all mission-educated Southerners were anti-North. Rather, author Eduardo Mason opined that ill-feeling between North and South was driven by ‘the fact that Southerners hear too often the pronouncements by unauthorized Northerners either publicly in the press or in private dealings and conversations which they take as prelude to attacks against their freedom of religion and education.’<sup>443</sup> The paper ran a cover story on the first Sudanese Parliament in January 1954 and, in the same issue, included brief biographies of men from Bahr el Ghazal who had run for seats (Stanislaus Paysama, Mica Bol, Mathayo Cambe, and Peter Muorwel). It was noted that Bol, Cambe, and

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<sup>441</sup> ‘December Competition Results’, *The Messenger* (February-March 1937), 20.

<sup>442</sup> Mason, ‘The Controversy Over the Belanda’, *The Messenger* (May 1946), 28.

<sup>443</sup> ‘Our Policy: An open Letter to Our Northern Friends’ *The Messenger* (March 1953), 18.



Muorwel were Protestants who had attended the Loka Intermediate School.<sup>444</sup> In an important moment Stanislaus Paysama's biography was included under the heading 'Our Senators'. In one respect use of the word 'Our' reflected the fact that he had attended Catholic mission schools, but it also a feeling of regional representation on the national level of government. He was, after all, a representative of the Southern Party.<sup>445</sup> In this way the newspaper was conveying to its readers a sense that Paysama and his counterparts were representing their interests as advocates for the South in Khartoum.

As political change quickened issues concerning Church-State relations achieved more prominence in the paper. The January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1953 edition of *Sudan Star* published a quote from the Post Elementary Schoolmasters' Union of the Three Towns stating that no missionary school be opened in the future and that existing mission schools be gradually transferred to the Ministry. The *Star* piece, which was later published in the *Messenger* in an article on education, compelled one contributor to write a critical response that *Messenger* published in its 'Viewpoints' section:

'Such a questionable statement regarding Mission schools in the Southern Provinces, in this decisive transitional period of the country is not constructive but destructive...It shall never happen, however through constitutional channels without the Southerners' consent. If Christian Schools are threatened so openly to be put out of existence, it is difficult to understand how freedom and religious tolerance can be maintained...Anybody advocating the unity of the Sudan should have this in mind: Diversity in unity can co-exist...the people of the Sudan may be divergent in many respects without necessarily fighting each other. One is for instance a Northerner, another is a Southerner; one may be a Moslem, one a Christian; one may be brown in colour, the other, black;...yet, despite

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<sup>444</sup> 'First Sudan Parliament' and 'Bahr el Ghazal Province' *The Messenger* (15 January 1954), 1 and 16 respectively.

<sup>445</sup> 'Bahr el Ghazal Province' *The Messenger* (15 January 1954); 12.

these differences, they are all Sudanese, having at heart the welfare of their country.’<sup>446</sup>

The November 1<sup>st</sup> edition, published less than three months after the Mutiny and in the midst of ongoing unrest, had as its headlining story ‘Freedom of Opinion and Expression’, a message sent on the Pope’s behalf that summarized the proper roles of Church and State. The bottom of the cover page included a description of freedom of expression as listed in Sudan’s constitution and the Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That issue also included Fr. Ferdinando Sembiante’s vivid eyewitness account of the Torit Mutiny—the subject of the following chapter—and a note that Uganda was insisting that the mutineers were political refugees who, by international law, should not be handed back.<sup>447</sup>

The inclusion of Uganda’s statement that the mutineers were ‘political refugees’ rather than criminals can perhaps be read as being indicative of what *Messenger*’s editors thought of them as well. The newspaper’s perceived warmth toward the mutineers caught the attention of the young Sudanese Government, which cited *Messenger* for its allegedly-slanted coverage of the executions imposed on some of the perpetrators. In its March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956 issue and under the heading ‘They Died A Good Death’ the paper framed the executions with martyrdom language. The report stated that three of the condemned asked for baptism prior to their executions and noted that before their sentences were carried out they renounced their former names and expressed their wishes to be known by their Christian names. “The last five to be shot were all Catholic...all of whom died a

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<sup>446</sup> ‘Old Boys Corner’ *The Messenger* (15 January 1954); 15.

<sup>447</sup> ‘Freedom of Expression and Opinion’, Ferdinando Sembiante, ‘TORIT: 18-30 August An Account of the Days of the Mutiny’, and ‘Uganda refuses to hand back mutineers’ in *The Messenger* (1 November 1955); cover page, 160, 163.

really Christian death.”<sup>448</sup> Their deaths, to be sure, were based on their involvement in a regional revolt that witnessed hundreds of Northern Sudanese slaughtered by Southern Sudanese troops and civilians. The paper also reported that some of the men sang ‘O Jesus, for love of me...’ during the last hundred yards of their walk. Prison Officer Marcelo Bakhit, one of the condemned that day, thanked missionaries for their role in his life and asked forgiveness for disobeying God’s laws. Three prayers were recited before the final shots were fired.<sup>449</sup> Governor of Bahr El Ghazal K.M. Sabir chastised Bishop Mason for *Messenger*’s ‘angelic’ portrayal of the criminals and followed that the article’s title was ‘certainly misleading and is causing grave anxiety and deep concern...In some quarters the article is considered to be designed to encourage others to commit the same crimes as those of the heroes of the article.’<sup>450</sup> Framing the execution with such religious symbolisms perhaps suggested that their faith imparted a measure of innocence upon them, or that their punishments reflected Khartoum’s attitudes towards Sudanese Christians and Christianity.

In 1960 *Messenger* would again draw the Government’s attention, this time for printing information about the persecution of martyrs in early Christian history. The paper had mentioned their plight along with religious persecution then occurring in Eastern Europe. Under the presumption that such an editorial decision must have been informed by the violent circumstances facing Sudanese Christians in the wake of Islamicization policies, Fr. Hadrian Bonfanti was accused of “intending to make the

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<sup>448</sup> See SSNA Box EP 213, Folder EP.SCR.10.C.6 [August 2013 designation], ‘Extract from Article on page 32 of the Messenger Magazine of 1.3.1956’, 1 and K.M. Sabir to Vicar Apostolic of Bahr El Ghazal [Eduardo Mason], May 28, 1956, in same box and folder (1).

<sup>449</sup> See ‘Extract from Article on page 32 of the Messenger Magazine of 1.3.1956’, 1; ‘They Died a Good Death even if they had not lived a good life’ and ‘Read and Remember’, each in *Messenger* (1 March 1956); 32.

<sup>450</sup> Sabir to Mason, May 28, 1956.

readers believe...that difficult times are facing their creed...[it] may stir up the feelings of Christians and affect public peace”.<sup>451</sup> Bonfanti was warned that if such behavior continued the *Messenger's* license would be cancelled. In February 1962 he was put on trial for trafficking foreign currency, and in October the paper was forced to submit to censorship. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1963 he was among four Verona Fathers to arrive in Rome after being expelled from the country.<sup>452</sup>

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*Messenger* was an important space in which readers could learn about those of other ethnicities, acquire knowledge about national political changes, and contribute commentaries on various facets of Condominium life. As the next section shows, people within Southern Sudan had varying reactions and responses to the Condominium's political future and the prospect of national unity. Amid such conflicting viewpoints, one constant that emanated political discussions of the period was the awareness that the South, for a range of reasons, was fundamentally different from the North. By providing spaces for readers to gain a better understanding of different communities within Southern Sudan and provide commentaries on a range of issues, *Messenger* became an important way by which a 'Southern' identity—however nascent and tenuous—was cultivated in the years up to and through the Torit Mutiny.

#### Sudanese Nationalism from White Flag Revolt (1924) to Independence (1956)

Gordon Muortat, a member of the Agar Dinka from Rumbek, recalled that “There was no ‘Sudanese Nationalism’ as an entirety or as an integral whole...As soon as the south came into the picture, it started to develop its own nationalism in opposition to that

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<sup>451</sup> O'Donovan, “Editor of Catholic Paper Expelled from Sudan”, 1-2.

<sup>452</sup> See Ibid; 1-2 and ACR.A/93/12/12; “Religious Oppression in the Bahr el Ghazal”, 1964: 7-9. *The Messenger* continued publishing after Bonfanti's expulsion ‘but under great difficulties’ (8-9).

of the north.”<sup>453</sup> Southern Sudanese nationalism, according to this line of thought, was produced by the very nationalism that it tried to confront. While the Mahdist movement was perhaps the first manifestation of Sudanese nationalism,<sup>454</sup> the twentieth century’s first occurrence was the pro-Egyptian White Flag League Movement. Many Sudanese had issue with the British refusal to allow them a political voice, and in 1924 Ali Abdel Latif formed a political party with other Sudanese officers and lower-tier civil servants. The party was known as the White Flag League (WFL), named after their emblem of a white flag with a map of the Nile Valley. The WFL, along with the Sudanese Union Society, aimed to defend the rights of the Sudanese people and fight for self-determination. Latif envisioned a united Sudan, and the WFL had as one of its stated goals the desire to unite Sudan with Egypt. Though it claimed no enmity against the Condominium regime it paradoxically wanted to eventually force the British to leave the Sudan. While the League opposed to discrimination against Southern ethnic groups, it did not grant membership to Southerners. Several military officers and ex-officers secretly joined the League and Society, and when Egypt became independent both organizations staged demonstrations in Khartoum supporting the Egyptian nationalists. Latif’s imprisonment for organizing the demonstrations compelled the Sudanese nationalists to rebel. The British Army completely crushed the uprising.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Gordon Muortat, as quoted in Francis M. Deng and M.W. Daly, *‘Bonds of Silk’: The Human Factor in the British Administration of the Sudan*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1989; 196. For Muortat’s bio see p. 239.

<sup>454</sup> See for example Mahgoub el-Tigani Mahmoud, who stated that ‘Despite its distortion in the colonial writings and captives’ references, the Mahdist state and its elements shine as a heroic Sudanese movement for national liberation. It appears that the Mahdist state maintained a coherent political and ideological system on the basis of national unity versus external intervention.’ ‘The Mahdist Correctional System in the Sudan: Aspects of Ideology in Politics.’ *Africa Today* 28, no. 2 (1981): 85.

<sup>455</sup> See Philip Abbas, “Growth of Black Political Consciousness in Northern Sudan” *Africa Today*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1973), 31; Durham University Special Collections Library, HAW 1/3/15, ‘Note on Sudanese Nationalism’; Lual A. Deng, *The Power of Creative Reasoning: The Ideas and Vision of John Garang*. Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc., 2013; 132; Pitya, ‘History’, 335-336; and Eve Troutt Powell, *A Different*

While armed revolt may not have proven to be an unsuccessful means of expressing nationalist sentiment, the periodical press was a prime arena for the nationalism to develop among Northern Sudanese, Arabic-speaking, educated elites who began to write about “national” issues as discussions of Egyptian nationalism entered Sudanese periodicals. By the late 1920s and early 1930s some began to refer to a “Sudanese” national identity and literature.<sup>456</sup> In the 1930s there was a vague sense of nationalism among the *effendiya* class of people who had been educated to fill minor government posts (the British were forced to rely more on local administrators, particularly after the financial crisis forced cutbacks in British staff). The *effendia* were drawn mostly from riverain groups in the North, particularly the Nubians, and the Condominium’s capital resources were being used to develop the Gezira region as the Condominium’s economic backbone. In 1938 members of the educated classed formed the Graduates Congress and included among its early leaders Ismail al-Azhari and Muhammad Mahgoub, two of the first Prime Ministers. The Congress, which had an original goal of independence, soon split into groups that supported national independence and another that supported unity with Egypt. The first Sudanese parties were established during the Second World War. Each was based in the North. The Ashiqqa party comprised *effendia* whose primary demand was unity with Egypt, while the Umma Party—the political wing of the Ansar religious sect and Mahdi family—advocated for a Sudan under Sudanese control. In 1946, three years after the Advisory Council for the Sudan had been created, the British acquiesced to elites who pressed for a

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*Shade of Colonialism: Egypt, Great Britain, and the Mastery of the Sudan*. Berkeley: University of California Press (Colonialisms, 2), 2003; 208.

<sup>456</sup> See Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity, and Race’ *African Affairs* Vol. 107, Iss. 426 (2008); 21 and Sharkey, ‘A Century in Print: Arabic Journalism and Nationalism in Sudan, 1899-1999’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (November 1999), 531. Sharkey puts quotations around ‘Sudanese’ and ‘national’ in ‘Century’, 531.

unified Sudanese state and reversed the isolationist Southern Policy. Any possibility of Southern Sudan becoming an independent state or joining an East African entity like Uganda or Kenya were effectively quelled.<sup>457</sup>

By the 1950s *ta'rib*, or Arabization, became an official policy that sought to quickly spread Arabic throughout a linguistically-diverse land.<sup>458</sup> Southern Sudan began to witness the implementation of the Arabist vision. Although vernaculars were used as instruction mediums in all village and primary schools while English was employed at the intermediate and higher levels, Arabic was introduced as a main subject in the Ater Intermediate school, the Rumbek Secondary government school, and Juba Training Centre in 1949.<sup>459</sup> It could be said that these measures were the fruit of an Arab ideology articulated by the Graduates Congress to the Condominium Government back in 1939:

“education should be orientated towards the Arab and Islamic, but not African, culture, because the Sudan had much in common with the Arabic countries of Islamic Orient...[they argued that education in the South could not be improved by a subsidized missionary system] but through the opening of government schools, similar to those in the North, and where the Arabic language would provide the lingua franca”.<sup>460</sup>

This emphasis on Arabism did not go unopposed. Recognizing the growing power and influence of the Northern elite, Adam Adam—a medical practitioner in Khartoum who came from a Darfurian slave family—founded *Kutla as-Suda* (the Black Bloc) in 1938.

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<sup>457</sup> See Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*, 11; Richard A. Lobban Jr., Robert S. Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85). Third Edition. Lanham, London: Scarecrow Press, 2002; xlv and ‘Graduates (General) Congress’, 114-115; HAW [from Durham University Special Collections Library] 1/3/15; Abbas, ‘Growth’, 31-33.

<sup>458</sup> Sharkey, ‘Arab Identity’, 21.

<sup>459</sup> See South Sudan National Archives [hereafter SSNA] Box ZD 29, Folder ZD.17.3 [Summer 2012 designation], Abdel Rahman Ali Taha [Minister of Education], ‘Introduction of the Teaching of Arabic into the Curriculum of Schools in the Southern Provinces’ [ca. late 1940s], 1).

<sup>460</sup> Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Educational Development in the Sudan, 1898-1956*. Oxford, 1969; 152, as taken from Oluwadare Aguda, ‘Arabism and Pan-Arabism in Sudanese Politics’ *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 11 No. 2 (June 1973), 184.

He argued that all Blacks, being ‘the only true Sudanese’, should unite at a time when Arabized townspeople used the term *Sudani* as a slightly derogatory term to describe un-Arabized Black men. Attracting people from the Nuba and Fur people—there were then not many people from the South in Khartoum—Adam hoped that the movement could develop into a political party. Resolutions were passed demanding that their rights be recognized and that power never be handed to Arabs. The Ashiqqa and the Umma Parties, which each objected to the Bloc, accused it of racism. The British were compelled to concede to Ashiqqa and Umma pressure and refused the Bloc the right to be licensed as a political party.<sup>461</sup>

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The Juba Conference took place on June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 1947. Initially organized to ask Southern Sudanese whether they wanted to send representatives to the newly-formed National Assembly in Khartoum, dignitaries included the Governor of Upper Nile, the Director of Establishments, a representative of the Legal Secretary, chiefs and other ethnic leaders nominated or chosen by their people. On the first day members from the South spoke against unity with the North, but on the second six delegates voted for unity, four spoke against, and seven abstained from speaking. Those who opposed unity considered Southern Sudan’s comparative underdevelopment and argued that they were like recruits compared to the North’s grizzled veterans; more training was needed before they could join Northerners in an assembly. In the end it was adopted—without voting—that Southerners favored national unity. Closer integration between North and South was recommended, as well the South’s representation in the proposed Legislative Assembly

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<sup>461</sup> Abbas, ‘Growth’, 32-33. ‘the only true Sudanese’ quote is taken from 32. Adam’s name is at one point spelled ‘Ahdam’ in Abbas’s article but elsewhere ‘Adam’ (32).



through a system of direct representation. Finally, it was proposed that provincial councils be formed to give Southern Sudanese experience and select their representatives for the central assembly. In the end, attendees from both regions agreed on the principle of national unity and Southern Sudanese participation in the Assembly. While the Conference recognized differences separating the two regions, an agreement was reached on safeguards.<sup>462</sup>

The perspectives of those who were alive at the time shed light on how the Conference was perceived—and the level of controversy and anger felt in its immediate aftermath. Gordon Muortat noted that nationalists from the North demanded a meeting between North and South without consulting the South, and Abd al-Rahman Sule—who will be described at further length momentarily—agreed that Northern Sudanese were, being pushed by the Egyptians, “in a hurry” to achieve independence. As such the Conference was convened only when the British insisted on the participation of Southern Sudanese.<sup>463</sup> Although initially opposed to participating in the Legislative Assembly, Sule explained that Southerners were persuaded by the issue of salaries: “Southerners hated the British [because] the British did not pay good salaries... That is what caused the southerners to say that the British should leave.”<sup>464</sup> Chief Chier Rian, a Conference attendee,<sup>465</sup> believed that the South should develop separately until it reached a point comparable with the North. At that point full unity could be considered:

“The reason I was not happy about [the British] departure was not that I liked them. It was because they had raised

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<sup>462</sup> See Gino Barsella and Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, ‘A List of Major Dates in the Modern History of the Sudan’. Nairobi, 2 (designated as Comboni Mission Library, 624 266.009 AAV Brack II); Wawa, *Pursuits*, 11; and Sudan No. 1 (1949) *Report by the Governor-General on the Administration, Finances and Conditions of the Sudan in 1947*. London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, [1949], 213.

<sup>463</sup> *Bonds of Silk*, 196 (quote taken from same page).

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid*, 196-197 (both Majok and Sule statements).

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid*, 197 and 238.

the standard of the north and left us behind. I knew that when they left, the north would replace the British and dominate us. That was why I said they should teach us so that when they left and we remained with our brothers, we would be equal.<sup>466</sup>

Stephen Chakuen enlightened me on one purported reason that delegates from the South changed their stance on the Conference's second day. Born in 1935 in the Wau area, Chakuen was in school at the time and claimed to remember the Conference 'very well'. Though Southerners were initially united in the stance that should the English leave, but Chakuen states that *jalabas* then made a plan: after going around, collecting money from merchants, and giving it to the Governor-General, they shuttled a plane from Juba to Khartoum to gather beer. Women from Ethiopia were collected with the beer, and *jalabas* emptied some of their houses so that guests and women could be accommodated. Rams were slaughtered and

'Each member of the assembly was given one wife—accommodated the rooms, and then the ladies were told that these guys are your guests. You have to treat them carefully... When the night fall came, each and everyone goes to his place. The whole night, people were drinking, dancing... When it near to come to the morning, then the gentlemen fell asleep. The time is fixed to be 10 o'clock morning that day. Most of them, they couldn't make it... They went to the assembly trying to go attend the sit-in. Though the sit-in was arranged, people sit, and then when it comes to voting, whether English... will go and then the Sudan will be what...? In the opinion of Jalaba, he want to chase English away and then leave the Sudan as the Sudanese together.'<sup>467</sup>

The veracity of these claims notwithstanding, the mere existence of such a rumor speaks to the broader level of mistrust. In its statement on a 1947 strike of labor and government employees in Juba, the Annual Report noted the 'feeling of dissatisfaction which had

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<sup>466</sup> Ibid, 197.

<sup>467</sup> Interview with Stephen With Chakuen, 19 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan)

been growing over the past two years...[in part due to] disappointment at the lack of any visible step taken as the result of the Juba conference towards the unification of establishments with the north.<sup>468</sup>

It is useful to note that the Dinka Muortat, the Bari Sule,<sup>469</sup> and Rian each appeared to be aware of the distinct roles and grievances shared by ‘Northerners’ and ‘Southerners’ within the Conference’s greater context. Taken together the Northern Sudanese are essentially framed as impatient, self-seeking, and more advantaged politicians without care for the concerns of those in the South. Southerners are, conversely, posited as victims: they are initially not consulted, only brought in after British insistence, underpaid, underprivileged, and susceptible to domination. The fact that no mention is made of ethnicity in their recollections of the Conference could be read as an illustration of its relative irrelevance as a factor to the issues facing ‘Southerners’ more generally. It could be said, thus, that a shared sense of trans-ethnic grievance served as a key building block for the emergence of a basic ‘Southern’ identity at this time. Indeed, Erisa Penesi’s anecdote concerning reaction to the Conference at the Nugent School—which had students from across the South—evinces a tangible ‘us and them’ mentality among that section of youth.

The following year the Legislative Assembly officially opened and a half-Sudanese Executive Council set up. Northern Sudanese political parties and official Egyptian representatives met in Cairo in 1952 while representatives from the South, due to their lack of a political party, did not attend. A Self-Government Statute was enacted which provided indefinite Sudanese self-government. In February of the following year

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<sup>468</sup> Sudan No. 1 (1949) *Report by the Governor-General*, 214.

<sup>469</sup> ‘Sule, ‘Abd Al-Rahman.’ [article co-authored by Scopas S. Poggo] *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 413

an Anglo-Egyptian Agreement was reached on the right to self-determination and a self-government phase implemented. Members from the South were once again excluded from the proceedings on the grounds that no Southern political party existed. In November 1953 the National Unionist Party (NUP), led by Isma'il al-Azhari, won the majority of seats in the first Parliamentary elections. The following year Al-Azhari was elected Prime Minister, Parliament opened session, and a Sudanization Committee was set up. The Republic of the Sudan officially became independent on 1 January 1956.<sup>470</sup>

Southern Sudanese responses to the national political developments ranged from passionate support and adamant resistance. A major bone of contention was the belief that the South was on the receiving end of mistreatment from a host of foreign and Sudanese actors. In addition to disdain towards the North, anti-British sentiment in the South rested on the argument that people there had been given inadequate means for development and that white people were invested in their submission. In the area of education, for example, student Lemi Logaro lamented in his 1955 mid-year examination that despite being helped by Europeans Southerners were 'primitive' and 'low' because of a lack of good teachers earlier on.<sup>471</sup> In an essay entitled 'Education in Sudan', Nugent student Amibu Fundā made a more damning assessment of mission education's impact on Southern life:

'We Southern Sudanese we have been cheated in education. When the British came...they came through the North and therefore taught only the Northern Sudanese...here girls' education is very low and they are not allowed to learn in secondary schools with boys

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<sup>470</sup> Barsella and Guixot, 'History', 2-3; Wawa, *Pursuits*, 12; and *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, xxxix. More details on Sudanization are included in the Tutuo chapter. It was, in the most general sense, the process by which Sudanese were selected to fill administrative posts in the transitional process to independence.

<sup>471</sup> Lemi Logero examination [1955], SAD.860/3/104-106.

whereas in other countries women's education is one of the important things...the Sudan is looking for self-governing which will soon lead to self-determination which is at hand. I hope the Sudan will progress in the future and will not be a home of primitive people any more'<sup>472</sup>

In addition to their role in institutionalizing educational inequalities, some expressed that the British fueled anti-Arab, anti-Northern feeling by keeping the legacy of slavery alive. Student leader Joseph Garang would accuse missionaries of cooperating with the British in teaching about historical slavery (see Chapter Four), but others who recalled British attitudes and behaviors described their efforts to sow division between North and South. Andrew Wieu, a Dinka from Upper Nile Province, was born in the late 1920s and appointed an administrative assistant in February 1952. To Northerners, Wieu stated, the British framed Southerners in a negative, insignificant light. 'And to southerners' he added, 'they kept reminding them of the Mahdi, the slavery, and all that. They...said they came to help the southerners out of slavery...this fanned something in the minds of southerners. Therefore, there remained some hatred.'<sup>473</sup> Muortat gave examples of specific comments levied by T.R.H. Owen, Deputy Governor of Bahr el Ghazal from 1948-1948 and Governor from 1948-1953. Muortat, who graduated from the Sudan Police College in 1951 and worked as a police inspector until the end of the Condominium period, claimed that Owen maintained that "Northerners were not good people...He argued that a leopard would never change its spots...if the Arabs of the north used to enslave southerners and oppress them, was it possible, after half a century, that

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<sup>472</sup> SAD.859/19/15-16; [Amibu Fundä?], 'Education in Sudan'. The essay is part of a larger compilation of Nugent essays.

<sup>473</sup> Andrew Wieu, as quoted in Francis M. Deng and M.W. Daly, '*Bonds of Silk*', 191. For Wieu's biographical information see p. 237.

they would change and accept southerners as equals?”<sup>474</sup> Another British administrator admitted to intentionally shaping Southerners’ perceptions of Egyptians and Northern Sudanese. Yambio’s Education Department Inspector H. Brian Bullen stated that in teaching the Nugent students he never missed an opportunity of underlining the differences between the North and South ‘and also of emphasising the rottenness of Egypt.’<sup>475</sup> In each of these instances, then, British figures are positioned as having a role in inculcating a consciousness that Northerners and Southerners were different but also a sense of enmity between them.

Antagonism towards Northern Sudanese grew with the perception that the South was being excluded from national decision-making. In the early 1950s the government periodical *Sudan Monthly Record* chronicled the steady rise of Southern unrest and tensions with people from the North. The final edition of 1952 reported that relations between North and South had recently started to deteriorate and that there had ‘recently been an abrupt flare-up of southern suspicion of the northern politicians’ intentions and of their agreements with the Egyptian Government, and of the possible abandonment of the safeguards for the south during the self-governing period’. With feelings running high in some districts, Southern Sudanese began sending telegrams of protest.<sup>476</sup> The January 1953 *Juba District Monthly Diary* noted that the atmosphere was “uneasy”, with the rural populace suspicious of agreements involving rapid change but which had not been agreed

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<sup>474</sup> Gordon Muortat, as quoted in Deng and Daly, ‘Bonds of Silk’, 191-192. For Owen’s credentials see Durham University Special Collections Library, ‘Thomas Richard Hornby Owen’ [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/owentrh.xml;query=t.r.h.%20owen;brand=default#1>]. Accessed 20 May 2014.

<sup>475</sup> SAD.864/2/13; for Bullen’s biographical information which is stated here and elsewhere in the chapter, see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/bullenhb.xml;query=H.B.%20Bullen;brand=default#1>]. Accessed 14 May 2014.

<sup>476</sup> [submitted by] H. Colville-Stewart, *Sudan Monthly Record* No. 264 (November-December 1952), [January 18, 1953], 2, 18.

to by Southern chiefs and elders working with one another. Despite the tension the *JDMD* noted that people in Juba were generally behaving well despite the occasional figure who tried to stir up ‘trouble’.<sup>477</sup>

In time, however, specific incidents were noted. One involved journalists from Khartoum whose tour of the South spurred rumors of disorder. On 18 December 1952 a meeting was arranged for the journalists to meet local representatives at Yambio. After hearing that the correspondents did not plan to come, a group of people became irritated and blocked the road that the journalists were supposed to take to Nzara. Another incident involved Egyptians led by Major Salah Salim, who traveled to the South and ‘further exacerbated local feelings’ by refusing to speak with elected representatives, persuading them to sign declarations that they most likely did not comprehend, “and by behaving with scant courtesy throughout”.<sup>478</sup> In his late 1954 letter to Canon T.F.C. Bewes S.W. Giltrap noted that there had been strikes in mission and Government schools, a refusal to turn in equipment at the end of the term, and the stoning of a headmaster.<sup>479</sup> Perhaps most ominous of all were reactions to Sudanization in the military. In his observations of Sudanization in the Equatorial Corps, Lt. Col. W.B.E. Brown stated that the order to Sudanize all British appointments in the Corps (and all British administration in the South) was received in the middle of June 1954. The handover of the Corps generated a sense of foreboding: ‘The news of our impending departure and handover to Northern Sudanese officers caused great shock and dismay among the troops. When I told my Sol Talim, he at first refused to believe it. Eventually having accepted the news

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<sup>477</sup> [submitted by] J.W. Hannah, *Juba District Monthly Diary* (January 1953) [February 21, 1953], 2, 4.

<sup>478</sup> [submitted by] H. Colville-Stewart, *Sudan Monthly Record*, No. 264 (November-December 1952) (January 18, 1953), 2.

<sup>479</sup> SAD.817/6/67; S.W. Giltrap to T.F.C. Bewes, December 30, 1954.

he said:--“there will be war down here”. Brown opined that after fifty years of rule, ‘all the people in the South—were being very badly let down.’<sup>480</sup>

Brown’s concern about possible war was amplified by occasional episodes of violence. The Sudanese Government’s *Report on the Administration of the Sudan in 1950/51* reported one clash between seven Upper Nile Province police and Humr Arabs from Kordofan in which three police and four Arabs were killed. In addition to an incident in the Mabaan in which an Upper Nile policeman was tried, sentenced, and imprisoned, the report concluded that ‘Both incidents show the latent danger of trouble when policemen from the Southern Sudan came up against arabs from the North.’<sup>481</sup> In the wake of the Cairo Agreement a clash occurred in Torit in which several Arabs received serious wounds. Some were arrested and detained by police, but they were later freed when men of the Lotuko ethnic group marched to the prison in full war regalia.<sup>482</sup> Perhaps the most notable incident leading up to the Torit Mutiny occurred in Nzara in the summer of 1955. Chiefs in the small textile production town in Western Equatoria had levied unpopular support for the government. To this were added the arrest of MP Elia Kuze (a Liberal Party member) and four chiefs who refused to sign a pro-government document. When textile workers protested mass redundancies at the Nzara factory in late July, six people were killed by military force.<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>480</sup> For both quotes and the information on Brown see SAD.533/9/3-4.

<sup>481</sup> Sudan Government. *Report on the Administration of the Sudan in 1950/51*. Khartoum: Sudan Government, 1955; 156.

<sup>482</sup> Joseph Oduho and William Deng, *The Problem of the Southern Sudan*. London: Institute of Race Relations, Oxford University Press, 1963; 22-23.

<sup>483</sup> Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan: Histories of Chiefship, Community and State* (Eastern Africa Series). Oxford: James Currey, 2013; 136 and Scopas S. Poggio, ‘Kuze, Elia’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 256. For subsequent Anyanya mentioning of the Nzara riot see Anya-Nya Armed Forces, South Sudan Liberation Movement; *Anya-Nya: What We Fight For* (1972); 2.



It is important to note that there were some who did support the move for complete independence under a unified framework with the North. There was a sense that Sudanese in the North and South were united by a shared experience of foreign intrusion and should therefore enter nationhood together. Wieu, who saw the nationalist movement as a struggle for rights that united people throughout the Condominium, shared that “people realized that they had a common enemy and that collectively it was necessary to defend their right [to free themselves] to pursue the course of life which they had pursued as independent people.”<sup>484</sup> Benjamin Lang Juuk, who was a school teacher and Council clerk in Gogrial before being chosen as a chief in 1941,<sup>485</sup> also alluded to the sense of unity:

“When we took over our country—when our big, educated brothers rose and contacted us in the south, and it was agreed that we should rule our country...we liked it. Our brothers in the north and our brothers in the south...agreed on one thing: the British should leave and we should govern our country.”<sup>486</sup>

Juuk’s reference to the ‘big, educated’ brothers is notable for the marked contrast it presents alongside characterizations of Northerners as slave masters, a perception I discuss at length in the following two chapters. Nevertheless, his mention of Northerners contacting Southerners speaks to the ways that they attempted to advance their claims and agendas within the South prior to independence. While the Juba Conference represented the first contact made between Northerners and Southerners as it pertained to the Condominium’s political future, the Graduates Conference and Advisory Council had already been formed. When the Cairo Agreement was signed Wieu was directed to

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<sup>484</sup> Wieu, as taken from *Bonds*, 195.

<sup>485</sup> Benjamin Lang Juuk, as taken from *Bonds*, 237.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid*, 195-196.

celebrate the occasion. He proceeded to make arrangements. When he was asked by a British officer why the people of Bentiu should have cause for celebration. He asked, “Do you think the Nuer understand all these celebrations?” Wieu responded that in the past the officer spoke on their behalf, but now he had taken the responsibility off of his neck and they would speak for themselves.<sup>487</sup> Chief Rian conveyed the sense that professional advancement would come with the shift in power. Educated by Italian missionaries and working as a clerk for fifteen years, he noted that the Arabs had promised to promote educated clerks to administrative positions.<sup>488</sup>

Perhaps the most evocative pro-unity sentiment was expressed by Hilary Paul Logali. Logali was educated at Juba’s CMS elementary school and proceeded to Loka Intermediate. Among the first cadre of Southern students to attend Rumbek Secondary School, he was the first Southerner from Rumbek to attend the University of Khartoum, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in economics. Logali worked at the Ministry of Finance before proceeding on to a decorated political career in Southern Sudan.<sup>489</sup> In his unpublished autobiography housed at Durham University’s Sudan Archive, Logali offered compelling insight on the pre-Mutiny perception that the nationalist movement was united across regional lines:

‘when I was in the University of Khartoum...I published a weekly wall newspaper, the “Negro”...I had written in favour of independence using the words of Psalm 57 verse 1, I wrote: “under the shadow of the wings of the (Middle East) shall be our refuge, until (British) tyranny [sic] be over-past”... For many young people in those days, the movement for decolonization was considered one...decolonization in the Arab world was for us a movement against colonialism and was therefore the same

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<sup>487</sup> Ibid, 197.

<sup>488</sup> Ibid, 201 [for biographical info. On Rian see 238]

<sup>489</sup> Pitya, ‘History’, 414.

with that led by Kwame Nkrumah, Azikiwe... Since the Sudanese movement had forged ahead thanks to the situation in the Middle East and relationship with Egypt, we in the South of Sudan believed... we should march on the road of decolonization triumphantly being together with the North... Colonialism we believed was evil, and... we could not conceive that some other people who had been under that system and had liberated themselves from it, would themselves turn to be colonizers and oppressors of other peoples. We could not foresee that the Northern Sudanese would later entertain pretensions to be colonizers... when we were better equipped [sic] with education and experience, we could opt to go it alone, if it became impossible to harmonize...<sup>490</sup>

This quotation offers a glimpse into the ways that Arab decolonization and African liberation could be used in the same breath to fuel the idea that Sudan could achieve independence on a united front. His connection between Arab decolonization in the Middle East and Sudanese/African nationalism is noteworthy considering the Arab influence on Sudanese nationalism and, in the ensuing years, Southern Sudanese attempts to align the region with Pan-Africanism. Nevertheless, it is evident that some Southerners before the Mutiny saw Northerners as political allies and brethren in the fight for independence. Rather than accepting the premise that Northerners were bent on their political slavery and national domination, anti-British sentiment and the desire to be free from foreign dominance appeared to serve as a unifying element in the midst of other differences. Considering the use of the Bible and liberatory religious thought during the First Civil War (waged against the Khartoum), Logali's use the Bible to convey solidarity with the Middle East illustrates the duplicitous uses of Scripture during this period.

#### The Liberal Party

In 1951 Stanislaus Paysama, Buth Diu, and Abdel Rahman Sule formed what would become known as the Southern Party. The group's main goals were to work for

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<sup>490</sup> Hilary Logali unpublished autobiography, SAD 890/1/38-39.

complete Sudanese independence and special treatment for the South within the spectrum of national unity.<sup>491</sup> Each of these men brought different perspectives and life-experiences to the organization. Paysama was born in Darfur and had spent some time as a slave with his brothers before being released. Joining the Comboni in Khartoum and educated in mission schools, Tintol Logie—Paysama’s sister-in-law—recalled that he was an evangelist who, along with his brothers, refused to return to West Sudan “because they said if we return our people will ask us to leave Christianity, so we cannot leave them...because they are the only people who freed us from slavery and they opened our eyes to the real God.”<sup>492</sup> Buth Diu was of Nuer origin and had as a young man entered government service in 1937. Eventually obtaining the position of magistrate, Diu became a Member of Parliament in the first Legislative Assembly and was the sole Southern representative on the Constitutional Commission in 1951. He resigned when the idea of federation was rejected.<sup>493</sup> Abdel Sule was a Muslim and hailed from the Bari ethnic group around Juba. The son of a chief, Sule was illiterate and lacked formal education. By 1937 he had left his position as sub-chief and traveled to Juba and Uganda before returning to Juba in 1940 as a businessman. He was one of the politicians from Southern Sudan to be sent to the first Legislative Assembly.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> Deng D. Akol Ruay, *The Politics of Two Sudans: The South and the North, 1821-1969*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1994; 67.

<sup>492</sup> For direct quotes see New Sudan Council of Churches Archive, Juba (NSCC), Nile Theological College Sudan Church Study, ‘Movement of Missionaries in Wau’, Interview of Tintol Logie by Ngeu Diing (January 25, 1998), 1. See also ‘Paysama, Stanislaus (1903-)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 225 for additional biographical information included above.

<sup>493</sup> ‘Thung, Buth Diu (1917-1975).’ *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 423 [article co-authored by Scopas S. Poggo] and *Resistance: The Story of Southern Sudan*. Report Issued by Information Service, Anya-Nya National Organization (1969), 4-5.

<sup>494</sup> Abdel Sule, as quoted in ‘Bonds of Silk’, 236-237; SAD.890/1/41, p. 37 [Hilary Paul Logali’s unpublished autobiography]; see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, ‘Miscellaneous Small Donations in the Sudan Archive’, [<http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/sadmisc.xml;query=MISCELLANEOUS%20SMALL%20D>

Logie intimated that slavery's legacy and Christianity's association with liberation played a direct role in the Liberal Party's creation, as the Party "was joined by most who were release by British as they were slaves. The idea of forming this Party is to defend the Church in Sudan from the enemy which is Islam..."<sup>495</sup> Despite this anti-Islamic perception the early composition of the Party's leadership reflected the mission pedigree of future Southern leadership and the reality that Muslims were not excluded from important positions on account of their faith. Benjamin Lowki, a Loka graduate, was a teacher from 1936 to 1948 and became the first Sudanese headmaster of the CMS Primary School at Yei.<sup>496</sup> When recalling the process by which he became Party leader, the Muslim Sule did not seem to infer that his religious identity played any mitigating factor. Rather, 'Younger members...said that they did not want the job because no money could be earned from it...they could not leave their present jobs to become [party] leaders...one of the Dinka fellows called Gordon Apach Ayom nominated me to be leader...That was when I was made leader'.<sup>497</sup> As Sule was not the organization's only prominent Muslim, in both contemporary and subsequent contexts it did not appear that Islam diminished or impeded their acceptance as advocates for the Southern cause. Secretary Ahmad Morgan, a Muslim school teacher from Mongalla, toured with Sule throughout the South on the Party's behalf. Despite his lack of formal education Sule was

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ONATIONS;brand=default#1]. Accessed 22 July 2014; and 'Sule, 'Abd Al-Rahman.' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 413 [article co-authored by Scopas S. Poggo]

<sup>495</sup> For direct quotes see New Sudan Council of Churches Archive, Juba (NSCC), Nile Theological College Sudan Church Study, 'Movement of Missionaries in Wau', Interview of Tintol Logie by Ngeu Diing (January 25, 1998), 1. See also 'Paysama, Stanislaus (1903-)' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 225.

<sup>496</sup> 'Lwoki, Benjamin (1918-)' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 170 and "Notes and Comments on the Church's Work" [written by 'I.F.A.'? (29)] *Sudan Diocesan Review* Vol. 1 No. 3 (July 1949), 15; see also "From the Rev. Fred Crabb." (March 19, 1949) *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* No. 11 (July 1949), 31.

<sup>497</sup> Abdel Sule, as quoted in *Bonds of Silk*, 236-237

noted for being a fiery politician capable of “spell binding the crowd in ecstasy, awe and wonder with his native wit and peasant anecdotes”. Logali noted that Sule and Morgan were “rapturously received” wherever they went.<sup>498</sup>

After the Sudanese Government published its 1964 Memorandum outlining reasons why foreign missionaries and priests warranted expulsion from the South, the Verona Fathers invalidated the accusation that missionaries exerted great pressure on the Liberal Party by highlighting the fact that some of its most influential leaders were Muslims, including Assistant Secretary-General Mohamed Yassin Bakhit and Asst. Treasurer-General Mohamed Najumi.<sup>499</sup> Indeed, the presence of Christians and Muslims within the Party’s leadership is perhaps the most overt example of contemporary Southern political solidarity in the early 1950s, reflecting the fact that national divisions were not driven along strictly religious lines. During the First Civil War the rebel SANU (among others) would make it a point to mention that their war was not against Islam by referencing Muslims participation within that organization. In an important respect, then, the Liberal Party’s interfaith composition preceded Christian-Muslim cooperation in the Anyanya liberation movement.

Religious composition aside, the Southern Party consisted of the great majority of the Southern intelligentsia and the bulk of Southerners who turned to the elite for guidance. In 1953 the Party became officially registered, but only after Southern participants had been excluded from the Political Parties Agreement (in which Egypt agreed to self-determination, Sudanization within three years, an international

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<sup>498</sup> Logali, unpublished autobiography, SAD.890/1/41, p. 37.

<sup>499</sup> *The Black Book of the Sudan: On the Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan, An Answer.* Italy, 1964; 90-91, where they are respond to a statement made in ‘Memorandum on Reasons That Led to the Expulsion of Foreign Missionaries and Priests from the Southern Provinces of the Sudan’ (*BB*, 19) by the Ministry of the Interior, March 5, 1964 (*BB*, 27); see also ‘Foreword’, *BB*, 7-8 (signed by the expelled Catholic missionaries from the Southern Sudan, August 5, 1964; p. 8).

commission to assume the Governor-General's powers, and an electoral commission to supervise parliamentary elections).<sup>500</sup> In the 1953 elections the Southern Party had captured the majority of Southern seats in the House of Representatives, but the following year the party changed its name to the Liberal Party to avoid Northern suspicion that the word 'Southern' implied separation. Although membership was open to Northerners, none joined (Northerners continued referring to it as the Southern Liberal Party). Emerging in the wake of disappointment in the Cairo proceedings, it tended to work with the Umma Party, aimed to secure self-government for the South, and fought for equal pay for equally-qualified people from the North and South in similar positions. At its 1954 meeting, Party delegates condemned the uneven results of Sudanization and called for national federation. In December 1955 Benjamin Lwoki seconded the motion for independence and called for Southern safeguards by mentioning that Southern MPs preferred a federal government.<sup>501</sup>

Faced with the government's increasing hostility for the South, Southern MPs across party lines were frustrated. Southern NUP members were particularly frustrated, with most resigning their membership and joining the Liberal Party. In August 1954 the Umma and Liberal Parties jointly toured the South and held several meetings in which inflammatory remarks were made against the government.<sup>502</sup> A group including MP Buth Diu (Upper Nile Province), Senator Paul Logale (Equatoria Province), and Liberal Party President Sule arrived in Yambio. According to the report of the Zande District Commissioner, Diu stated that the purposes of his visit were to enlighten the public on

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<sup>500</sup> Ruay, *Politics*, 67 and Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; 62.

<sup>501</sup> See Wawa, 12-13; 'Liberal Party (Southern)' and 'Southern Party' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 166 and 264 respectively; Ruay, *Politics*, 67.

<sup>502</sup> Ruay, *Politics*, 73.

the current situation and discuss parliamentary happenings. He addressed a crowd of roughly eighty Southerners and forty Northerners in Yambio's Chiefs Court and opened by stating that the National Unionist Party was working for unity with Egypt and the Southern, Umma, and Socialist Republican Parties aimed for complete Sudanese independence. Commenting on Sudanization, Diu attacked the government for not fulfilling its promises to Southerners in that none was allowed to fill positions for Governor or District Commissioner.<sup>503</sup> According to the report,

'Diu then advanced to a most vigirous [sic] attack on the present Government expressing his suspicion of Northern Sudanese and questioning the need for their existence among the Southerners...The result was a most uneasy atmosphere among the 40 Northerners who were present...When Sayed Buth Diu...concluded, Sheikh Oleish Saleh, merchant of Yambio and Vice President[' , 'Yambio Club together with some other Northern Sudanese asked permission to be allowed to question the speaker...But Abdel Rahman Makhtar a member of the party...struck the table three times and insisted that nobody should have the chance to speak before all members of the party have finished...some the audience mostly the Northern Sudanese insisted that they should be allowed to question Sayed Buth Diu...feeling rose high and abuses were exchanged. The Mamur ordered the meeting to disperse.'<sup>504</sup>

After the results of Sudanization were announced in October 1954 and Northerners assumed administrative positions, Southern discontent began to escalate. The Liberal Party sought to mobilize the restlessness and convened a meeting of its MPs in Juba. Attendees included traditional leaders, students, members from the Diaspora, and appointed members from the three Southern provinces. Top issues on the meeting's agenda included the country's political future and regional status within Sudan. The

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<sup>503</sup> SSNA Box EP 212, Folder EP.10.B.23 [August 2013 designation], Mohd. Omer Yacoub, 'Visit of a Political Party' (17 August 1954), 1.

<sup>504</sup> Yacoub, 'Visit', 1-2.



conference resolved that national independence must be achieved, but in order to avoid Northern colonization and ensure self-governance, it unanimously resolved that federation was the best solution to the Southern cause. Furthermore, if Prime Minister Azhari refused the request, total Southern independence would be considered. Azhari and the Parliament would not consider the request.<sup>505</sup> In a Senatorial session in early April 1955, Paysama raised the question of sociopolitical problems facing the South and how to solve them.

‘He gave a detailed account of the fears of the Southerners from the Northerners in the past, and how those fears were inculcated by imperialism. After 1948 things changed with the Legislative Assembly, and those fears began to vanish. Southerners started to come to the North for work and curiosity. Unfortunately they did not receive good care from the official circles...As a solution he asked the Government to open welfare centres or social clubs for their reformation. Southern Parliamentary Members were ready to help the Police in solving their problems.’<sup>506</sup>

Following the Torit Mutiny the Party convened in early October to consider the Southern situation. Benjamin Lwoki, now Party President, sent a note to each Sudanese party stating that the Liberal Party had decided to ask for Southern self-determination. The note added that the Party would demand an addendum to the Self-Government Statute reflecting this demand.<sup>507</sup> In its November 1<sup>st</sup> issue *Messenger* reported that some Party leaders had flown to ‘Cairo and demanded that the Co-Domini should effect a state of Constitutional breakdown and grant the South a federal status.’<sup>508</sup> The Republic of the Sudan became independent on 1 January 1956.

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<sup>505</sup> Ruay, *Politics*, 72; Collins, *History*, 66; Mawut Achiecque Mach Guarak, *Integration and Fragmentation of the Sudan: An African Renaissance*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011; 140-141.

<sup>506</sup> ‘Sudan News’, *The Messenger* (1 November 1955), 158.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid*, 158.

<sup>508</sup> *Ibid*, 159.

## Conclusion

Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, whose politics were anti-Somali and anti-Islamic, was interested in promoting evangelistic work in the region. The Emperor implored to Don McClure, a missionary who had worked with the Anuak in Ethiopia and Sudan, “You must hurry. If you do not reach them quickly for Christ, others will. Then your cause will be set back decades, perhaps centuries. Time is short!”<sup>509</sup> The same year Selassie made his bold charge a young Englishman named Oliver Allison expressed similar sentiments. The son of an English clergyman, Allison was ordained in 1932 and, after joining the CMS, arrived in Sudan in 1938. Accepting an assignment in Juba, by 1947 he had been appointed Assistant Bishop in the Sudan and promoted to Bishop for the Sudan in 1952. He would occupy the position until 1976.<sup>510</sup> In September 1946 the *Mail Bag* published a letter by Allison expressing his assumption that by publication-time the Anglo-Egyptian Commission’s decision on the Sudan’s political future would be decided (that same year the Southern Policy was reversed and Governor-General Hubert Huddleston promised the Advisory Council of the Northern Sudan that Sudan would become independent).<sup>511</sup> Allison noted that one way or the other the Commission’s decision would have a far-reaching impact on Sudanese history, but that regardless of the political ripples it was a critical time in the Church’s history: ‘It is vital that a strong united Church should be established on a united front; strong enough to resist and to conquer the encroaching forces of Islam, from the Northern Sudan, and materialism from our Western Civilisation.’<sup>512</sup> During and after World War II Christian agents in the South

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<sup>509</sup> Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation*, 340.

<sup>510</sup> James Lomole Simeon, ‘Allison, Oliver C.’ in *Dictionary of African Biography*, [[http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/allison\\_oliver.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/allison_oliver.html)]. Received 2003. Accessed 19 May 2014.

<sup>511</sup> See ‘Chronology’ and ‘Huddleston, Sir Hubert Jervoise (1880-1950).’ *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, xxxix and 203, respectively.

<sup>512</sup> “From the Rev. O.C. Allison, of Juba” *Southern Sudan Mail Bag* No. 1 (September 1946), 4.

buzzed that as Sudan moved closer to independence the Southern Church needed to be strengthened for the possible opposition that a Muslim-run government might bring.

Within this milieu a meaningful ‘Southern’ political consciousness and expression were articulated in *Messenger* newspaper and the Liberal Party. Varying opinions of political union with the North notwithstanding, each forum provided for and encouraged an understanding of Southern Sudanese consciousness and inter-ethnic participation in important ways. The Liberal Party had a diverse composition of members who worked to ensure Southern self-determination and equity at the national political level. *Messenger*, though published by the Italian Catholics, was a space where readers could read opinion pieces about various issues, updates on mission school ‘Old Boys’, the histories and folklore of other ethnic groups, and remain informed of important happenings throughout the South. The paper could do the community-binding work of producing and informing an ‘imagined community’ of readers that was cross-ethnic and geographically wide-ranging on Southern affairs. By the eve of the Mutiny, the identification of ‘Southern Sudanese’ had achieved a political utility—and potency—that it had never before possessed.

The following chapters illustrate that Southern intellectuals would appropriate the language of spiritual warfare and Southern ‘chosenness’ to validate their position as God’s people destined for victory. Recalling the harsh reprisals wrought upon the Southern intelligentsia in the wake of the Torit Mutiny, Hilary Logali positioned Southerners with the Israelites under Jeroboam: ‘I had written in favour of independence using the words of Psalm 57 verse 1...Oh! What tyranny [sic] did the shadow of the wings of the Middle East unleash on us!! “The British whipped us, but the Northerners flayed

us”. Our yoke became heavier everafter. (cf 1 Kings 12:12-15)<sup>513</sup> The significance of his decision to borrow from 1 Kings 12 is amplified when considering the similarity between the Biblical story and its Sudanese analogue. When Rehoboam succeeded his father Solomon as king, Northern Israel was dissatisfied but agreed to accept him on condition that he lighten his father’s taxes upon them. Rehoboam responded that he would intensify the yoke Solomon had placed upon them. The Northerners under Jeroboam were ready for rebellion and thereafter fought Rehoboam continually. Rehoboam died after ruling in Jerusalem for seventeen years.<sup>514</sup>

The span of time between the Torit Mutiny and the Addis Ababa Agreement that ended the First Civil War was approximately seventeen years.

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<sup>513</sup> Hilary Logali unpublished autobiography, SAD 890/1/37-38 (pp.34-35) [quotation is from 890/1/38, p. 34]

<sup>514</sup> Musa Gotom, ‘Commentary of 1 and 2 Kings’ in *Africa Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary Written by 70 African Scholars*. Ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo. Zondervan, 2010; 432; S.K. Mosiman, "Entry for 'REHOBOAM'". "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia". Gen. Ed. James Orr, 1915. [public domain] *BibleStudyTools.com*, [http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/rehoboam.html]. Accessed July 31, 2014; S.K. Mosiman, "Entry for 'JEROBOAM'". "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia". Gen. Ed. James Orr, 1915. [public domain] *BibleStudyTools.com*, [http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/jeroboam.html]. Accessed July 31, 2014.

## Chapter Four

### A New Rome: The Torit Mutiny and Moral Assessments of the Sudanese State , 1955-1964

‘No man is sure of his life, the individual is at the mercy of the state, murdering replaces justice... That any force on earth can shake the foundations of this pyramid of power and corruption, of human misery and slavery, seems inconceivable. But thirty years before this day, a miracle occurred. On the Roman cross in Judea, a Man died to make men free, to spread the Gospel of love and redemption. Soon that humble cross is destined to replace the proud eagles that now top the victorious Roman standards. This is the story of that immortal conflict.’<sup>515</sup>

These lines come from the opening monologue of the 1951 epic *Quo Vadis*. The primary plotline concerns a Roman general, Marcus Vinicius, who falls in love with the Christian Lygia during the reign of Nero. As the story progresses Marcus (who represents Roman power and paganism) and Lygia (a member of the oppressed Christian community) become bent on converting one other. When the Emperor blames Christians for kindling the Great Fire of Rome, the matter of religious identity achieves preeminent importance. Replete with the action, romance, and extravagance of the contemporary historical dramas, *Quo Vadis* was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture.<sup>516</sup>

*Quo Vadis* headlined the 13 April 1954 edition of the Sudanese daily *Morning View*. The paper reported that despite the movie’s long-awaited release in the Condominium, the Ministry of the Interior had banned the film. The Ministry justified its

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<sup>515</sup> Internet Movie Database [IMDb], ‘*Quo Vadis* Quotes’ [[http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0043949/trivia?tab=qt&ref\\_=tt\\_trv\\_qu](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0043949/trivia?tab=qt&ref_=tt_trv_qu)]. Accessed 15 April 2013.

<sup>516</sup> IMDb, ‘*Quo Vadis* Awards’ [<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0043949/awards>]. Consulted 3 September 2014.

prohibition amid speculation that its portrayals of Christian persecution could have a provocative influence among Sudanese audiences: ‘the Ministry of the Interior has been advised by the censor...that the facts of the film are presented in such a manner as to be unacceptable...and may well have some inciting effects’.<sup>517</sup> *Morning View* did not provide details on what may have further compelled the Ministry’s decision, but an indication can be inferred from the paper’s coverage of debates in the House of Representatives on the status of missionaries. One representative from Eastern Equatoria refuted charges that they had taught people in the South to hate the North, while Borjouk Wludo of Western Bahr el Ghazal argued that without mission education no one from the South would be capable of sitting in Parliament. These statements were countered by the likes of Hassan el Taher Zarroug, who argued that “Missionaries were...a danger; that taught not the Christian doctrine of brotherly love but hate towards the North and spread rumours about the return of the slave-trade.”<sup>518</sup>

The following year the Sudanese Government had a far more serious problem on its hands—the mutiny of Government troops at the Southern outpost of Torit. The Torit Mutiny occurred in August 1955 and has been commonly used to mark the beginning of the First Civil War, a conflict that raged until the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972.<sup>519</sup> While some may have considered *Quo Vadis* and its presentation of history to be rendered insignificant in the wake of the Mutiny, people did look to historical narratives—including early Christian history—to provide templates for action in the

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<sup>517</sup> ‘The Film “Quo Vadis” *Morning View* (13 April 1954) cover page (Sudan Archive Durham [hereafter SAD], 803/9/5)

<sup>518</sup> Ibid; Each of the aforementioned statements from the House of Representatives are taken from following page of *Morning View* article on SAD.803/9/6.

<sup>519</sup> Øystein Rolandsen has countered this dating by looking instead to the beginning of formalized violence in the early 1960s. See Øystein H. Rolandsen, ‘A False Start: Between War and Peace in the Southern Sudan, 1956-62’ *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 52, Iss. 1 (March 2011). I return to this point later in the chapter.

Sudanese context. One example comes from Bishop Oliver Allison, who in his 1947 article ‘Church History in the Making’ borrowed from Shakespeare when describing the political situation:

*‘The Sudan’s a Stage. History is being made these days...politically, socially and spiritually in the life of its peoples...we may well say, “All the Sudan’s a stage, and all the men and women in it players.” Whether we like it or not...we are actors and not merely passive witnesses on the Sudan stage at this particular moment in its story. The plot is developing rapidly and whether the drama that is being staged will develop into a tragedy, a comedy, or a triumph...is hard for us to judge.’*<sup>520</sup>

For many the Sudan became a stage in which several dramas from Sudanese and Biblical history were either being re-enacted or threatened to do so. The Torit Mutiny became one such occasion, where mutineers looked to defend themselves from another chapter of historical ‘subjugation’ from the North—a history deeply embedded in the history of slavery. I argue that the Mutiny was not only an emancipatory action governed a desire to prevent this history of subjugation from repeating itself. It was also, in a macabre sense, setting the tone for a War that would primarily be seen as a racial conflict between Blacks and Arabs. The violence’s sweeping nature, the level of civilian participants and casualties, and ferocity with which the Mutiny and its ensuing disturbances were waged lends credence to the sense that people were not only concerned about Southern Sudan’s political future. Rather, they were in a deeper sense concerned about Sudan’s future and their place in it could mean for their survival. In this sense the Mutiny was a fight for their lives as Black and ethnic political subjects.

The Mutiny took on added significance in the way that it illustrated the growing significance of the term ‘Southerner’. While people had previously seen ‘Southerner’ as a

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<sup>520</sup> Oliver Allison, ‘Church History in the Making’ *Sudan Diocesan Review*, v. 1 no. 3 (July 1949), 7.

social and political identity (see last chapter), it was now an identity that people were willing to defend, fight, and die for. As the Government attempted to address the matter of national disunity with encouraging Arabism and Islam, the situation facing the Church in Southern Sudan became increasingly repressive in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Commentators not only associated the Khartoum government as ‘evil’ but compared the contemporary circumstances to historical precedents including the Roman Empire of *Quo Vadis*. In each of these cases history helped contemporary actors make sense of their situation, forecast futures, and fashion responses.

#### The Torit Rebellion: Events, Motivations, Aftermath

The Torit Mutiny is the kairoitic moment of Southern Sudanese nationalism. Resistance had hitherto been limited to minor uprisings, rhetoric, and repeated references to the history of Northern domination (most often slavery). After the Mutiny, Sudan was years of warfare, political upheaval, and the oft-told sorrow of millions. The legacy of slavery remained fresh in the South, and as the Condominium inched towards independence there was a very real fear that the new regime would thrust the region into an era of political ‘slavery’. Missionaries were related to this discourse in important ways. As explained in the previous chapter, Liberal Party leader Stanislaus Paysama associated Christianity with his personal liberation from slavery and sister-in-law Tintol Logie intimated that the association between Christianity and emancipation helped spur the Party’s creation and growth. William B. Anderson, who worked as a missionary before his expulsion, stated that there was truth to the claim that missionaries taught that Arabs were slavers. He claimed, however, that it would have been impossible to teach this after 1953 given the government’s closer gaze on mission work. Despite the notion that missionary teaching of Arab slavery was directly responsible for dividing the



country, Anderson concluded that it was not necessary for them to do so because ‘their fathers can remember vividly the days of slavery.’<sup>521</sup> In May 1955, just two months before the Mutiny, Minister of Mechanical Transport Dak Dei wrote that a new era was at hand: “The South has lost confidence in the United Sudan...The South will never tolerate second colonisers...Northerners, give Southerners their demands...If not the South may refuse the resolution of the evacuation of the foreign troops...This is a new era in Southern Sudan ”.<sup>522</sup>

Events in Torit and the ensuing disturbances confirmed the extent to which people in the South were willing to go to prevent a new colonialism and ‘slavery’. Some Liberal Party members and Southern Sudanese members of the National Unionist Party called for Southern federation under the framework of unity with Egypt. After a conference in Juba in July 1955, a delegation left for talks concerning federation amid concealed threats of trouble if Southern Sudan did not get special treatment.<sup>523</sup> Employees of Egypt’s Irrigation Department at Malakal and Juba started to distribute anti-Northern Sudanese pamphlets and money, while Radio Cairo—broadcasting in Southern Sudanese vernaculars—criticized Prime Minister Ismail Azhari’s government for rejecting unity with Egypt. Radio Cairo also spoke of the loss this would mean for the South, presumably in an attempt to further stoke emotions.<sup>524</sup> Concern over impending rule from the North was fed and exacerbated by information—however true or untrue—

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<sup>521</sup> Anderson, “The Role of Religion in the Struggle in the Sudan”, SAD.795/6/11, pg. 413.

<sup>522</sup> Dak Dei to *Sūdān al Gadid*, 14 May 1955, MI Cotran Commission Documents (*Commission of Enquiry*), as taken from Peter Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*. London: Rex Collins, 1979; 152.

<sup>523</sup> Peter Woodward, ‘The South in Sudanese Politics, 1946-56’ *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 16, no. 3 (1980): 187. In his description Woodward included the ‘Federation of the South with Unity with Egypt’ call by some Southern NUP members and Liberal Party members and cites in fn. 21 ‘Minutes of the meeting of the southern NUP members and Liberal M.P.s in Juba, 7 May 1955’

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid*, 187.

disseminated by the media and other networks. One of the only English-language newspapers in Southern Sudan leading up to the Mutiny was *El Ayam*, which was translated from Arabic. The paper was at one point critical of Khartoum and periodically found itself in trouble. After being allegedly bribed with modern equipment, however, the editor's favor was sufficiently curried. In order to make Government policy more widely available, local translations were translated into English. According to Erisa Penesi, *El Ayam* may have been the only paper that printed Prime Minister Azhari's policy statement in which he said he would whip Southerners with iron as opposed to the leather used by the Anglo-Egyptians. Translations of the paper were said to have reached the Provincial Headquarters of Juba, Wau, and Malakal.<sup>525</sup>

It is likely that Azhari's 'whipping with iron' comment is the "forged telegram" attributed to Azhari during this period in which he purportedly tried to incite Northern Sudanese administrators to "persecute, oppress and ill-treat" Southern Sudanese.<sup>526</sup> This forged telegram circulated throughout Equatoria Province and reached Yambio, Maridi, Nzara, Yei, and Torit. A Lieutenant Saturlino—who will be discussed shortly—further distorted the telegram before distributing it to the Equatoria Corps.<sup>527</sup> Penesi remembered that he heard 'some big people who were talking about it so widely in Juba town',<sup>528</sup> and as a result of the propaganda such slogans as "Out with the Arabs" began to appear. Some leading figures in the South wrote anti-Northern pamphlets—which were printed in Egypt—and petitions to the Governor-General threatening imminent civil war. The

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<sup>525</sup> For the stated information concerning *El Ayam* see SAD 851/13/24-25 [ErisaPenesi, *The living History And the Hidden Graves. Part One*]

<sup>526</sup> Woodward, 'The South in Sudanese Politics', 187 and L.S. Sanderson and G.N. Sanderson [contributor], *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan 1899-1964*. London: Ithaca Press; Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1981; 343. For the quotations they cite the Cotran Report [*Report of the Commission of Enquiry*], 82-84 and Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*, 152-3.

<sup>527</sup> Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 40-41

<sup>528</sup> SAD 851/13/25 [Penesi]

demonstrations at Nzara in July in which a number of people were shot only served to aggravated already simmering feelings in Equatoria Province.<sup>529</sup> Despite the absence of radios in houses or in the marketplace, Penesi wrote that people spread news to one another through conversation. In this respect there were many traders in Juba and elsewhere who befriended people from the South, and politically-minded Northern Sudanese traders disclosed secrets to their Southern friends. As the security situation continued to deteriorate, rumors about the Government's plan to dissolve the famed Equatoria Corps spread among military forces and civilians.<sup>530</sup> The extent to which some were already preparing for all-out war can be inferred from Penesi's following recollection: 'many tribes men were seen in the Native lodging areas, the (Malakia), Juba, practising war between two opposite groups which used to call itself, "the south and the north on the battle-field"...the spears and the arrows were blazing in the air.'<sup>531</sup>

These occurrences were paired with rumblings in the Equatoria Corps. As early as October 1954 (following a visit from Azhari to Juba), Daniel Tongun and Marko Rume began holding discussions about the possibility of organizing a widespread rebellion throughout the South. Rume was a Kuku politician and Tongun a Bari catechist, bookkeeper, political activist and longtime politician. According to Tongun there was a general consensus among Equatoria Corps troops stationed in the South that if the South was marginalized in discussions about their political aspirations, they would refuse to be transferred up North.<sup>532</sup> Non-commissioned officers at Torit were in touch with Liberal Party members and Southern government employees. In 1955 Quartermaster-Corporal

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<sup>529</sup> Woodward, 'The South in Sudanese Politics', 187.

<sup>530</sup> SAD 851/13/24-25 [Penesi] and Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 40.

<sup>531</sup> SAD 851/13/24 [Penesi]

<sup>532</sup> Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 38, 41-42.

Saturlino Oboyo of the Corps at Torit organized an insurrectional plot. Oboyo, President of the Liberal Party's Equatorial Corps' branch, had spread rumors that Northern troops were planning to come South with murderous intentions. In a pre-emptive effort he tried to organize a massacre of Northern officers within the Corps, but despite his successful recruitment of non-commissioned officers into the plot the conspiracy was uncovered on 6 August. Oboyo was arrested, his correspondence and list of co-conspirators discovered. The plot involved telling privates who were supposed to leave to participate in celebrations of the evacuation of the Sudan by Condominium troops that they would be massacred in Khartoum. Once Torit had mutinied, other troops with whom the Torit plotters had established contact in Juba, Yambio, Yei, Malakal, and Wau would also revolt. Egypt would demand that Condominium troops be sent South to protect the region from 'their Northern oppressors'. In response to the conspiracy Northern troops were quickly flown down to Juba.<sup>533</sup>

On 8 August, amid concerns that Southern soldiers were full of anti-Northern enmity, the military affirmed its earlier decision to transfer some Southern troops to the North and replace them with Northern units. Consistent with this order Torit's No. 2 Equatorial Corps Company was ordered to move to Khartoum on Thursday, 18 August. Contrary to the customary practice of allowing troops' families to move with them, these troops were ordered to do so without ammunition, their wives, and children. This exceptional stipulation exacerbated the dual concern that the unarmed soldiers could be

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<sup>533</sup> Peter Woodward, 'The South in Sudanese Politics', 187-188 [quote concerning 'Northern oppressors' comes from this article]; Sandersons, *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan 1899-1964*, 343 and Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 40. With regards to what would happen to Southern troops in Khartoum, Poggo includes quotation that is presumably from the *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*, 106.

killed by Northern troops upon their arrival in Khartoum and that their unprotected families would be at the mercy of the newly-transferred Northern troops.<sup>534</sup>

Thus, it is important to consider the complex politics behind the making of the Mutiny and the diversity of interests that were at play. While Equatorial Corps soldiers in the immediate sense disapproved of the order to be transferred North, they had already spoken about the possibility of rebellion if the South continued to be marginalized in political discussions with the North. Azhari's forged telegram—which historian Amir Idris contends was directly responsible for the violence<sup>535</sup>—had been widely circulated throughout the South. There were rumors that the Corps was going to be dissolved, violent demonstrations at Nzara, and Egyptian efforts to rouse anti-Northern sentiment in the region. In the backdrop of this milieu was the pervasive legacy of slavery—an element that would be referenced during, after, and long after the Mutiny. While it is difficult to single out one cause as the prime engine driving the coming onslaught, each factor can be generally subsumed under the general fear that Northern Sudanese subjugation and violence were at hand and that it had to be avoided at all costs. The coming Mutiny, therefore, was not simply a military matter rooted in the Equatorial Corps' disapproval of a transfer order. It was, rather, a mutiny against the existing and purportedly future state of things; political marginalization, subjection, and threat of life.

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Elizabeth Noah was living with her family in Torit when the Mutiny broke out. In her remembrance of the events she expressed to me that

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<sup>534</sup> Sandersons, *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan 1899-1964*, 343-344.

<sup>535</sup> Amir H. Idris, *Sudan's Civil War: Slavery, Race and Formational Identities*. African Studies Vol. 56. Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001; 106.

‘the chief commander was talking that all people should get ready to go to Khartoum. And then one of the soldiers said “ok, but why can we go without our family, our property, the arms?” The chief commander said ‘No, shut up’...then after...one of the captains shoot one of the soldiers. Immediately and suddenly, things bursted up.’<sup>536</sup>

As the removal of Southern troops to the North without their families stirred many to believe that something crooked was going on, she stated that leading up to the Mutiny some ‘knew it that things were going to happen...because of the plans the Northerners put...it was like hidden, a hidden plan that the Arabs did...but it was good that our people discovered it immediately.’<sup>537</sup> On the morning of 18 August 1955, troops in Company No. 2 mutinied.<sup>538</sup> Alberto Marino, who had worked as an engineer in Egypt and Sudan since 1934, inferred that a racial slur combined with anti-Muslim angst to ignite the uproar. Marino, who was in Wau that evening, asked his substitute whether he had heard of what had taken place in Torit. The substitute shared that the uproar began when an Arab officer insulted an elderly Black sergeant-major named Latada by calling him a slave. This was, according to the substitute, the worst insult a Muslim could hurl upon a Southern Negro.<sup>539</sup> After this aspersion an unspecified shooter fired a pistol and the unnamed Arab fell to the floor, lifeless. After the killing “Negro lieutenants, nearly all Christians, joined Latada leading the insurrection...Latada was very brief in his speech, ‘The hour of vengeance against the Moslems has come, do you understand? It is war to the end.’”<sup>540</sup> Marino offered no conjectures as to how the racial slur stirred religiously-

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<sup>536</sup> Interview with Elizabeth Noah, 2 September 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>537</sup> Ibid

<sup>538</sup> William Anderson, Roland Werner, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment: The History of the Southern Church Across 2000 Years*. 1<sup>st</sup> reprint [2001]. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000; 367-368.

<sup>539</sup> Sudan Archive Durham [hereafter SAD], 721/3/193-194, “The Southern Troops Mutiny”. This is a section of Alberto Marino’s larger memoir entitled ‘The Sudan’.

<sup>540</sup> SAD 721/3/193-194 [Marino]

motivated violence, though the ready conflation between Arabs with Islam and ‘Negros’ with Christianity is evident. After rejecting orders to embark on trucks to Juba (to be subsequently transported to Khartoum), the Torit troops attacked Northern Sudanese officers. Breaking into the armory to gain arms and ammunitions, they not only killed Northern officers but also committed acts of arson and looting. Mutinies occurred that same day in Juba, Yei, Yambio, and Meridi with the participation of approximately 190 Southern troops. The first wave of violence left 361 Northerners and seventy-five Southerners dead.<sup>541</sup>

The ethnic makeup of the Equatorial Corps soldiers that participated in the Mutiny is salient to understanding the way that the violence was conducted and developed. To begin, this was not an occasion in which every soldier initially joined in. The plan to mutiny at Torit was conceived primarily by Equatoria soldiers from the Latuko ethnic group, and while some soldiers from ethnic groups from the Nile’s East Bank participated the Latuko were more active. This reality was illustrated by the fact that soldiers stationed at Wau and Malakal were not initially part of the plan to revolt: though news of the Mutiny quickly reached Equatorial soldiers at those two sites, it was thought to be ‘a “Latuko/Arab problem”’.<sup>542</sup> Historical context adds depth to this perception. I noted in Chapter One that the Latuko had been targeted for recruitment earlier in the twentieth century in part because of their martial prowess. They had also staunchly resisted British rule in the early twentieth century, perhaps revealing in that period a violent aversion to foreign dominion. These two elements—martial prowess and

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<sup>541</sup> Scopas S. Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War: Africans, Arabs, and Israelis in the Southern Sudan, 1955-1972*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; 42.

<sup>542</sup> *Ibid*, 49-50 [Poggo cites in fn. 5 Interview no. 84 by John Ukech Lueth and Paul Urbac (28 January 1980)]

resistance to foreign rule—may have proved to be combustible combination when orders for troops to leave Torit (located in Latukoland) were made. Thus, Latuko participation not only illustrates the Mutiny’s early ethnic tenure<sup>543</sup> but also the sense of Latuko historical vocation; now, as earlier in the century, was an occasion to display martial skill in the face of foreign rule.

Ethnic composition aside, Penesi opined that the troops at Torit were the best-trained Sudanese troops in the country. They were trained by the British and, as mentioned in the first chapter, many of the SDF troops at Torit in 1955 had fought in the Second World War.<sup>544</sup> Rather than being trained in leadership skills that could have proven useful in the coming war against the government, however, the Non-Commissioned Officers that took part in the Mutiny were trained by the British as ordinary soldiers with the basic tasks of shooting and killing. During Sudanization British and Egyptian officers were replaced by Northern Sudanese, resulting in individuals from the South constituting the rank and file of soldiery with a few NCOs. Before the Mutiny the highest rank held by person from the South was second lieutenant (and this rank was held by only a few men). Technologically, only a few soldiers in Southern Sudan had radios or wireless sets.<sup>545</sup>

Albino Tokwaro Fabian was an eight-year old boy in Torit when the Mutiny exploded. Almost sixty years later he shared with me a lucid recollection of his experiences that day:

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<sup>543</sup> In *First Sudanese Civil War* Poggo notes that the Latuko ‘suffered most’ (49) and comprised 66% of those prosecuted in Equatoria’s East Bank, they were by no means the only ethnic group to participate violently. The Kakwa and Kuku, for example, took up arms (49-50), and when Northern troops were flown down to suppress the disturbances “civilians lost confidence and became alert and ripe for revolution.” (50; where Urbac is cited).

<sup>544</sup> SAD.851/13/26 [Penesi, *History*]

<sup>545</sup> SAD.851/13/26, 29 [Penesi, *History*] and Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 37 [see also 47].



‘we just entered the class...after a while we began to hear shots...and after the class...my father arrived, he was by then a policeman and took me home. Then from home...we were taken to the village...I didn’t know very much what was the problem but later on I learned that it was a Mutiny, that people were rebelling against the rule of the Arabs...I saw a person who was wounded for the first time so then I began to know that war is not good...’<sup>546</sup>

After making sure that his family was safe, Fabian’s father returned to Torit. There he was captured by Arab soldiers who had recently arrived from Juba. He was taken to Khartoum, where he was imprisoned and never returned. ‘I do not know how he died but he did not return...we were told that he died’.<sup>547</sup> Rumors that Northerners had launched (or were planning to launch) a wholesale attack ignited anti-Arab sentiments. Daniel Jumi Tongun, whose name was included in a telegram containing a complete plan of the Mutiny, was arrested and imprisoned in Juba. During an exhaustive testimony Tongun alluded to the historical roots of Southern antipathy:

“We don’t like you. My plan would have been to order the Southern Sudanese soldiers to capture the airstrips in Torit, Juba, Bahr al-Ghazal, and Upper Nile so that no government airplane would land. We would then capture the steamer, and then declare our intention to secede from you [Northerners]. We are not politicians nor do we know politics...we cannot forget the atrocities that you committed against our ancestors. If it means death, so be it!”<sup>548</sup>

Tongun’s mention of atrocities against his ancestors with the desire to secede appears to not only links the two (by giving the contemporary intention to secede an historical foundation) but also suggests that efforts to prevent unity with the ancestral oppressors was a cause worth dying for.

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<sup>546</sup> Interview with Albino Tokwaro Fabian, 15 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan)

<sup>547</sup> Ibid

<sup>548</sup> Daniel Jumi Tongun interview with Nathan Wojia Pitia in Yei, Southern Sudan (2004), as taken from Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 51.

On 19 August Ismal Gemaa of the Forestry Department drove to Tambechi and “told the villagers that the Mondokoro [Arab] Army killed their relatives in Juba...they should kill all the...Mondokoro in the area.” After he conveyed this message Mohamed Abdel Karim, who worked as a forest ranger and lived there with his family, was killed. Four of the men implicated in his death said that Gemaa had instigated them to kill Northerners based on his information that Southerners had been killed at Juba and Torit.<sup>549</sup> In another case, a man named Albino Tombe was implicated in inspiring Loluche Gule to kill Northerners by telling him that they had taken his brother from Juba to Khartoum and killed him. This story was not entirely true: Gule’s brother, M.T. Tifing, had indeed been arrested in Juba and taken to Khartoum. He was, however, very much alive. Inspired by the erroneous story Gule killed a man under Tombe’s orders and slew another.<sup>550</sup> Another example of anti-Arab sentiment was exemplified by an episode in which a woman’s husband and ten-year old daughter were killed in her presence. After their deaths some people directed vitriol towards the new widow by shouting “Kill her as she would be giving birth to more Mondokoros”.<sup>551</sup> Jonathon Glassman has noted that violence against women is a calculated trademark of racial and ethnic violence, as acts like disembowelment and rape are understood as attacks on the enemy’s ability to reproduce and an assault on the enemy’s manhood (through their inability to protect and

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<sup>549</sup> See Osman El Tayeb, October 19, 1955; in SSNA EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1 (353) and ‘Note on Confirmation of Findings and Sentences by the Chief Justice’ M.A. Abu Rannet, Chief Justice of the Sudan (October 30, 1955), 1, 4. [same box and folder]

<sup>550</sup> ‘Summary of Salient Facts’, Osman El Tayeb (November 5, 1955) in EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1 and 2.

<sup>551</sup> Osman El Tayeb, October 12, 1955; in SSNA EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1 (323). A ‘Mr. Williams of the C.M.S.’ contributed this quote to the report, 1 (323).

control their women).<sup>552</sup> By targeting those capable of producing more members of the race, the aforementioned anecdote suggests an element of racial cleansing from the war's first clash. That episode would be followed by others that I describe in the following chapter.

Judicial proceedings denote that several participants did not have deep-seated reasons behind their actions. The aforementioned widow's husband, for example, was killed after sub-chief Lado Gangura had simply instructed a crowd of locals to do so.<sup>553</sup> Although three of the men accused in his death defended themselves on the claim that they had been ordered to kill by Gangura and mutineers, evidence showed that they had killed outside of the mutineers' presence. Their death sentences were confirmed.<sup>554</sup> On 19 August mutineers arrived at Loka West and similarly instructed people there to kill all Northerners, and in a momentous case in which seven Northerners were killed (including the District Commissioner of Meridi) one of the accused—prison warder Kayangua Kolobi—similarly argued that he had killed the postmaster upon prison officer Aippo Loko's order.<sup>555</sup> Although such defenses might have been desperate attempts to evade culpability, they do hint at the probability that some of the perpetrators had to be pushed or persuaded. It nevertheless appears that on that grisly day many knew what roles they were expected to perform once the violence had begun.

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<sup>552</sup> Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011; 256. Glassman states that castration is another form of violence to signal meanings about reproduction (366)

<sup>553</sup> Osman El Tayeb, October 12, 1955; in SSNA EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1 (323).

<sup>554</sup> 'Note by C.J. on Confirmation of finding and sentence' M.A. Abu Rannat, Chief Justice of the Sudan (October 20, 1955) in EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1,3.

<sup>555</sup> See Osman El Tayeb, Province Judge, Southern Circuit, Trial of Warong Lemi and Lyla Karva [n.d., folder page 351] and 'Note by C.J. on confirmation of findings and sentences' M.A. Abu Rannat, Chief Justice of the Sudan (October 29, 1955), 1-3, 13, 14.

An incident involving a Latuka man not revealed religious identity as a murderous motivation and suggested the increased importance of Muslims being identified and acceptance as ‘Southerners’. On 20 August Airo Ogwana, a Crier at Torit mosque, speared a Northerner to death near Torit’s Veterinary Offices. He was understood as being a Muslim and thus more associated with the Northerners under attack. Court documents state that when anti-Northern violence commenced he ‘participated by killing one to prove to his people that he was still a Southerner with no sympathy towards his [associates]...in the Mosque’.<sup>556</sup> Ogwana’s alibi was that ‘he was frightened by the mutineers who told him that unless he killed a Northerner his loyalty to the South would not be proved’ was insufficient to prevent Chief-Justice Abu Rannat and the Governor-General from confirming his previously-recommended death sentence.<sup>557</sup> That the Muslim and Latuka Ogwana killed in order to prove his ‘Southernness’ illustrates that even at the war’s inception the question of just ‘how Southern’ a Muslim was or could be was debatable and could present an identity crisis of sorts. This question compelled Ogwana to choose between the two, and for him the possibility of being both Southern and Muslim in Torit was impossible during the Mutiny. Finally, the court documents state that Ogwana was ethnically Latuka, an ethnicity he shared with many of the principle mutineers in the Equatorial Corps in Torit. Even this did not appear to prove or reinforce his ‘Southernness’ in the eyes of those mutineers who reportedly threatened his life. In this instance his being a Muslim appeared to supersede the importance of his Latuka ethnicity, revealing in an important way the ethnic and religious politics at play

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<sup>556</sup> See ‘Trial of Airo Ogwana’ (October 18, 1955), p. 1; attached ‘Note’, p. 1; and ‘Notes on confirmation of Findings & Sentence by the C.J.’ M.A. Abu Rannat Chief Justice of the Sudan. (October 29, 1955), each in SSNA EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation]

<sup>557</sup> ‘Notes on confirmation of Findings & Sentence by the C.J.’ M.A. Abu Rannat Chief Justice of the Sudan. (October 29, 1955), each in SSNA EP 507, Folder EP.41.C.1 [August 2013 designation], 1.

during the Mutiny. Ogwana believed that the best way for him to ensure his acceptance as a Southerner was to take a Northerner's life. It was a sanguinary rite of passage.

In Equatoria—and particularly at Yei and Kajo-Kaji—people bitterly received news of the mutiny. Panic spread throughout Kajo-Kaji and the Kuku viewed rebellion as an attempt to wrest free of Arab subjugation.<sup>558</sup> One story emerged about an old woman who, when rebel escapees had come to Kajo-Kajo with news of the uprising, left her house and called together “her children”. Saying that they should run for safety she spontaneously sung the following words:

‘The Turks came in my days  
The Kuturiya came in my days. Many invaders of Kuku  
came in my days  
And found me still alive’.  
I am too tired to run.  
All the fighting has come in my days...  
Let my children run.’<sup>559</sup>

Her mentioning of the ‘Turks’ appears to be a clear reference to the either Turco-Egyptian history (with its history of slavery and predation) or the Mahdist regime (as stated in chapter one, light-skinned foreigners could generally receive the ‘Turkish’ designation). The specific reference notwithstanding, the old woman clearly found the Mutiny to be an occasion to recall past abuses by outsiders and to place the rebellion in the same genealogy. While some decided to run to the Nile Riverbanks, some Kuku men attacked Arab merchants in their shops. In Kajo-Kaji a pastor and evangelist saved a group of Arabs from being burned alive. The Kuku were joined by the Kakwa in taking up arms against Sudanese police, prison guards, and particularly Arab merchants. In Yei some Southern Sudanese policemen killed their Northern counterparts, illustrating an

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<sup>558</sup> Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 49-50

<sup>559</sup> Lyrics and aforementioned story come from SAD 393/2/46.

instance in which professional affiliation was insufficient to mitigate violence.<sup>560</sup> Despite the fact that the rebellion was initially thought to be rooted in a problem between the Latuko and the Arabs, Pacifico Lado Lolik related that when Northern troops flown down to suppress the situation harassed people in the South, “civilians lost confidence and became alert and ripe for revolution” as a result.<sup>561</sup>

Penesi recalled that he was in Omdurman when the Mutiny entered its second week. One Sunday afternoon was he sitting near a radio when he heard the Buth Diu broadcasting to the Torit Garrison mutineers through the Omdurman Broadcasting station. Diu told the mutineers to surrender their arms. His broadcast was followed by the Governor-General, who told the mutineers that the British soldiers would not be coming to surrender them (as they had requested); rather, they had committed ‘the bitterest crime a soldier had ever committed...come down as men to lay down your arms...and then, wait to face the consequences.’<sup>562</sup> According to Penesi some would blame Diu for coming out and telling the mutineers to surrender because ‘those mutineers were his followers who were carrying out his orders [sic] in the best possible war. [sic]’<sup>563</sup> Diu—who had co-founded the Southern Party, been elected to Parliament, and levied a public attack against imbalanced Sudanization in August 1954 (see previous chapter)—was probably one of the most popular politicians in Southern Sudan at the time. And yet, regardless of how passionate he may have been about the equality of Southern Sudanese and federation, I have found no evidence to corroborate a claim that Diu ever called for open rebellion. Still, Penesi’s suggestion that some felt betrayed by Diu—‘the only

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<sup>560</sup> SAD 393/2/46; Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 49-50; and Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 368.

<sup>561</sup> Poggo, *First Sudanese Civil War*, 50 (in fn. 50 Poggo cites his interview with Lolik, conducted in Dallas in 2005).

<sup>562</sup> SAD 851/13/29 [Penesi]

<sup>563</sup> Ibid

political and military leader so to speak<sup>564</sup>—speaks to the way that some internalized his political views as either calling for or sponsoring war.

After the Governor-General told mutineers to surrender, terms were offered and the Army entered Torit.<sup>565</sup> The government's controversial handling of the mutiny fanned further frustration and distrust of Northern Sudanese, for despite the expectation many had that their cases would be seen three hundred were sentenced to death and fifteen hundred others thrown into prison. By October the Equatoria Corps had been eliminated.<sup>566</sup> While the names of those who had been killed by mutineers were for a period announced 'every day' over Radio Omdurman, in times the names of those who were accused of helping the mutineers—as well as those who were convicted and killed by the Sudanese Army—were also announced. Penesi remembered the shock he felt when he heard Bullen Ngangi Kpasua's name among those killed by Arab soldiers. Bullen had been headmaster of the Maridi mission primary school (Penesi had attended the Maridi's CMS Elementary School—see prev. chapter).<sup>567</sup>

Recalling information his father had shared with him, Torit's Ambrose Hilary explained to me that after mutineers fled and went to the bush a helicopter flew over and broadcasted the following message: "Please come back we have forgiven you we have forgotten about this...don't keep on running, we are not more going to do anything bad on you". However, when mutineers heeded this declaration of clemency they were

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<sup>564</sup> Ibid

<sup>565</sup> Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation*, 368.

<sup>566</sup> Ibid., 368; Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 53; and Smith Hempstone, 'Fate of 240 White Nuns, Priests and Ministers Uncertain in Northern Sudan' *Chicago Daily News* (30 March 1964); 24. Each year the state government conducts a ceremony at that site to commemorate those whose lives were lost. Information gathered from interview with Ambrose Hilary on 30 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>567</sup> SAD 851/13/29-85/13/30.

rounded up, taken on trucks and executed approximately 15-20 kilometers from Torit.<sup>568</sup> Given the dangerous nature of the situation, all schools in Southern Sudan were closed and the government declared a State of Emergency. The school year was effectively terminated.<sup>569</sup> Following the closures several chiefs from the Jur River District of Bahr El Ghazal Province expressed regret at the uprising and its pejorative impact on education in the South. This sentiment was contrasted by students who refused to allow the disturbances to stymie their educational progress. Many boys from Upper Nile Province expressed their desire to continue their education in the North, and some who had been matriculating under Northern syllabi were attached to Northern schools. By August 1956 many schools in the South were operating again.<sup>570</sup>

As the Mutiny and the ensuing disturbances raged the pace towards Sudanese sovereignty accelerated. On 18 August—the day the mutiny began—the Sudanese Parliament voted unanimously to speed up the independence process, and on 30 August it approved a measure mandating that Sudan should determine its political future through a plebiscite. On 19 December the Legislative Assembly and Senate unanimously approved the resolution declaring Sudan’s independence, and on 1 January 1956 the Republic of the Sudan became independent.<sup>571</sup> Southern MPs had been reluctant to vote for the Independence Resolution sans the guarantee that the nation’s constitution would be a

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<sup>568</sup> Interview with Ambrose Hilary, 30 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>569</sup> See B.J. Harper to G.H. Martin, September 7, 1955 (SAD. 47/2/107), “Sudan Riot (August 29, 1955)”, and “Sudan Riot (pt. II)”, both in Billy Graham Center Archive [BGCA] Collection 081, Box 16 Folder 9, labeled ‘General Files: Sudan—Miscellaneous--Reports; August 1952-December 1956’, and Gino Barsella and Miguel A. Ayuso Guixot, *Struggling to be Heard: The Christian Voice in Independent Sudan 1956-1996*. Faith in Sudan No. 4. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998; 18.

<sup>570</sup> See *Sudan Monthly Record* [published by the Republic of the Sudan, Ministry of the Interior] No. 297 (September 1955), 2; *Sudan Monthly Record*, No. 298 (October 1955; published 9.10.1956 [p. 9]), 8; *Sudan Monthly Record*, No. 299 (November 1955), 12.

<sup>571</sup> For the timeline of dates referenced in this paragraph see Comboni Mission Library [hereafter CML], Brack II 624 266.009 AAV: Gino Barsella and Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, *A List of Major Dates in the Modern Sudan*. Nairobi, (p. 3). See also the Sandersons, *Education*, 352.



federal one, but the Assembly resolved that federation for the southern provinces would receive full consideration.<sup>572</sup> The Ministry of the Interior's *Sudan Monthly Record* captured the ecstasy of the moment with the following description:

‘All over the country, the flags of the condominium Governments were lowered for the last time, and the new Independence flag of blue, yellow and green was hoisted in their place... The reports from all Provinces speak of the profound emotion attending the various ceremonies; of rousing speeches by distinguished citizens; of prayer, of music, and of revelry...’<sup>573</sup>

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The joy of independence did not mitigate the profound effect that the disturbances had created. A Commission of Enquiry was formed with the responsibility of identifying the mutiny's causes. The three-member Committee was established under Judge Tawfiq Cotran, a Sudanese Christian with Palestinian origins who had worked as a long-time Condominium employee. The Commission's other Northern Sudanese member was Khalifa Mahjoub, a General Manager in the Equatoria Scheme Board. The third member and sole representative from the South was Chief and MP Lolik Lado.<sup>574</sup> Considered a model Government chief, during World War II the illiterate Lado purchased grain for the Sudan Defence Force garrisoned in Juba and was recognized as a broker by private traders.<sup>575</sup> He participated in the Juba Conference, where he and Chiefs Gir Kiro and Cir Rehan emphasized their need to consult with their people amid dissension between chiefs and the ‘educated community’ regarding the question of Southern representatives being

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<sup>572</sup> See the Sandersons, 352.

<sup>573</sup> *Sudan Monthly Record*, No. 301 (January 1956) [published February 27, 1957], 1.

<sup>574</sup> See Woodward, *Condominium*, 155; John G. Nyuot Yoh, ‘The Historical Origins of the Sudanese Civil Wars: The Politics of Gunboat Diplomacy’. Presented at the South Africa Human Rights Commission, Johannesburg, 25 May 2001. [<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/155995858/johns-sudan-paper---New-Sudan>]. Consulted 19 August 2014; p. 8.

<sup>575</sup> Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan: Histories of Chiefship, Community and State* (East Africa Series). Oxford: James Currey, 2013; 77.

sent to the Legislative Assembly. He famously opined that Southerners' dilemma was akin to a girl who, being asked to marry a young man, needed to know more about her suitor before consenting.<sup>576</sup> During the First Civil War Lado would serve as a judge/arbitrator for the Anyanya.<sup>577</sup>

While the Commission was instructed to carry out its investigation in Juba or any area/areas that Cotran deemed appropriate, it was restricted from looking into the Mutiny's political or social aspects. Committee meetings and hearings were to be public or secret based on circumstance. With the Defense Minister's approval the Commission was authorized to appoint two advisers, preferably from the SDF.<sup>578</sup> Southern Sudanese politicians contributed little evidence to the Commission—much of it, according to Peter Woodward, was contradictory. Nevertheless the Commission gathered evidence that included papers from the prosecution in court martials and letters along the lines of Chief Lako Logono's to the Governor of Equatoria, which stated that "If the Northerners and the Egyptians want to join with the South let them bring our grandfathers and grandmothers, and all our brethren whom they carried as slaves long ago, then we can link with them".<sup>579</sup> The Committee submitted its report on 18 February 1956, and the Government published the Report of the Administrative Board of Enquiry into the Mutiny in October. The Report was originally written in English and mirrored the published English version (an Arabic version was also published), and 1500 copies were

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<sup>576</sup> Leonardi, *Government*, 131.

<sup>577</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>578</sup> Yoh, 'The Historical Origins of the Sudanese Civil Wars', 8.

<sup>579</sup> Lako Logono to Governor Equatoria, 18 February 1954, MI SCR 1/C/15, as taken from Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*, 148. See also fn. 24 in Woodward, 205 and fn. 49 on Woodward, 207.

initially printed. Amid considerable demand, three thousand additional copies were in preparation by the end of the month.<sup>580</sup>

The Commission concluded that there were five principal realities that laid the foundation for the disturbances. These were:

1. Northerners and Southerners had little in common.
2. For historical reasons, Southerners regarded Northerners as foes.
3. The pre-1947 British policy of encouraging Southerners to “progress on African and Negroid lines” prevented Northerners and Southerners from knowing each other. Missionaries favored and influenced this policy.
4. The North had progressed far ahead of the South for several reasons, creating ‘a feeling in the underdeveloped people...that they are being cheated, exploited and dominated.’
5. These factors discouraged a feeling of common citizenship; ‘It is only within the last year...that the average Southerner is becoming politically conscious, but this political consciousness...is regional and not national.’<sup>581</sup>

Given the government’s religious policies in the coming years, it is important to note that the Report’s section on ‘Education and Religion’ stated that religious differences had not played a part in the disturbances. On the contrary, it found ‘that the real trouble in the South is political and not religious...In the extensive disturbances that took place in Equatoria, Christians, Pagans, as well as Muslims, took part...some of the leaders of the anti-northern propagandists are southern moslims [sic].’<sup>582</sup> In addition to religion not being considered to be a major factor in the disturbances, the Report also stated that the

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<sup>580</sup> FO [Foreign Office] 371/119604, no 87 (30 October 1956): ‘[Report on the Southern Mutiny]: despatch no 128 from Sir E Chapman-Andrews to Mr Selwyn Lloyd commenting on the Cotran Report. *Minute JSR Duncan*’ as taken from *Sudan* (British Documents on the End of Empire). Ed. Douglas Johnson. Series B Volume 5. Part II, 1951-1956. London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies in the University of London, the Stationery Office; 1998; 504.

<sup>581</sup> *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*, 81, 127.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid*, preface, 5, 6, 127.

slave trade was not a contributing element either; ‘the historical fact of the slave trade was used by different people for different purposes.’<sup>583</sup>

Despite the Commission’s findings regarding the relevance of slavery, sentiments expressed before the Mutiny indicate its salience for those who wanted to reject attempts at national unity. In the immediate sense both the violence and Commission stimulated more references to slavery. In their report of events surrounding the Mutiny one observer commented that the weight of past injustices was directly responsible for the maelstrom:

‘It seemed as though the whole Southern Corps was on a man hunt. Their hear[t]s were so filled with bitterness and hatred toward all the northerners. Vengeance, not only for present grievances but that which has been stored up down through the past half century, was now running wild... Many of the tribesmen of Central Africa have the proverbial ‘elephant’s memory’, especially when it comes to the Arab atrocities of 50 years ago. Even the youth of today know of relatives who had suffered at their hands.’<sup>584</sup>

These sentiments were echoed in Sudan Ambassador E. Chapman-Andrews’ reflections on the Commission’s Report. Chapman-Andrews acknowledged that British and mission policies were important contributing elements to the ‘trouble’, but he also stated that memories of the slave trade had long been a source of anti-Northern resentment in the South. He hinted at the necessity of the isolationist Southern Policy in a milieu where the animus was so strong:

‘...for a long time after 1899 Southerners were so suspicious of the North and had such indelible memories of the slave trade that it was essential to keep them apart...so serious an event as the mutiny must have deep roots in the past. Certainly we are not solely responsible for that past. The slave trade is one of the most discreditable chapters in

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<sup>583</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>584</sup> Anonymous writer, ‘SUDAN Late 50s//Early 60s’, 1,2; in BGCA Collection 081, Box 102 Folder 6, labeled ‘Historical Documents by Country (1950) 1960-1994 1908 +1909’.

the history of the Arabs...it must be regarded as a major cause of trouble between Arab and Negro even today.<sup>585</sup>

In addition to the popular argument that missionaries had sown discord by keeping the legacy of slavery alive, the Commission concluded that mission work in the South from 1927-1946—when they exercised great influence on education—had wholly failed to produce people capable of filling leadership and administrative positions. The inference was that the imbalance of promotions among people in the North and South in Sudanization was attributed not to racial or religious favoritism but instead out of a paucity of qualified mission-school graduates from the South.<sup>586</sup> While one could be inclined to dismiss the government's criticisms of mission education as the biased intimations of authorities bent on 'Islamicization', but it is critical to understand that government officials were not the only ones who offered serious critiques of mission education. Perhaps the strongest indictment occurred at the First Southern Student Conference in June 1956. The Conference—where the formation of the Students Union of the Southern Sudan (SUSS) was proclaimed—complained that missionaries were keeping alive the pejorative legacy of slavery. In his report of conference resolutions Secretary Joseph U. Garang blasted missionaries for cooperating with the British in 'widening the gap between North and South by teaching children biased views about slavery...and creating a prejudice against the Northern People in such a way as to make

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<sup>585</sup> FO [Foreign Office] 371/119604, no 87 (30 October 1956): '[Report on the Southern Mutiny]', as taken from *Sudan*, 506. For biographical information on Chapman-Andrews see *Sudan*, 518.

<sup>586</sup> *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*, 6-7. Heather Sharkey and Mohamed Beshir have each argued that riverain Muslims were afforded a preferential education which prepared them for superior government positions more than their Southern counterparts. See Mohamed Omar Beshir, *The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict*. New York: F.A. Praeger, 1968, and Heather Sharkey, "Colonialism, Character Building and the Culture of Nationalism in the Sudan, 1898-1956" in James D. Le Sueur, ed. *The Decolonization Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 218-237 and Heather Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

understanding between South and North difficult to reach.’ This statement comprised part of the Conference’s resolution that the government immediately take over mission schools.<sup>587</sup> This resolution, among other grievances (see previous chapter), is critical in illustrating that critiques of missionary work in the educational sphere were not limited to Northern, non-Christian commentators bent on eliminating mission influence.

As time progressed people from the South would frame their efforts against the government as one meant to free themselves from enslavement, and by harnessing that history they linked Khartoum’s intentions with an older, established record of injustices. The premise that such memories should remain in the past not only added fervency to the liberation movement but also created a prime opportunity to create a new history. Encouraging national unity in the midst of such glaring disharmony became a priority for the young government, and in the coming years it attempted to do so with devastating effect. Islam and Arab culture were its instruments of choice.

#### Solutions to the National Problem: Islam and Arabism

‘In ‘62 missionary schools were much, much better. The education was very good...those who fought for the freedom of South Sudan are those who were in missionary schools at those times...teaching was very strong and they taught us with so many things.’ On a July afternoon in the shadows of Juba’s All Saints’ Cathedral, Ezekiel Diing recalled his memories as a mission school student. Born in Jonglei in 1954, Diing entered school in 1961. After sharing memoirs from his schooldays the tenor of his remembrances took a drastic turn.<sup>588</sup> Upon his completion of the primary level in 1964 he found the transition to a system based on English to Arabic quite difficult. By 1966 the

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<sup>587</sup> See H.A. Yousif to Director of Education, Ministry of Education, June 27, 1956; 1 and Joseph U. Garang, ‘A Word on Current Matters and Their Interconnection with the First Southern Student Conference’, 1-3; both in SSNA Box EP 246, Folder EP.17.A.3.8 [August 2013 designation]

<sup>588</sup> Interview with Ezekiel Diing; 11 July 2012.

contours of his memory shifted to the brutal treatment his instructor received from government troops:

‘By that time they killed our headmaster. The Arab people did...they smothered him like a chicken. He was called Moses White. He was our headmaster in...Malek Primary. They killed him by night, when they shot people they killed many people. Then in the morning they collect some of the teachers, they beat them. They broke some of them very badly.’<sup>589</sup>

The government’s efforts to inculcate the South with Islam and Arab culture cemented similar impressions upon the mind of Joseph Taban, an ordained Anglican then serving as Principal of Juba’s Bishop Gwynne College. ‘Islamization was intense!’ he shared. ‘All over the country, especially in South Sudan.’ Though Diing’s memories of Islamicization were imbued with violence, Taban offered a different perspective by claiming that an Arabic-based system allowed him to gain a firm grasp of the language; ‘I know the language very well. I’m thankful that I can speak even to my enemies and sit at the table and speak and read the Koran...But many people are lost and never came back, because they lost their culture. They became Muslims.’<sup>590</sup> On a sweltering Sunday in July 2012, Taban stood adjacent to Desmond Tutu and translated—from English to Arabic—the former Archbishop’s speech commemorating the first anniversary of Southern independence. It was impossible not to recognize the irony of the moment.

The recollections of Joseph Taban and Ezekiel Diing—Anglican Bishop for the Twic East Diocese—embody the intensity of government initiatives to unite Sudan under a single cultural and religious framework. For South Sudanese old enough to remember, childhood is interwoven with recollections of the militarization and bloodshed that

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<sup>589</sup> Ibid.

<sup>590</sup> Interview with Joseph Taban; 12 July 2012.

accompanied the government's unifying initiatives. From the construction of mosques to the destruction of churches, the implementation of Arabic over English, the sweeping expulsion of foreign missionaries to the Exodus of Southern masses, the process produced rippling effects throughout the South's physical, ideological, and spiritual landscapes.

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Internal divisions led many African states to take on inclusive nation-building strategies as much of the continent moved from colonialism to independence. In addition to political institutions, cultural manifestations like anthems, flags, football teams, and musical icons were orchestrated from the center to minimize opposition.<sup>591</sup> In varying degrees nation-building shaped assumptions about how members of the nation should live and identify themselves, and though it aimed to foster inclusion nation-building carried with it exclusionary tendencies during difficult times.<sup>592</sup> While colonial governments used education to create categories of difference—and the educational disparity separating Northern and Southern Sudan was indeed gaping—anti-colonial nationalists often imagined the independent nation within the discourse of race.<sup>593</sup> These realities played themselves out in Sudan in important ways. Linguistically, for example, the pre-1947 'Southern Policy' had sought to exclude Arabic from local government and restrict the entry of Northern Sudanese Arabic-speakers in the South. This generated a negative response from scholars and Sudanese nationalists, and post-independence rulers sought to stimulate national unity through the imposition of Arabic policies in the South

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<sup>591</sup> Sara Dorman, Daniel Hammett, and Paul Nugent, 'Introduction: Citizenship and its Casualties in Africa' in Sara Dorman, Daniel Hammett, and Paul Nugent (eds.), *Making Nations, Creating Strangers: States and Citizenship in Africa*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007 (African Social Studies Series, 1568-1203, v. 16), 7.

<sup>592</sup> Dorman et. al., 'Introduction', 8.

<sup>593</sup> Ned Bertz, 'Educating the Nation: Race and Nationalism in Tanzanian Schools' in Dorman et. al., *Making Nations*, 162.



(though a form of Arabic has existed in the South since at least mid-nineteenth century).<sup>594</sup> Indeed, all African nations at some point tried to unify culture and language. Rolandsen has noted that though the effort to inculcate Arabic and Islam in the South has often been ascribed to Northern intolerance, it is important to note the anticolonial, nationalistic, and internal security dimensions at play. Though Arabic and Islam had buttressed Sudanese nationalism as it developed in the 1930s and 1940s, English and Christianity were conflated with foreign colonial dominance. The Mutiny made the need to assimilate the South and secure its loyalty to Khartoum vital for state security, and restricting missionary activity was interpreted as a crucial step in minimizing foreign influence in the South. In these ways the accusations of subversion levied upon missionaries, the increased microscope placed on Church activity, and the eventual expulsion of missionaries by early 1964<sup>595</sup> were each elements of the government's initiative to construct a nation unsullied by foreign interference and unified in culture, religion, and language.

Khartoum's Arabization policies were heavily influenced by contemporary developments elsewhere in the Arab world. It bears stating that in the war's initial stages the Khalil government was invested in developing the country's intra-African relations and hesitant to cement its future in the Arab League (which it joined shortly after independence). Khalil reportedly understood that Sudan's 'connection with the Arab

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<sup>594</sup> Cherry Leonardi, 'South Sudanese Arabic and the Negotiation of the Local State, c. 1840-2011' *The Journal of African History* Vol. 54 No. 3; 351-352. Leonardi argues that 'South Sudanese Arabic became an innovative and necessary means of communication among multiple actors within new fields of interaction...these fields of interaction were both the product and the arena of local state formation...the spread of this creole language indicates the enlarging arenas of participation in the local state. The development and use of South Sudanese Arabic as an unofficial lingua franca...demonstrates that communication and negotiation among local actors has been central to the long-term processes of state formation in South Sudan.' (351).

<sup>595</sup> Rolandsen, 'A False Start', 119.

Middle East is real and natural” but did not believe that this should mean that its relations with new African nations “should be entirely governed by the tormenting problems of the Arabs.”<sup>596</sup> Nevertheless, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a statement in 1956 which clearly detailed the government’s Arab inclinations: “Sudan is in the main a cognate part of the Arab world. Our policy towards the Arab League is to support it, to strengthen it and draw strength from it”.<sup>597</sup> From a foreign policy standpoint Sudan’s attempts to prove its mettle as an integral component of the Arab world were largely defined by its approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. When Anglo-French-Israeli forces invaded the Suez Canal in 1956 Sudanese volunteers were sent to assist the Egyptians (though Sudan preserved its diplomatic ties with Britain and France).<sup>598</sup> Sudan’s involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict and elsewhere in the Arab world will be further detailed in the following chapter.

Post-independence attempts to bring southern Sudan under the framework of Arabism and Islam began largely with the creation of the Department of Religious Affairs. Founded in 1956 and financed with public monies, the DRA’s purpose was to promote Islam among non-Muslim, non-Arab Sudanese communities but particularly among those in the South.<sup>599</sup> Director Kamal Baghir was quoted in the Sudanese Arabic-language newspaper *Rai El Amm*, ‘we, of the Department of religious affairs are ready to

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<sup>596</sup> From 28 December 1957 article entitled ‘An African Policy’ in unnamed periodical from the Northwestern University Archives [NUA], Gwendolen M. Carter Papers, Box 78, Folder 6 labeled ‘Sudan’, 1-2.

<sup>597</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1956, Foreign Policy of the Sudan, No. 2 p. 23, as taken from ‘Sudan’s External Relations 1956-63’ *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 1 No. 4 [1963]; 13.

<sup>598</sup> ‘Arab-Israeli Conflict’ Richard A. Lobban, Jr., Robert S. Kramer, and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85). Third Edition. Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 2002; 27.

<sup>599</sup> See ACR A/93/15/5; G. Vantini, ‘Church to Be Annihilated in Africa’ (March 8, 1966), 1; and ACR A/90/3/1; K. Cherono and T.K. Rubale, “A Petition by the East African Students in the United Kingdom and Ireland to President Ibrahim Abboud of the Republic of the Sudan During His State Visit to the United Kingdom” (May 21, 1964), 2.

do our duty. We have begun with the opening of Islamic centres in the Southern Provinces and we will not cease to work (and are still) in the direction until we have realised the cultural Islamic unity which we seek'.<sup>600</sup> The DRA's establishment ushered in the government's targeting of the educational sphere. Ziada Arbab was one of the leading figures in this process. Born in 1915, Arbab was schooled at Gordon Memorial College and graduated from Khartoum School of Law (his studies included English Law and Sharia). He served as Secretary to the Umma Party's delegation that took part in the negotiations that ended in the Cairo Agreement, and in November 1958 was appointed by Abboud as Minister of Education and Justice.<sup>601</sup> In February 1957 Arbab announced government intentions to takeover mission schools, though this was not immediately implemented.<sup>602</sup>

1958 witnessed a heightening of official rhetoric espousing the goal to frame the country as an Arab, Islamic state. Minister of the Interior Ali 'Abd al-Rahman, a graduate of the Islamic University of Cairo, publicly declared in El Obeid that 'Sudan must be ruled by the two islami[c]...religious leaders, and those who do not accept this must quit the country.'<sup>603</sup> School programs were soon Arabized and missionaries who had served in education were expelled in 1958. Islamic instruction became required for non-Christian students in former mission schools, and those who embraced Islam were given advantages in school recruiting. The gradual transferal of Christian teachers to the North

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<sup>600</sup> *Rai El Amm*, September 30, 1959; as taken from ACR A/86/26, 'The Southern Front Memorandum to O.A.U. on Afro-Arab Conflict in the Sudan', 50. See also ACR A/93/15/5; G. Vantini, 'King Faisal Promoter of Islamic Crusade [sic] in Africa' (March 8, 1966), where Vantini described the newspaper as the 'Sudanese leading daily' (1).

<sup>601</sup> UNESCO Archives, 11/C/NOM/18 'Candidates for Election to the Executive Board Curriculum Vitae Mr. Ziada Arbab (Sudan)' 27 October 1960. [<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001631/163147eb.pdf>]. Consulted 3 September 2014; 1-2.

<sup>602</sup> See Wawa, 14 and ACR E/693/6/1, "The Question of Mission Schools in the Sudan", 2.

<sup>603</sup> Quote taken from "Plight of Christianity in the Southern Sudan: Urgency of Immediate Alms to Assist More than 100,000 Refugees" in Folder ACR A/107/1 [11], 1.

meant a reduction in religious training for Southern Christian students.<sup>604</sup> That the education question and (Islam's role in it) was deemed crucial to establishing national unity was reflected in a speech made by Education Minister Arbab and published in the December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1958 issue of *Bahr El Ghazal Daily*. Claiming that "Our growing Sudanese nation is rich with its spiritual potentialities", he stated that national understanding could be reached through the study of Arabic in Southern village and elementary schools. To this he added that "we cannot build a good community and a sound Sudanese nationality unless we take aid of the religious doctrine and quote from the philosophy of the Islamic Sharia."<sup>605</sup> There was also speculation that Muslims from the North envisioned Southern Sudan as a vital gateway for the broader Islamicization of Africa. On 9 March 1960 the Northern Sudanese weekly *Anba El Sudan* responded to the continued expansion of Christianity in the South despite the government's measures by recommending that the state should invite Islamic missionaries from India, Pakistan, and other Muslim countries into the South.<sup>606</sup> Fifty khalwas were planned to be built in the South in 1961 and another fifty in 1962, but when it was found that the religious funds were not sufficient to build and operate the amount of khalwas and *Maahed Ilmiya* that policymakers in Khartoum desired the Minister of Education utilized public monies to support Southern khalwas. This move was apparently justified by changing the names of all "religious schools" to "Elementary" schools.<sup>607</sup> Operating at one time with a budget of

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<sup>604</sup> The information on Arabization and Islamicization in this paragraph is largely taken and paraphrased from Corne, 'Thorns from Khartoum', 32, which provides an excellent, concise summary of a multi-faceted, byzantine process.

<sup>605</sup> *Bahr El Ghazal Daily*, Bulletin No. 12, 'Educational Planning Committee to...On New Educational System' December 27: 1958; 4.

<sup>606</sup> *Black Book [The Black Book of the Sudan on the expulsion of the missionaries from Southern Sudan: An Answer*. Rome, Bologna, Milano: Verona Fathers, 1964]; 67, as taken from ACR A/86/26, 'The Southern Front Memorandum to O.A.U. on Afro-Arab Conflict in the Sudan', 50.

<sup>607</sup> ACR A/94/1/1; [P.G. Vantini?], 'Secret Plans of Persecutions Revealed', 2.

over one million dollars, from 1961 to July 1964 the Department of Religious Affairs had built or planned to approve the construction of eighteen Intermediate *mahads* (Islamic schools) and a Secondary *mahad* in the South.<sup>608</sup>

Notwithstanding the popular belief that there was an insidious religious objective at work with the government takeover of Southern education, authorities often denied any religious connection and reiterated the state's commitment to religious freedom. However, government correspondences betrayed a sense that the state was not using its means against the Church. Secret documents obtained by German Catholic news agency KNA shed light on the religious and anti-missionary aims expressed by officials contemporaneously with the school takeover. For example, Yusif Mohamed Said (District Commissioner for Eastern Equatoria) opined to the Governor of Juba in December 1957 that the 'savage' Boya people could not be properly subdued by the added presence of a mission station but rather with the Government's 'fire and sword' capable of controlling every such group.<sup>609</sup>

Governor of Equatoria Ali Baldo was more direct in his leanings. Ali Mohammed Ali Baldo was born at El Obeid in 1908 and began his career as a soldier. After spending sixteen years in the police force and reaching the rank of Commandant, he was seconded to the Ministry of the Interior and appointed Deputy Governor of Kassala Province in 1955. He entered Southern Sudan for the first time as Governor of Equatoria in September 1958.<sup>610</sup> In another letter to Dr. Said in November 1959 Governor Baldo expressed that "We must protect the Mohammedans and the pagans from falling under

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<sup>608</sup> See 'U.S. Not to Curtail Aid to the Sudan' and 'Santino Fabricates in Defence of his Arab Masters' Despotism in Southern Sudan', both in *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 2 No. 2. (July 1964): 14 and 24-25, respectively.

<sup>609</sup> 'Harrying the Missions: Secret Documents from the Sudan' *The Tablet* (20 April 1963); 418.

<sup>610</sup> *Black Book*, 97, fn. 1

the control of the Christians. It is only in this way that we can guarantee that everyone can enjoy the right of choosing the religion that he wants, a right guaranteed to him under the Constitution.”<sup>611</sup> Baldo was rumored to have dreamt that the Prophet ordered him dispose of the missionaries and, after watching *Quo Vadis*, desired to exceed Nero’s efforts in harassing Christians. William Anderson, himself an expelled missionary, described him as ‘the most notorious personage connected with the enforced islamicization in the south.’<sup>612</sup>

Islamicization also generated rather disturbing tales. For example, in 1959 the headmaster of Marialbaai (Nyamlel) took his Christian students to a nearby river and washed their heads with soap so as to purge them of baptism. They were then invited to convert to Islam. In December 1962, thirty-eight boys of the Mayom-Thiet elementary school were stripped and lashed twelve times because they had gone to visit priests (all children were forbidden to go to the house of nuns or priests). For having taken part in a strike they received four lashes.<sup>613</sup> As most people were directly responsible to local chiefs, converting chiefs to Islam became one strategy of reaching a larger group of potential converts. Presented with the choice of converting to Islam or losing their status, some obeyed the government and were promptly flown to Khartoum to have their names broadcast on Radio Omdurman.<sup>614</sup> Though the aim was to entice people in the South to

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<sup>611</sup> ‘Harrying the Missions: Secret Documents from the Sudan’ *The Tablet* (20 April 1963); 418.

<sup>612</sup> See ACR A/85/16, *Memorandum on Reasons that led to the Expulsion of Foreign Missionaries and Priests from the Southern Provinces of the Sudan*, Appendix ‘C’, 7 and SAD. 795/6/9, pg. 410; Anderson, “The Role of Religion in the Struggle in the Sudan”. For another example of such an insertion, see ACR A/92/7, Michael Arundi, “Misleading Statement by U.S. Government on Religious Persecution in the Sudan” Kampala (19 July 1964) in *The U.S.A. and the Sudan: In the Comments of American Newspapers*, in which another official declared, ‘I shall be another Nero for you missionaries.’ (38)

<sup>613</sup> For both stories, see ACR.A/93/12/12, ‘Religious Oppression in the Bahr el Ghazal’ (1964); 13-14.

<sup>614</sup> Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 93.

follow their leadership and embrace Islam, they still largely failed to convert to Islam or embrace Arab culture. Conversely, many went into exile.<sup>615</sup>

### A New Rome

By the early 1960s some had become convinced that peaceful efforts to achieve Southern goals had been exhausted and that military force was needed to counter Northern Sudanese aggression. Joseph Oduho and Father Saturnino Lohure had a plan to organize a guerrilla movement, and in December 1960 they fled with other politicians to Uganda to lay the groundwork for a Southern armed force.<sup>616</sup> Oduho had Latuka roots and was born in Lobira, Equatoria. After completing high school in Uganda and Rumbek, Oduho's life as an activist began by leading a demonstration against the 1953 Sudan-Egypt agreements. Narrowly escaping execution after his involvement in the Mutiny, he taught in Equatoria and was elected to Parliament in 1958. He immediately went into exile following Ibrahim Abboud's coup.<sup>617</sup> Lohure was the first Lotuko priest. Named to the constitutional committee in 1957, he stood for Torit in the first general elections and was elected MP in 1958. A leading member of the Southern Parliamentary contingent, he returned to the South after the Abboud coup.<sup>618</sup>

In 1962 Oduho, Saturnino, William Deng, and Clement Mboro formed the Sudan African Closed Districts National Union (renamed the Sudan African National Union). The SANU pushed for complete Southern Sudanese separation.<sup>619</sup> In July 1963 Oduho and Saturnino visited Europe to procure financial assistance and support. In Rome they

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<sup>615</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>617</sup> 'Oduho, Joseph H. (ca. 1930-1993).' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 218.

<sup>618</sup> 'Lohure, Fr. Saturnino (?-1967)' Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban Jr., and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 267 and 'Saturnino Lohure' *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From Beginning to 2006*. Khartoum; 26.

<sup>619</sup> 'Oduho, Joseph H. (ca. 1930-1993)' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition; 218; Richard Gray, 'Some Reflections on Christian Involvement 1955-1972', 121. The larger backstory behind Saturnino's involvement in *Problem* was taken from Gray, 'Reflections', 120-121.

formulated the idea of a guerrilla movement that would need propaganda to rouse the support of exiled Southern intellectuals, members of the former Equatorial Corps, Southern students, and others.<sup>620</sup> The Anyanya borrowed its name from the harrowing poison of the Gabon Viper. In an earlier period witches kept the poison and would, for a fee, send it to the buyer's enemies. After enough innocent people had been caught in the way British authorities in the 1930s told the witches to stop their trade.<sup>621</sup> The Anyanya forces, which in time became military face of the liberation movement, attacked government posts and secured weapons from abroad.<sup>622</sup> From an organizational standpoint, then, it is evident that resistance in the South was advancing on a violent continuum.

Øystein Rolandsen has argued that though historians typically trace the beginning of the First Civil War to the Torit Mutiny, it was not until 1963 that organized political violence reached the level of civil war. This violence occurred after a seven year period of increasing political tension, minor localized violence, and social and economic stagnation.<sup>623</sup> This section illustrates that religious thought—along with political tension, violence, and stagnation—developed increasing criticism of Khartoum's policies. In this milieu of Arabization and Islamicization figures including Oliver Allison, Michael Ngamunde, students, and others began to frame the Abboud regime as the antithesis of righteous government and/or draw comparisons between contemporary circumstances and those faced by Christ and the Church during the Roman Empire. With the takeover of

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<sup>620</sup> Poggo, *The First Sudanese Civil War*, 63.

<sup>621</sup> Anthony Carthew, 'Inside Southern Sudan A Story to Shock the World' *Daily Mail* (1 February 1966), p. 6.

<sup>622</sup> See Wawa, 15-16 and Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008; 79-80, which discusses these three men founding the SACDNU. The SACDNU changed its name to the Sudan African National Union (SANU) in 1963 (79-80).

<sup>623</sup> Rolandsen, 'A False Start', 105.



mission schools, Sunday's abolition as a weekly holiday, and the passage of the Missionary Societies Act—an unholy trinity from the Southern Church's perspective—a new setting was constructed in which heroic Christian devotion in the face of state oppression could be played out. Not only was there opportunity to make new history but also an occasion to construct spiritual arguments that government from Khartoum should be removed altogether.<sup>624</sup>

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In February 1960 the Friday Law replaced Sunday with Friday as Southern Sudan's weekly holiday.<sup>625</sup> This decree—which still allowed Christians free time to attend Church services—was met by students who were at the forefront of the 'Sunday Protest'.<sup>626</sup> Missions, and particularly Protestant missions, had stressed the importance of their students needing rest on Sundays, and secondary students were aware of government intentions to Islamize them. Protest from the Rumbek Secondary School was particularly virulent, and after Catholic priest Paolino Doggale printed their papers of protest arrests were made and hefty prison sentences doled out. The Southern Archdeaconry Council sent Governor Ali Baldo a petition expressing sadness that Christians would be denied their day of rest. The message was furiously rebuffed.<sup>627</sup> In the wake of the Sunday Protest one tract attempted to absolve the Government of

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<sup>624</sup> Here I am reading through the lens of the Kairos Document, a theological treatise produced within apartheid South Africa. Meant as a Scriptural argument against apartheid's (mis)use of Scripture and as a call for action against the regime, it positions God as an historical liberator of the oppressed, outlines Biblical examples of ungodly government, and Christian duties when dealing with such evil (namely removal). The general argument is that, based on the treatment of Babylon/Rome in the Book of Revelation, God will ultimately punish those regimes that have forfeited their godly ordination to govern justly. See 'Challenge to the church: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa...The Kairos Document, 1985' at [<http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/challenge-church-theological-comment-political-crisis-south-africa-kairos-document-1985>].

<sup>625</sup> Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation, Day of Contentment*, 370, 375.

<sup>626</sup> Barsella and Guixot, *Struggling to be Heard*, 109.

<sup>627</sup> Anderson et. al., *Day of Devastation, Day of Contentment*, 375.

transgression by citing a Gospel dictum that it was the duty of good Christians to obey the State:

‘It would be absolutely wrong to construe that the decision is an attack on the Christian Faith, as every individual in this Country has the freedom to follow his religion. The authors and instigators of the so-called “Sunday Protest” should be reminded that even Christ himself orders obedience to the State: Render to God what are God’s and to Caesar what are Caesar’s. In this case there is no conflict as the State is not asking the Christian to give up prayers to his God.’<sup>628</sup>

In April 1960, two months after the Friday Law was decreed, Philip Ibrahim Torossian preached before a combined CMS Bari, Zande, Moru, and English congregation. Torossian, an accountant for the Province Headquarters who also served as a Church layreader, spoke before a congregation of over five hundred people and likewise used the New Testament to preach a message of Christian submission to the state. He

‘reminded the christians to obey their Government with their leaders so as to enable the Govt. to render to its people what they want...he asked all Christians to work and base their religion...to run concurrently with the Govt. policy...He read some quotations taken from...Mark Chapter XII I-I8 “Render to Ceasar the things that are Caser’s [sic] and to God the things are God’s.” Also he read Romans XIII I-I4 the Constitutions of the Christians towards their Government. His preaching was accepted heartily by the congregations and they were pleased.’<sup>629</sup>

Despite that congregation’s response on that particular Sunday, it is evident (in part by reactions at Rumbek) that attitudes towards the Government’s measures were not always met with rousing approval. The government takeover of mission education is

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<sup>628</sup> SSNA EP 373, Folder EP.46.B.2; ‘Facts from Equatoria Province’, 4. The ‘render to Caesar’ passage is taken from Matthew 22:15-21, where in their effort to trip Him up Pharisees ask Christ whether it was right to pay the imperial tax or not.

<sup>629</sup> Both the quotation and information concerning Torossian are taken from SSNA UNP 145, Folder NUP.46.B.2 [Summer 2012 designation], ‘Equatoria Province Headquarters, Juba (April 5, 1960)’ and adjacent ‘Special Report’, dated April 3<sup>rd</sup> [1960].

another such example. After boys from the Rumbek Secondary School went on strike the school was shut down, with many of them detained for months and three of their leaders sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. Although these sentences were later reduced to five years each, accused ringleader Doggale received a 12-year sentence that was later reduced to five. In 1963 Rumbek and Mboro elementary schools went on a three day strike because some of their members had been lashed for going to church. This incident sparked further protests from other schools: Wau Technical School observed a two day strike and Bussere, Tonj, and Kwajok intermediate schools each observed a one hour silent protest condemning the punishment of the church-goers.<sup>630</sup> Ibrahim Nyigilo, President of the Sudan Christian Association, drew a direct connection between the strikes and what he deemed to be the persecution of Christianity in the country. In a letter copied to President Abboud and the World Council of Churches he wrote:

‘The persecution of Christianity and Christians is more obvious [in]...schools and in employment...Christian children are- compelled to memorize verses of Koran...The history of schools of Southern Sudan [since]...1955, is a history of heroic strikes and a struggle against the Arab oppressors, exploiters and Christian persecutors. Last October, 17 schools went on strike indefinitely [sic] in protest to the government policy in the Southern Sudan. Today, many of these heroic youths have been forced to give up their education and families to seek refuge in Uganda, Congo...’<sup>631</sup>

The participation of Muslim students in the anti-Government strikes is one example of the way in which Muslims made significant contributions to protestations of government policy. In October 1962 three thousand students in over seventeen schools—

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<sup>630</sup> ‘School Children Strike in Defence of Religious Freedom.’ *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 2 (1963), n.p.

<sup>631</sup> Ibrahim Nyigilo to Heads of Christian States, Heads of African States, and UN Secretary General, in *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 2 (1963), n.p.

including three Islamic seminaries—went on strike. After blaming Catholic missionaries for stirring the agitation that led to the strike, a chief asked the Governor of Juba why Muslim seminary students had become involved. “You shut up!” was the reply.<sup>632</sup> Of the eighty-five Southerners who were studying at the Islamic seminary in Juba, seventy went on strike and most fled to Uganda. All of the students at the Islamic seminaries at Maridi and Yei joined the strike, with some of them fleeing as well. The remaining seminarians at Juba were said to have been locked inside since the beginning of the strike so that no one could be allowed to enter or leave.<sup>633</sup> *Voice*, which covered the strikes in its first issue, provided the following description:

‘The strikes were protesting against the repression of the Sudan’s African people and aspirations by the self-claimed Arab Government of the Sudan,... This incident is by no means the first time Moslem Africans of the Southern Sudan, have joined in complete solidarity with their kith and kin in the fight against the tryanicle [sic] rule of the successive governments that have risen to power since the Sudan gained independence...’<sup>634</sup>

Strikes were but one arena in which Southern Muslims contributed to the ‘fight’. In the political realm Abdel Sule, who was responsible for registering the Southern Sudan Federal Party, stands out. Following his 1958 arrest Sule vented at a political meeting in Yambio that the manner in which he had been arrested made him “feel that there are two separate laws in our country, one for us black Southerners and another for Northerners.”<sup>635</sup> The SANU later recognized Sule for having suffered arrest and torture in

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<sup>632</sup> See “The Calvary of the Verona Fathers in the Sudan” (excerpts) *Frontier Call*, March-April 1963 in ‘The U.S.A. and the Sudan in the Comments of American Newspapers’ [ACR A/92/7/3], p. 27.

<sup>633</sup> SAD.965/3/70-71; “Anti-Christian Persecution in South Sudan Reaches Final Stage”, November 25, 1962

<sup>634</sup> ‘Southern Moslems to Strike in Support of Freedom’ *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1963), n.p.

<sup>635</sup> SSNA EP 212, Folder EP.10.B.23 (August 2013 designation), ‘The Liberal Political Propaganda [campaign]...in Zande District’ [1958], 1.

the name of Southern justice and freedom.<sup>636</sup> By highlighting examples like Sule's abuse, *Voice* prioritized the fact that Southern Muslims were not exempt from suffering and discrimination. As such, their religious identity did not dampen their 'Southernness'—a position that contradicts the reasons behind Ogwana's act of murder during the Torit Mutiny. *Voice* opined that such realities illustrated that the liberation struggle ran across religious lines, debunking the myth that the conflict was rooted in missionary activity or religious principles: 'This is just to mention a few cases out of so many to show the reader that...the African Moslems like those of Tanganyika, are shoulder to shoulder united with their Christian and pagan Southern Sudanese, battling their way to victory through oppression...'<sup>637</sup> Although Islamicization was certainly a bone of contention in the South, Muslim contributions strengthen the notion that the liberation struggle was in many respects preeminently a racial, rather than religious, fight.

Perhaps the pinnacle of anti-government angst occurred in the wake of the 1962 Missionary Societies Act. The Act aimed to regulate Christian missionaries in the country: it demanded that Sudanese pastors be registered and licensed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowment; that registered church workers be paid by this minister (a move churches rejected); and generally aimed to allow the government unlimited interference with missionaries (section 3 of the Act stipulated that no missionary society or member do any mission work outside of terms of a license granted by the council of

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<sup>636</sup> See 'Southern Moslems to Strike in Support of Freedom' *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 1 No. 1 (April 1963), n.p.; Aforementioned 1963 letter by Ibrahim Nyigilo to UN Secretary-General and other leaders, in *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 2 (1963), n.p. and 'Sudan's External Relations 1956-63' *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 1 No. 4; 16.

<sup>637</sup> See *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (April 1963), 'Southern Moslems to Strike in Support of Freedom' n.p.

ministers). The Act's ultimate intention was clarified in 1964 when the government ordered the expulsion of all foreign missionaries from Southern Sudan.<sup>638</sup>

In the wake of the Act and believing that Church communication now required secrecy, Bishop Allison and former CMS General Secretary Max Warren assigned Biblical names for certain figures and organizations because, as Warren stated, 'we ought to be able to find appropriate biblical parallels to meet the situations.'<sup>639</sup> The following is a portion of the code listed in Warren's 9 July 1962 letter to Allison:

Archbishop of Canterbury	Aaron
Foreign Office	Cyrus
Legal advice	Scribes
Sudan Government	Babylon
Governor of Juba	Rahshakeh [Rabshakeh]
Prospective Sudanese bishops	Apostolic men
Sudanese pastors	Disciples
Sudanese Church	Ecclesia in partibus in
fidelum	
Missionaries	Deacons
Roman Catholics	Separated brethren
American Presbyterians	Rechabites. <sup>640</sup>

Given the importance of Biblical insertions to the Southern national project, this code is of singular importance. Certain terms stand out: American Presbyterians, for example, are described as 'Rechabites' (an Old Testament group that escaped Nebuchadnezzar's invasion and entered Jerusalem), and the Sudanese Church as 'Ecclesiastia in partibus in fidelum' (Church in the land of unbelievers).<sup>641</sup> Warren's suggestion for 'Babylon' and

<sup>638</sup> See 'From Military Rule and Armed Resistance to the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972' in Anders Breidlid, Avelino Androga Said and Astrid Kristine Breidlid, eds. *A Concise History of South Sudan (New and revised edition)*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2014; 211; P.M. Holt and M.W. Daly, *A History of the Sudan: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day*. New York: Routledge, 2014; 122; Francis M. Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995; 138.

<sup>639</sup> Max Warren to Oliver Allison; July 6, 1962. SAD.804/8/18

<sup>640</sup> SAD.817/10/25; July 9, 1962.

<sup>641</sup> Max Warren to Oliver Allison, July 6, 1962; SAD.804/8/18. For a fuller description of 'Ecclesiastia in partibus in fidelum' and 'Rechabites', respectively, see Auguste Boudinhon, 'In Partibus Infidelium' *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 8. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910.

‘Rabshakeh’, however, are particularly striking.<sup>642</sup> It is highly likely that Warren and Allison were referring to Rome, as evidenced by Warren’s reminder to Allison that “When in Babylon do as the Babylonians do”.<sup>643</sup> The inclusion of ‘Rabshakeh’—which most likely referred to Ali Baldo—is also enlightening. Rabshakeh appears in the Old Testament as a Babylonian emissary sent to Israel to negotiate the terms of its submission. In his attempt to scare the Israelite officials he praised Babylon’s might while questioning the power of Israel’s God. In addition, he implored his audience not to trust in its venerable King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:27-37). Rabshakeh represents blasphemous, ungodly, worldly power that disregards God and mocks His people. In conclusion, these code-names are a clear likening of the contemporary conditions facing Sudanese Christians with those of the early Church under Rome—a religious minority threatened by a powerful state resolved on its eradication. More than that, it was a clear indictment of Khartoum as evil.

To be sure, the charge that the Sudanese Government or its policies were ‘evil’ did not begin after the Missionaries Societies Act. They can be traced back to at least the late 1950s, when in the midst of the mission school takeover Raik Dinka schoolboys in Bahr el Ghazal composed songs that venerated Catholics Fr. Umberto Pasina and Bishop Eduardo Mason and conveyed a tangible sense of their opposition to Islamicization. Of Fr. Pasina they sang:

‘He is the master to overcome the evil that confronts us...  
Mohammed has come to break our divine laws...  
Our big Father is the protector...’

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[<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08025a.htm>]. Consulted 12 June 2013; and Frank S. Frick, “Rechab” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 5: O-Sh*. New York: Doubleday, 1992; 630.

<sup>642</sup> SAD.817/10/23; Max Warren to Martin Parr, July 6, 1962. SAD.817/10/25 [Parr Papers]; Warren to Allison, July 6, 1962 [Allison Papers], SAD.804/8/18.

<sup>643</sup> Parr to Allison, August 18, 1962. SAD.804/8/39 [Allison Papers]

Our Father has spoken...  
Our Master will put the land in order by his Church.<sup>644</sup>

Against the backdrop of increasing repression and criticism of the Church came more examples of the demonization of Khartoum as evil. An editorial in the second issue *Voice* coupled references to the Army and Arab regime with ‘forces of evil’. Rather than cowering to a sense of defeat the writer borrowed from Proverbs 22:8 to express that victory would come anyhow:

‘Southern Sudan is fully alive to the fact that the Army’s rise to power came as the last bulwark of Arab regime. But despite all these desperate attempts and misrepresentations to stifle the just demands and aspirations of the Africans of that land, they shall triumph over the forces of evil. Lying to justify our perpetration of repression and degradation of our fellowmen is iniquity and he that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity.’<sup>645</sup>

When President Abboud visited the United Kingdom in 1964, East African students in the United Kingdom and Ireland wrote a petition to him that condemned the notion that the problems were caused by missionaries and noted the pejorative impact his policies had on African unity. Despite their anger at what they perceived to be glaring African negligence, the petition expressed that ‘It is difficult to carry out evil policies for long without being exposed.’<sup>646</sup>

Michael Tawil Ngamunde gave a compelling indication of the direction that religious thought was moving towards by the mid-1960s. Ngamunde was educated by the CMS in Maridi and Loka. Taking refuge in Zaire, he decided to join the Southern

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<sup>644</sup> See Sandersons, 404-405, for the information concerning the schoolboys’ adoration for Pasina and Mason. For this particular song they cite F.M. Deng, *The Dinka and Their Songs*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973; 253-259.

<sup>645</sup> *Voice of Southern Sudan*. Published by Sudan African National Union. 1 (1963/1964), Vol. 1 No. 2 (1963); n.p.

<sup>646</sup> ACR A/90/3/1; ‘A Petition by the East African Students in the United Kingdom and Ireland to President Ibrahim Abboud of the Republic of the Sudan During His State Visit to the United Kingdom’ (May 21, 1964), 1-2.



resistance moving there. Following the Civil War he became a Minister of Public Service and Minister of Education.<sup>647</sup> In his 1964 article ‘The Southern Sudan Problem’ that was published in *New Africa*, he blasted the hypocrisy of a government that admitted missionary innocence while enforcing their expulsion. After citing Arab fanaticism, the persecution of Christianity, and the missionary expulsion, Ngamunde assessed the state with the following censure: ‘the Sudan government deserves the name of Kakistocracy-government by the worst sort of citizens, without moral law or conscience.’<sup>648</sup> Echoing the triumphalist spirit that others expressed in the face of such a foe, the writer opined that freedom would be won even if it took Anyanya participation to accomplish:

‘We are not going to negotiate for freedom, because other than God nobody can grant freedom...nobody can be enslaved forever. Freedom is our unconditional prerogative...respected even by God Himself, but not by malicious man. However, we are going to achieve it. Any Arab government like the Kakiatocracy [sic] of Abboud may merely delay the time and prolong the struggle; but it will never prevent us from getting our God-given attribute “Liberty”...The only step Arabs must expect from us...is that sooner or later we shall join Anyanya.’<sup>649</sup>

Allison and Warren’s comparison to the Khartoum regime as a modern equivalent of ‘Rome’ was inferred by other members of the Southern Church, with comparisons to the circumstances they were facing with those of early Church. Allison recalled that after the Anyanya was formed and the exodus of refugees was beginning, Canon Ezra Lawiri

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<sup>647</sup> Philip Legge Pitya, ‘History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan, 1898-1964’ Dissertation, Boston University Graduate School, 1996; 412; ‘Appendix 6: Extracts from Regional Assembly Debate and Resolution on Language 1974’ in H. Wani Rondyang, ‘The Role of Indigenous Languages in Southern Sudan: Educational Language and Planning’ Dissertation, Institute of Education, University of London, 2007; 282; and ‘Speech of H.E. Jemme Nunu Kumba, Governor of Western Equatoria State, on the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Yambio, Western Equatoria State Yambio, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010’ South Sudan Concern Citizens International Association, [<http://www.sscica.org/gpage15.html>]. Consulted 11 July 2015.

<sup>648</sup> ACR A/93/12/1; Michael Ngamunde, ‘The Southern Sudan Problem’ *New Africa* [1964], 1-3.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibid*; 1, 3-4.

encouraged him not to worry: “we know our Bibles” he said. “we have read the Acts of the Apostles. That is what happened at the beginning of the Church, and it was hard and dangerous for the early Christians. Why not for us?”<sup>650</sup> A similar invocation was voiced by seminarians who had worked with Fr. Hadrian Bonfanti, whose troubles with the government were recounted in the previous chapter. After his expulsion, seminarians at Okaru’s St. Mary’s seminary penned a letter to his parents stating that they were ‘not surprised to see that the church is persecuted in our country, for since the first centuries there have been persecutions in the Catholic Church’.<sup>651</sup> One Sudanese priest sermonized that the situation created by the missionary expulsion was relatable to the circumstances facing the Apostles after Christ was taken away to be crucified. ‘The going away...of your fathers is the same as the capturing away of Jesus from his Appostles [sic]. So now you are without Priests and I alone will not be in all places...When you are sick, put your souls right before God. The salvation of your souls are in your hands.’<sup>652</sup> Another sermon taken presumably from the same preacher positioned the Jews, rather than the Romans, as Christ’s captors in the Passion narrative. He stated that ‘Jews hunted the son of God Jesus Christ...It happens to our matter of today that these people...already determined to send our superiors...never-theless they will return within a short time here in the Sudan.’<sup>653</sup> As I argue in the next chapter that Southern Christians later positioned themselves as scions of the national peculiarity emblematic of the Biblical Israelites, this likening of the

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<sup>650</sup> Oliver Allison, *Through Fire and Water*. London: Church Missionary Society, 1976; 1.

<sup>651</sup> ACR A/95/1/12, pp. 1-2.

<sup>652</sup> ‘Third Sunday Lent. Gospel Quotations. [March 1 or March 21, [1964]]’, in SSNA TD 102, Folder SCR.46.A.1 Vol. II [Summer 2012 designation], [p. 47]. This document has ‘Torit, 21<sup>st</sup>. March, 1964.’ on the bottom but has ‘March, 1<sup>st</sup>. at 4 7 pm.-8 pm.’ elsewhere on the single-page document. That the speaker was a priest is inferred by other documents located close to this one relating to a similar theme with identical dates relating words by a speaker named ‘Native Father Martin’.

<sup>653</sup> SSNA TD 102, Folder SCR.46.A.1 Vol. II [Summer 2012 designation], ‘The Sermon Spoken by Native Father Martin During the [Time] of Mass at 9.30 a.m.’; p. 1.

Abboud regime to murderous Jews presents a dilemma of sorts. This notwithstanding, it is important to note that some had begun to liken the contemporary plight of Southern Christians to the sufferings of the early Church.

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The increasingly dire situation facing Southern Sudan not only spurred protests and the creation of a formalized movement in the SANU and Anyanya but also a stream of religious thought that used spiritual and Biblical language to criticize the Abboud government. A vital development during this period was the effort to reconfigure the relationship between subject and ruler by drawing from a range of historical antecedents—including the early Church under Rome—to deploy a new range of images and archetypes to vilify the national government. By the passage of the Missionary Societies Act some expressed that Khartoum had become evil. This critical change of perception paved the way for the stream of thought that Providence would eventually liberate Southern Sudan.

The next chapter continues this analysis of religious thought by its continued development in the ensuing years of the First Civil War. More specifically, it discusses the ways in which people from the South spiritualized the conflict and recognized the role of God's Providence in working out their liberation.

**Chapter Five**  
**The Blended Discourse of Nationalism and Providence, 1963-1972**

“Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, Our home to foreigners...  
With our lives at gun point we are cruelly beaten with fire...  
Arabs rule over us; there is none to deliver us from their hands...  
Women are vanishing in the South, virgins in the towns of the South.  
Southerners are just shot dead...  
The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to moaning. [sic]  
The crown has fallen from our head...for these things our eyes have grown dim;  
for the South is devastated; Arabs roam over it.  
But thou, O lord, dost reign for ever; thy crown endure [sic] to all generations.  
Why dost thou forget us for ever; why dost thou so long forsake us!  
Restore us thyself, O’lord, that we may be restored!”<sup>654</sup>

Jeremiah composed the Book of Lamentations six centuries before the birth of Christ. There the Weeping Prophet bemoaned Israel’s transgressions, God’s righteous indignation that had wrought Jerusalem’s destruction, and the subsequent Jewish exile to Babylon. Despite Israel’s claim to being God’s peculiar nation its sins would not go unpunished. This theme notwithstanding, Jeremiah’s underlying theme is that God had not forsaken His people and that Providence was working in the midst of their suffering.<sup>655</sup> Nehemiah would rebuild Jerusalem’s walls. Cyrus would liberate the exiles from captivity. God would lead His people back to their Promised Land. During the Second Sudanese Civil War a group of hymns emerged known as *diet ke guom*, or Songs of Suffering. Unlike the majority of hymns from the ECS (Episcopal Church of Sudan) Dinka Church that expressed confidence in God’s saving power over the oppressive *jak*,

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<sup>654</sup> P.K. Mabuong, ‘Southern Leaders Remember the South’ *SANU Youth Organ Monthly Bulletin*. Issue No. 2, November 1967; 16-17.

<sup>655</sup> ‘Lamentations’, *Life Application Study Bible*, New Living Translation. Second Edition. Tyndale House Publishers, In. Carol Stream, Illinois. 2007; 1292-1293, 1305.

the *diet ke guom* expressed doubt, fear, and hopelessness. Though Church leaders were reluctant to give such dirges public recognition, Sudanese Christians used Lamentations Chapter Five to convey their sense of grief and loss.<sup>656</sup>

The verses included above, however, were not authored during the Second Civil War but are instead taken from the November 1967 issue of the English periodical *Youth Organ*. There P.K. Mabuong echoed Jeremiah's sorrow for Israel by borrowing verses into Lamentations Chapter Five to describe the troubles facing Southern Sudan. Produced by the Khartoum's SANU (Sudan African National Union) Youth, the same *Youth Organ* issue that published Mabuong's poem included articles on the upcoming elections, setbacks in Arab diplomacy, education, and a statement from SANU Secretary for Education, Youth and Culture Ezekiel M. Kodi.<sup>657</sup> Youth were a particularly important demographic for the SANU which—in addition to launching an extensive campaign of 'political mobilization and sensitization'—focused on building youth as a core group with which to change the emphasis from 'Arabism to Sudanism or Africanism in the future.'<sup>658</sup> During the 1960s many Jieng boys and young men left the South for Northern Sudanese urban centers, and as black youth sought opportunities in largely Muslim and Arab settings many found a sense of solidarity in Catholic and Protestant "clubs".<sup>659</sup> Club

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<sup>656</sup> William Anderson, Roland Werner, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment: The History of the Southern Church Across 2000 Years*. 1<sup>st</sup> reprint [2001]. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000; 560 (see also fn. 45 on 360). Though I have yet to identify when the first Dinka translation of Lamentations in Sudan was completed, the first book of the Bible translated into Dinka-Agar (Cic) occurred in 1866. See J. Persson, *In Our Own Languages: The Story of Bible Translation in Sudan* (Nairobi, 1997 [1998 reprint]), appendix.

<sup>657</sup> 'A Statement by Ezekiel M. Kodi, SANU Secretary for Education, Youth & Culture, and M.P.', *SANU Youth Organ Monthly Bulletin*. Issue No. 2 (November 1967); 20.

<sup>658</sup> Lual A. Deng, *The Power of Creative Reasoning: The Ideas and Vision of John Garang*. Bloomington: iUniverse, 2013; 106.

<sup>659</sup> Marc R. Nikkel, 'Christian Conversion among the Jieng Bor', in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan: Papers from an International Conference at Yale, May 1999* (Faith in Sudan, 12). Yusuf Fadl Hasan and Richard Gray (eds.). Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2002; 163.

attendance meant learning to read the vernacular language and studying the Bible. The majority converted to Christianity.<sup>660</sup> It is possible that Mabuong was one such youth.

Mabuong—perhaps one such Southerner who fled to the North and participated in a Christian club in Khartoum—was attempting to use the Bible to heighten the sensitivities of SANU supporters and *Youth Organ* readers. Mabuong transformed the South into a new Zion by replacing the words ‘Judah’, ‘Zion’, and ‘Mount Zion’ from Jeremiah’s text with ‘the South’.<sup>661</sup> That piece was one of many attempts made during the war to spiritualize the circumstances facing southern Sudan. In addition to the substance of such efforts, the composition of the audience to which such sentiments were addressed sheds light on their purpose. While in some instances Sudanese were addressing themselves or their colleagues privately, in other occasions their thoughts were conveyed to international actors like the Pope and *Grass Curtain* magazine. The use of religious idioms, furthermore, was not the exclusive preserve of ecclesiastical thinkers but also laypeople that include Anyanya leader Joseph Lagu and former priest-turned-rebel Angelo Tutuo (see next chapter). There was a three-fold purpose of framing themselves as God’s oppressed people in a Providentially-arranged narrative of oppression and liberation: clarifying the true nature of the conflict, providing encouragement that victory was assured, and to win support from the outside world. It was perhaps because of such sentiments expressed by the likes of Mabuong that the SANU received financial support from international Christian bodies.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>660</sup> Nikkel, ‘Christian Conversion’, 163.

<sup>661</sup> Mabuong’s version seems to combine the English Standard Version and the Authorized King James Version. See both versions of Lamentations 5.

<sup>662</sup> Øystein H. Rolandsen, ‘The Making of the Anya-Nya Insurgency in the Southern Sudan, 1961-64’ *Journal of East African Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (May 2011), 217.

Religious thought also provided an important spiritual hue to the racial dynamics of the war. Mabuong was not alone in linking Arabs—the racial Other—to spiritual or Biblical oppression, as some expressed that the conflict was spiritual warfare being waged in the physical realm. In this thread Arabs were positioned as inhuman, evil agents being used by Satan to war against God’s people. While some Southerners went great lengths to argue that the war was not a religious war, the preponderance of moments in which Southerners spiritualized aspects of the war illustrates that many understood their circumstances through a spiritual framework. Religious thought became a space for Southerners to articulate the extent of racial division and hostility.

Through a series of calculated insertions, Christians in Southern Sudan likened the situation to circumstances that faced the Biblical Nation of Israel. Southerners were positioned as scions of a peculiarity that distinguished Old Testament Israel as their circumstances were likened to those related to its history with Egypt and Babylon. While the government and its soldiers were linked with oppression, Southerners were marked as God’s chosen people destined for national liberation. This chapter contends that while Southern students, politicians, and others moved to define southern Sudan as a Black African nation, others like Jerome Siri, Joseph Lagu, and Paolino Doggale contributed to the construction of a liberatory current of religious thought. Such figures maintained that Providence was working on the South’s behalf and would lead Southerners to final victory.<sup>663</sup> These references not only encouraged the idea of an imagined community

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<sup>663</sup> I credit the 1985 Kairos Document, a theological treatise written in apartheid South Africa, as the chief interlocutor through which my argument was formed (I intend to expound on this fully in my introductory chapter). The KD authors mention that every theology requires a symbol of evil, mentions the evil nature of Biblical regimes like Rome and Babylon, and positions God with a primary task of liberating the oppressed. At one point it frames the South African conflict not as a racial one but rather between the oppressor (the state) and oppressed (Black South Africans). See the ‘Challenge to the church: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa. The Kairos Document, 1985’ at

united by race, politics, and spiritual experience but also positioned God as an active agent working for the South's benefit. Israel's history was repeatedly summoned to describe the South's tribulations while a Black, African identity was appropriated to articulate its distinctions from the North. This publicly and privately constructed narrative of oppression, divine intercession, and ultimate victory provides a lens into the ways in which Southerners were thinking about history and national definition. They could not only claim to share a racial and cultural identity (Black and African) but also the spiritual experience of oppression. Just as the Bible speaks to the 'crowning' of His people at the end of time, God would restore the crown that had fallen from Southerners' heads in Mabuong's lament with spiritual liberation and material victory in the war. This thought foreshadowed the dissemination of a related theology on a broader scope in the Second Civil War through the *SPLM/SPLA Update*.

#### Arabization and Islamicization Continued

Sudan's Arabization policies in the latter stages of the war were driven by its continued investment in maintaining a pro-Arab position in foreign affairs, particularly with the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict. The Middle Eastern conflict mattered to Sudanese actors insofar as it gave the government an occasion to prove itself as an Arab nation abroad while it sought to fashion itself in the same manner domestically. With an influx of Arab support for Khartoum's efforts against the Anyanya, the Anyanya in turn found it politically strategic to curry Israeli support.

Sudan's relationship with Israel had not always been sour. In 1954, as the Condominium was progressing towards independence, the Sudanese leadership initiated

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[<http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/kairos-document-1985-0>]. Thus, one of my larger arguments in the dissertation is that the tenor of religious thought in 20<sup>th</sup> century South Sudan is related in some respects to the Black Theologies that emerged in the United States and South Africa (though not identical).



ties with Israel through British intermediaries. Following independence in 1956 and the Suez Crisis later that year, a sign of worsening relations may have been evidenced when an attempt to arrange a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Sudanese leader ‘Abdallah Khalil in 1957 appeared to come up short. With the coup d’état the following year that brought Ibrahim Abboud to power, Khartoum’s secret ties with Israel were severed.<sup>664</sup> Col. Gamal Abdel Nasir, the champion of Pan-Arabism, visited the Sudan in November 1960 to commemorate the second anniversary of the 1958 coup. This trip included a journey south to Juba and Nimule.<sup>665</sup> In 1967 Sudan joined nine other Arab states in severing diplomatic ties with Germany after it had exchanged ambassadors with Israel, and with the Six-Day War that June came more showings of Arab support. Sudan cut diplomatic ties with the Britain and the US (restored in 1968 and 1972, respectively) and sent military personnel to support Egypt’s efforts.<sup>666</sup> The Khartoum Summit of August 1967 represented the height of Sudanese Arabism during the civil war. The Summit addressed several matters but is known chiefly for its resolution on future Arab-Israeli relations: that Arab countries would unite to force Israel’s withdrawal from the occupied territories, an insistence on Palestinian rights, and that no peace, recognition, or negotiations with Israel would be made. Sudan’s choice for the Summit was considered a political victory for Prime Minister Mahgoub, who desired

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<sup>664</sup> Yossi Alpher, *Periphery: Israel’s Search for Middle East Allies*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015; 30 and ‘Chronology’ in Richard A. Lobban Jr, Robert S. Kramer and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Third Edition. Lanham, and London: The Scarecrow Press (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85), 2002; xlvi.

<sup>665</sup> Joseph Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State: From Hope to Ruin*. Omdurman: MOB Center for Sudanese Studies, Omdurman Ahlia University, 2006; 74.

<sup>666</sup> For the preceding information see ‘Arab-Israeli Conflict’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 27-28.

a role in settling Arab disputes.<sup>667</sup> In October of that year Fakhreddine Mohamed, Sudan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivered a scathing critique of Israel before the General Assembly. 'It is our firm conviction', Mohamed charged, 'that if the United Nations had acted in accordance with the principles of the Charter, it would not have failed to condemn Israel's aggression and demand the unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli troops of occupation...'<sup>668</sup>

Sudan's pro-Arab stance was reciprocated by several nations that offered military support to Khartoum to aid its war effort. In August 1965 Kuwaiti Finance Minister Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir described the Southern independence movement as "imperialist and Zionist" while announcing that an approximately £5 million loan would be given 'to help its "sisterly Arab country" preserve "the unity of its territory."<sup>669</sup> Following the Israeli victory Egypt, Libya, and Syria talked with Sudan about the possibility of forming a federation, and the fruits of the agreement included Egyptian and Libyan support in the form of troops on the ground.<sup>670</sup> Such pledges of Arab support illustrated that Sudan's membership in the Arab League and other efforts to ally itself with the Arab world were yielding tangible results. More importantly, al-Jabir's quote showed one way in which the war was viewed not just domestically but regionally as one with important ramifications for all Arabs.

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<sup>667</sup> For the information concerning the 1967 summit, see 'Khartoum Summit of 1967' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 157 and David W. Lesch, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; 215.

<sup>668</sup> For quote see SAD 105/95/20, 'Statement by His Excellency Sayed Fakhreddine Mohamed Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations. Delivered at the XXII Session of the General Assembly, United Nations Tuesday, 10 October, 1967'. See SAD 105/95/20-22 for the anti-Israeli tone of Mohamed's speech mentioned here.

<sup>669</sup> 'The Church in the World' *The Tablet* (18 September 1965); 1045.

<sup>670</sup> ACR.A/98/4/11, 'Brief Report on the Life of the S. Refugees Bordering North-East Congo and North-West Uganda' [1971], p. 1.

Khartoum's efforts to align itself with the Arab world were coupled by the creation of institutions, programs, and initiatives that intended to frame the country as an Islamic state. The sectarian nature of Northern politics translated into voter mobilization along religious lines and resulted in sectarian parties promoting Islamicization in the South. The Islamist movement in Sudan appeared in the 1950s as the Muslim Brotherhood, and during that decade Islamicization was presented as necessary for establishing national unity. By the 1960s each of the major parties had begun to advocate for the creation of an Islamic state, and the Brotherhood was renamed the Islamic Charter Front (ICF). With political forces encouraging different ideologies, the push for Islamist politics increased and led to an ICF-led campaign to write Sudan's first constitution along Islamic lines. In 1969 Gafaar Nimeiri became president through a coup that tried to block the draft constitution that would establish an Islamic state (though he would later adopt the process that resulted in the imposition of sharia law in the 1980s).<sup>671</sup> Despite his leftist coup Sudan still decided to join the inaugural cohort of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Similar to the way that Sudan displayed its pro-Arab stance with regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict, its decision to join the OIC—established in September 1969 after the arson of Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque—can be interpreted as a move to more deeply entrench itself politically with the Arab and Islamic worlds as an Arab-Islamic state.<sup>672</sup>

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<sup>671</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars: Peace or Truce*. Revised Edition. Rochester, Suffolk, and Kampala: James Currey, Boydell & Brewer Inc., and Fountain Publishers, 2011; 35; Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Alsir Sidahmed, *Sudan*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005 [published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library in 2005]; 50-51; Kevin M. DeJesus, 'Democratic Unionist Party (DUP),' in Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban Jr., and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 124.

<sup>672</sup> See Kramer et al., *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, xli; Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, 'About OIC' [[http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv2/page/?p\\_id=52&p\\_ref=26&lan=en](http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv2/page/?p_id=52&p_ref=26&lan=en)]. Consulted 26 August 2014. The African nations that joined Sudan as inaugural OIC members were Chad, Tunisia,

### Reactions to the 'Arab Menace'

Southern reactions to government policy were marked by rejection. Two of the most important conclusions to emerge from the maelstrom of sentiments were that they were integral members of Black Africa and that the conflict was political, not religious. These streams represent critical elements of the intellectual milieu from which the religious thought I discuss later emerged.

Just as the Arab-Israeli conflict mattered to Khartoum, Southerners like leading Anyanya figure Joseph Lagu were invested in Middle Eastern developments. With Sudan in the world news and the Southern Sudanese movement gaining sympathy abroad, Lagu followed events in the news with his transistor radio (he recounted, for example, that news of Kenyan and Zanzibari independence were repeatedly broadcast over BBC, Radio Uganda, and the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation). Through access to different media forms Southerners like Lagu were far from oblivious to contemporary world events. SANU leader Fr. Saturnino Lohure had books on the Cyprian Eoka and Che Guevara's movement in Latin America and Cuba (which Lagu read). A former student of Kwajok Intermediate School remembered gathering around the school radio to listen to BBC broadcasts summarizing exchanges between Krushchev and President Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. All leaders in the initial Anyanya groups were issued such radios, and popular stations among them included the BBC, Radio Voice of the Gospel, and Cologne's Voice of Germany.<sup>673</sup>

One evening Lagu received news about a developing situation in the Middle East. War had broken out between Israel and the Arab states. He recognized that that if that

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Algeria, Senegal, Somalia, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Egypt, Morocco, Mauritania, and Niger. See OIC, [<http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv2/states/>]. Consulted 26 August 2014.

<sup>673</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 117, 118, 120 and Jacob J. Akol, *I Will Go the Distance: The Story of a 'Lost' Sudanese Boy of the Sixties*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2005; 244-245.

war continued the Northern Sudanese—who regarded themselves as Arabs—would lend their support, which would in turn provoke Israeli retaliation. With a common foe the situation could be exploited in way that benefitted the Anyanya. Considering this fortuitous development Lagu saw the 1967 war as nothing short of divine intervention.<sup>674</sup>

‘I passed the news on to my people saying that the good Lord had not forgotten us, and that He has his own peculiar ways of caring for South Sudan. As I recall, I said in my statement, “My dear brothers, be cheerful. When we first entered the bush we went with our bare hands, with rudimentary weapons. God, who moves in his mysterious ways, caused arms that...were never meant for us, available for our use...Now, just as we are running short of the ammunition for those weapons, another opportunity seems to be on the horizon. We shall definitely get something out of this Arab-Israeli war. So let us be cheerful...We are not a forgotten people by God the Almighty.”<sup>675</sup>

It can be ascertained that the ‘people’ who comprised his audience were fellow Anyanya soldiers, illustrating a moment in which the Southern commander informed other freedom fighters that God was on their side and that a conflict hundreds of miles away was Providentially-arranged for their benefit. Lagu called on the Israeli embassies in Nairobi and Kampala in search of support and presented a narrative of the Arab oppression of Africans. In the coming years Israel did provide the liberation movement with material support. After visiting Israel personally the first Israeli mission traveled to Lagu’s base in Southern Sudan at Owiny Kibul. Israelis under former IDF paratroop officer David Ben-Uziel trained a Southern military force, arranged for weapons and supplies to be dropped, and oversaw a goodwill effort in the form of a medical team and field hospital. Israeli assistance extended to the field of propaganda. From 1969-70 Yossi Alpher was in charge of producing and distributing (primarily within Africa) pro-Anyanya, anti-Khartoum

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<sup>674</sup> Lagu, *Sudan: Odyssey Through a State*, 191-192

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid*, 191-192

propaganda. Produced in Tel Aviv, Alpher created pamphlets and a type of bush newspaper. The materials were mailed from Kampala and Nairobi 'to local newspapers, foreign journalists, and international diplomats based in East Africa. The idea was to boost the armed struggle in the bush by putting the Anya Nya "on the map" with no traces whatsoever of Israel'.<sup>676</sup>

It is tempting to presume that Israeli support for the Anyanya was rooted in a kind of Judeo-Christian solidarity against Islam (with a Jewish state, waging war against several majority-Muslim states, supporting a guerrilla movement aimed against an Islamic government). This sentiment is however absent from the scholarly record and my personal correspondence with Alpher. From the Israeli perspective its support for the Anyanya was rooted in response to Sudanese President Jafaar Nimeiri's support for Egypt and anti-Israeli position (a Sudanese brigade was positioned on the Suez Canal until 1972). It benefitted Israel for a significant portion of Sudanese armed forces to be focused on the South, with Mossad head Zvi Zamir believing that Sudan's threat against Israel at the Canal and the Red Sea would be minimized by a more powerful force in Southern Sudan. Ali Mazrui contends that there was also the belief that the Sudanese army's distraction by a Southern war could necessitate a partial diversion of the Egyptian army to Northern Sudan. Israel was not really invested or concerned with the possible attainment of Southern Sudanese self-rule.<sup>677</sup> 'The Israeli public', Alpher explained to me, 'knew virtually nothing' of the South's fight with the Sudanese government.<sup>678</sup>

Southern Sudanese similarly seemed to be keenly aware of the political, rather than

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<sup>676</sup> Information after the block quotation comes from Alpher, *Periphery*, 33-34, 35, 36 (quotation comes from 36).

<sup>677</sup> See Alpher, *Periphery*, 35 (and 34 for further information on Israeli motivations) and Joel Peters, *Israel and Africa: The Problematic Relationship*. London: The British Academic Press, 1992; 9 (where information and Mazrui reference are located).

<sup>678</sup> Yossi Alpher questionnaire

religious, reasons for an alliance with Israel. As Jacob J. Akol stated in a 1971 edition of *Grass Curtain* magazine (a publication discussed further in this chapter), ‘That the Arabs have to link us with World Zionism is not surprising. The Israelis and the South Sudanese are at war with the same enemy, and thus are both assumed to be essentially interested in each other’s movements for reasons of survival...’ This quotation was part of his larger piece in which he levied a vociferous argument against the notion that the war was being waged on religious grounds.<sup>679</sup> When I asked Alpher if he or others viewed themselves as being religiously connected with the South Sudanese he responded with an answer that indicated a more primary racial element:

‘There was not a specific Jewish-Christian angle, but more an angle of two peoples facing the same Arab oppressor. The emphasis was more on the Arabs as a people and the Southerners as oppressed non-Arab peoples. We were also keenly aware that Southern Christians were both Catholics and Protestants but that many Southerners were animists, not Christians.’<sup>680</sup>

Aside from his role in procuring Israeli assistance, Lagu’s significance in the war effort as an organizational unifier cannot be overstated. Although the name Anyanya would by the late 1960s be universally accepted or applied to all guerilla groups fighting against the government (or ‘Arab menace’), it was not at all times a ‘unified’ front. For a lengthy period guerrillas organized themselves along ethnic lines and proclaimed “republics” that represented quite restricted locales (examples include Samuel Abujohn’s “Sue River Republic” in Zande country in Western Equatoria and Akuot Atem’s “Anyidi Republic” in the Upper Nile’s Bor District). Added to such ethnic division and self-proclaimed republics was the cooperation of certain ethnic groups with Khartoum. The

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<sup>679</sup> Jacob J. Akol, ‘What we are, and are not, fighting for’ *Grass Curtain* Vol. 2 No. 2 (October 1971) [quote comes from 25, line of argumentation about religion and the war from 26].

<sup>680</sup> Yossi Alpher questionnaire

government gave Nuer arms to fight the Dinka Anyanya in the Upper Nile Province in the mid-1960s and also gave arms to the Murle to fight Anyanya (Nuer and Dinka) as the guerrilla movement expanded beyond ethnic lines. The militias increasingly attacked civilians accused of supporting the guerrillas, who in turn organized their own defenses as Anyanya allies. In perhaps the most extreme manifestation of this sectarian violence the national civil war in the Bahr al-Zerag area had by the end of the war become a virtual Nuer civil war.<sup>681</sup> It was only until the war's waning years that guerrilla armies became fully integrated at the provincial level and started to effectively work with one another regionally. The Anyanya army was unified in 1970 largely because of Lagu.<sup>682</sup>

In these ways, then, it is crucial to note that through various ethnic groups may have been fighting the same enemy in Khartoum, this did not translate to unity in the war's early stages. The fact that the Nuer and the Murle accepted government arms to fight other ethnic groups further typifies that a firm sense of a shared 'Southern' identity was far from realized in the wake of the Torit Mutiny and rising anti-government grievances. In a roundabout way, however, the reality that the Anyanya grew stronger as civilians—being attacked by militias—allied with the Anyanya suggests that ethnic division actually fueled the Anyanya's position as a unified force. Thus, while the First War did witness the emergence of a centralized fighting force, it also portended the kind of ethnic division that would wrack Southern Sudan in the Second Civil War.

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<sup>681</sup> Douglas J. Johnson and Gerard Prunier, 'The Foundation and Expansion of the Sudan People's Liberation Army,' in *Civil War in the Sudan*, ed. M.W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga. London: British Academic Press, 1993; 119.

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid*, 118-119.



Organizational divisions notwithstanding, many in the South understood their conflict as a racial war pitting Arab oppressors against non-Arab (African) oppressed. In some respects the element of overt racial conflict was evident as far back as the Torit Mutiny, as the previous chapter included an anecdote from the disturbances in which a mob screamed for the death of one woman because of her potential to give birth to more Arabs. Similar episodes reinforced the notion that a state of racial war existed. Steven Wöndu is an Anyanya veteran who went on to graduate from Makerere University, serve as Sudanese Ambassador to Japan, and work as South Sudan's Auditor General.<sup>683</sup> In his recollections of the 1964 Black Sunday riot he wrote that there 'a racial war broke out between Northerners and Southerners...Babies' heads, we were told, were smashed against concrete walls. The bellies of pregnant women were slit open...'<sup>684</sup> Women and girls during the Juba Massacre were said to have been raped in broad daylight.<sup>685</sup> In 1967, when at the end of meetings that resolved a dispute, a female chief pronounced that all marriageable daughters in East Equatoria Province elope so that they could 'conceive and bring-forth all baby sons, so that they come to continue to fight the endless war.'<sup>686</sup> Each of these episodes illustrated the degree to which physical reproduction and dominance over the female body became increasingly important for the actors involved.

Southern leaders expressed that all Africans needed to take heed to the potential dangers facing the continent as a result of Arab oppression. The SACNU, in its 1963

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<sup>683</sup> Steven Wöndu, *From Bush to Bush: Journey to Liberty in South Sudan* (Kenway autobiographies, 22). Nairobi: Kenway Publications, 2011.

<sup>684</sup> Wöndu, *From Bush to Bush*, 42-43.

<sup>685</sup> [Aggrey Jaden], 'Report from the Sudan African Liberation Front Office' *Voice of Southern Sudan* v. 3 no. 2 (October 1965), 11.

<sup>686</sup> Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Shaping a Free Southern Sudan: Memoirs of Our Struggle 1934-1985*. [Limuru, Kenya]: Loa Catholic Mission Council, 2002; 319.

letter to Milton Obote congratulating Uganda on its independence, warned that if Sudanese Arabs succeeded in their mission

‘the whole of Africa will be prostrate to Arab domination. We therefore consider that the resistance of southern Sudanese to Arab domination is the resistance of the Negro to any domination. Such resistance is thus part and parcel of the great struggle for liberation in Africa...our movement needs to be supported by all the Negro governments of Africa because it is our part of Africa which first comes face to face with the Arab menace.’<sup>687</sup>

This positioning of southern Sudan as a key locus in a continent-wide struggle against Arab oppression was echoed by Chairman Edward Nyiel Abod of the Union of Southern Sudan[ese] Student and Youth, an organization based in Leopoldville. In his letter ‘To All African Student Organisations’ he lamented the negligence of African states in responding substantively to ‘the Arab reign of terror in Southern Sudan’. Abod argued that all Africans needed to pay attention to what had transpired because they shared a common fate and threat to their survival. Arabs would not stop at southern Sudan, he opined, but they instead desired to control the entire Nile Basin. He added that this Arab oppression was not different from the white domination of Southern Africa.<sup>688</sup> Along with the military language of an impending Arab ‘occupation’ of the Nile Basin, the argument made by Abod and the SACNU that the Southern situation had ramifications for all of Africa comprised a major part of the discourse positioning southern Sudan as a constituent piece of Black Africa. Abod, for instance, included in his letter that ‘We Southern Sudanese students...appeal to all the students ad [and] youth of Africa. You are...privileged to witness the achievement of complete freedom...for our Mother Africa.

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<sup>687</sup> *SAD*.817/10/57-59; SACNU to Milton Obote, February 20, 1963.

<sup>688</sup> ACR.A/94/10/1; E.N. Abod, ‘Statement by Southern Sudanese Students and Youth “To All African Student Organisations”’ [1964]; 5.

Come to our support...the problem at issue is not merely a local one but touches the heart of Africa'.<sup>689</sup> The line of thought will be further discussed momentarily.

Driven to prevent a new chapter in the history of Sudanese slavery, Southerners cited Arab intentions to enslave Blacks as a real motivation driving government policies. Slavery, as a result, became a central element to the racial war paradigm. The SACNU implored Obote that liberated African nations were now responsible for helping to free those Africans still struggling under a foreign yoke. Arguing that Sudanese nationalism was part of the Pan-Arab movement and had never positioned itself with Africanism, Southerners were suffering under a yoke akin to their ancestral bondage: 'in the Sudan the Arab invaders are holding the four million Negroes in chains, who[se] grandparents they had in the last century raided and sold into slavery...they [Arabs] call the great nilotics and nilo-hamites, verily the Negroes here, slaves.'<sup>690</sup> A similar statement came from President Ibrahim Nyigilo of the Southern Sudan Christian Association. In January 1962 refugees in East Africa established a sister organization called the Sudanese Christian Association in East Africa (SCAEA). Headquartered in Kampala, committees were established in locations where Sudanese refugees lived, including Kenya and Tanganyika. Though it took on the appearance of an organization aimed at assisting refugees, it was in reality the financing body of the liberation movement.<sup>691</sup> Nyigilo, in his letter to the UN Secretary-General, African Heads of State, and 'Heads of Christian Churches', remarked that his organization could not accept national unity; Africans—as the country was then comprised—would merely remain a slave. Fighting for freedom

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<sup>689</sup> ACR.A/90/3/1; Edward Abod, 'To All African Student Organisations', 1-4.

<sup>690</sup> *SAD*.817/10/57-59; SACNU to Milton Obote, February 20, 1963.

<sup>691</sup> Ga'le, *Shaping a Free Southern Sudan*, 233, 242. I believe that the Southern Sudan Christian Association and the Sudanese Christian Association in East Africa—each based in Kampala—are one and the same.

was, therefore, their only choice.<sup>692</sup> The extent to which the theme of slavery was proliferated is illustrated in a story shared by Wöndu, who recalled that as a child there was a celebration each November 17<sup>th</sup> to commemorate Ibrahim Abboud's rise to power. One of the activities to mark the occasion was a singing contest among the schools, and though trophies were normally awarded quite liberally his school was not awarded a single trophy in 1962. The reason could be found in choirmaster Maika Lokonga's decision to select David Garrik's 1759 'Heart of Oak' rather than a patriotic song praising Abboud. Wöndu noted that though he and his classmates were oblivious of the circumstances and lacked a true understanding of the song, they proudly chanted

'To honour we call you,  
As free men, not slaves  
For who are so free  
As the sons of the waves...  
We will fight and will conquer  
Again and again'<sup>693</sup>

Though Garrik's allusion to slavery was made within the context of anti-impressment—in his view impressing a sailor would make him a slave<sup>694</sup>—it is useful to consider Lokonga's decision to presumably use the song as an argument against the Abboud regime. Wöndu's memory of the episode, furthermore, offers a glimpse into the way that Southerners could at an early age be inculcated with the understanding that slavery was a terrible institution and, as such, was important to prevent. Finally, it represents another example of the way that historical antecedents—this time from mid-eighteenth century naval history—could be harnessed to fit the contemporary Southern

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<sup>692</sup> SAD.804/8/52-53, 56; Ibrahim Nyigilo, Southern Sudan Christian Association (Kampala) to Heads of Christian Churches, Heads of African States, and Secretary-General of the UN.

<sup>693</sup> Wöndu, *Bush*, 30. Heart of Oak's authorship and year were taken from the same page.

<sup>694</sup> Daniel J. Ennis, *Enter the Press-Gang: Naval Impressment in Eighteenth-Century British Literature*. Cranbury, NJ; London; Mississauga, On.; Associated University Presses, 2002; 92.

situation. A final illustration of the strong motivation to fend off slavery comes from Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, who used it to justify his decision to join the liberation movement in 1963. As a youth Severino had completed catechism instruction at the Loa Catholic Mission and was subsequently educated at the Loa Catholic Elementary School and Okaru Intermediate before attending a course at a government training center. Taking up government work, he fled to Uganda and joined the liberation movement once the South was plunged into political upheaval.<sup>695</sup> He indicates in his autobiography that the possibility of renewed enslavement influenced his decision to join the rebellion:

‘I had learned through my history lessons about Arab brutalities against our ancestors. In the Condominium Government I had thought those things were fictions from the past. When the political balance had changed and as soon as the so-called educated Arabs had assumed power...their administration confirmed that what their ancestors had done to ours were indeed fact, and that they intended to do the same to us...’<sup>696</sup>

As a testament to the argument that the war was a struggle against racial oppression, a stream of Pan-Africanism pervaded arguments that southern Sudan was a Black African entity. Southern Sudanese students were perhaps at the forefront of expressing such sentiments. With Southern student organizations located across the globe, the geographical expanse of these organizations reflected both the scope of the Southern Sudanese Diaspora and the keen interest amongst its youth in matters back home. Groups could be found on at least three continents: the Union of Southern Sudanese Students was based in Minneapolis, the first meeting of the Students Union of the Southern Sudan in Europe convened in Bologna, the Students’ Union of Southern Sudan issued its policy statement from Khartoum, and a Southern Sudan Students Union

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<sup>695</sup> Ga'le, *Shaping*, 17.

<sup>696</sup> *Ibid*, 218 (that the year was 1963 is taken from p. 215).

operated in Nairobi.<sup>697</sup> The Students Union of the Southern Sudan (SUSS) positioned itself as ‘an African Students’ Organisation based on the concept of Pan-Africanism’ that aimed to promote education among Southerners, condemned apartheid, and voiced support for liberation struggles in Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, and South-West Africa.<sup>698</sup> Students who migrated to neighboring countries could be useful as refugees capable of attracting foreign funding or by being recruited as soldiers.<sup>699</sup> Students from other African countries kept an eye on developments in southern Sudan, and in 1965 members of student organizations representing Malawi, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda wrote a joint letter to Mahgoub expressing concern about the conflict’s destructive effect in the South (with particular mention on education). The students’ resolutions included a protest against what it deemed the government’s Nazi-like genocidal methods, an argument that this violence threatened African unity, and a call upon their respective governments to raise the Southern issue at the upcoming OAU meeting.<sup>700</sup> When the Prime Minister’s 1965 East African goodwill tour traveled through Kenya, members of the Kenya United Students Organisation demonstrated at the Sudanese Embassy. Those same students petitioned Jomo Kenyatta to use his resources to find a solution to the Sudanese problem.<sup>701</sup>

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<sup>697</sup> See ACR.A/90/3/15, Dominic Mohamed, ‘Union of Southern Sudanese Students Since Bluffton ‘Progress Report’ (March 1971), 3; ACR.A/90/3/16, ‘The Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the Students Union of the Southern Sudan in Europe (S.U.S.S.E.) Bologna...March 26-27-28/1966’; ACR.A/90/3/13, ‘Students Union of the Southern Sudan Policy Statement (November 27, 1965) (p. 2); ACR.A/107/5/47, Peter M. Eyobo, Secretary General of Southern Sudan Student Union (from Nairobi) to Elders (August 12, 1965).

<sup>698</sup> ACR.A/90/3/13; “Students’ Union of the Southern Sudan (S.U.S.S.) Policy Statement” November 27, 1965; 1-2.

<sup>699</sup> Rolandsen, ‘The Making of the Anya-Nya Insurgency in the Southern Sudan, 1961-64’, 220.

<sup>700</sup> ACR.A/90/3/7; Letter written by Eric D. Ndovi (Malawi), Donatus Okolkwo (Nigeria), Atru Agez (Ethiopia), Roman Dalmas (Kenya), and John A. Ukel (Uganda) to Mohammed Mahgoub, July 22, 1965; 1-4.

<sup>701</sup> ‘Mahgoub Meets Demonstrations at Nairobi Airport’ *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 3, No. 2 (October 1965), p. 4.

In both name and objective, two of the most prominent political organizations in the liberation movement—the SANU and Azania Liberation Front—aligned themselves with Pan-Africanism. William Deng introduced the first issue of the SANU’s *Voice of Southern Sudan* by declaring that the paper was ‘dedicated to self-determination for the Southern Sudanese who are an unseparable [sic] part of Black Africa by race and culture’, with his definition of self-determination being that Southerners should be able to freely decide ‘whether they should become an independent nation within the framework of African unity or opt the other way by uniting with the North’.<sup>702</sup> SANU leaders tapped into Pan-Africanist sentiments in their letter to Nigerian Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa decrying the extradition of Southern refugees from Lagos by Sudanese authorities. That Nigerian police assisted these authorities added insult to injury for the letter writers as they expressed that such action was a flagrant slight to Black unity against racial oppression:

‘Such incident is also contrary to the spirit of Pan-Africanism, because, as Negroes like Nigerians, they could not be handed back to a government whose policies are based on racial superiority...In the so-called Republic of the Sudan today, the Arab degrades the Negro...We consider it humiliating for a sister country, like Nigeria...where the same Negro people whom the Arabs degrade in the Sudan enjoy dignity and sovereignty...should have been handed over to face death’.<sup>703</sup>

In a petition sent to the United Nations on behalf of all Southerners, the SACDNU stated that it had a mandate from Southerners to seek complete independence as the only

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<sup>702</sup> William Deng, March 9, 1963; in *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (April 1963), [1].

<sup>703</sup> SAD.951/5/2; July 23, 1964.

remaining option if federation was denied. To this end the SACDNU was convinced that Southerners wanted total independence ‘within the framework of Black African unity’.<sup>704</sup>

The Azania Liberation Front’s decision to use the name ‘Azania’—a Pan-African term derived from Ibn Battuta—was strategic. At one time the rebellion’s political committee considered the name ‘Fashoda land’ rather than Azania in recognition of Captain Jean-Baptiste Marchand, who in the late nineteenth century won Dinka support for his plan to separate the Upper Nile Valley from the influence of Mahdist Islam. His aspirations ended when the French decided to cede control of the region to the British at Fashoda, which was subsequently renamed Kodok. As one man explained to a French reporter, “Because you French yielded Fashoda to the English, our country is now integrated with Arab and Musulman Nubia. Otherwise, today, we should have been a French-speaking independent republic of Africa”.<sup>705</sup> Using the name ‘Fashoda’ would have hearkened to an unrealized colonial plan that could have altered the course of Southern history, while ‘Azania’ paid homage to an old East African kingdom described by the Greeks as an African region south of the Red Sea.<sup>706</sup> The decision to adopt the name Azania was another example of the way Southerners borrowed from historical antecedents in their attempts to re-write history: even though Marchand’s dream was never realized, the ALF could work towards making separation from the North a reality. To this end its Constitution was imbued with Black racial pride. Counting Fr. Saturnino among its membership, the ALF’s stated aims included the establishment of an independent African state from the three Southern provinces, eliminating tribalism and

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<sup>704</sup> SAD.804/8/77; Sudan African Closed Districts National Union (SACDNU) petition to United Nations [1963]

<sup>705</sup> ACR A/87/1/1 [Jean-François Chauvel, “The Sudan: Africa Bleeds” *Le Figaro*, March 30, 1966; p. 22.]

<sup>706</sup> See ACR.A/107/2/119; The Constitution of the ALF (Azania Liberation Front), 1 and Garraud, “The Sudan: an unknown war” *Le Figaro*, 24 March 1966; p. 4. [ACR.A/87/7/1]



regionalism, and obtaining self-sufficiency. Each of these aims were elements of its general project to establish an independent African nation in the South ‘so that the black man in this part of the continent may realise security, justice, welfare, and his lost human rights’.<sup>707</sup> The mention of tribalism and regionalism not hinted potential barriers that could preclude the formation of a united nation but perhaps specifically the SANU, which struggled with policy differences along ethnic, factional, and personal lines.<sup>708</sup> Uniting on the basis of a shared Black African heritage and identity could, according to this line of thought, mend such divisions.

Despite the salience of Pan-Africanism in political rhetoric there were dissenting views to the popular invocations of Pan-African solidarity. At least one leader, Fr. Saturnino, expressed concerns at the ideology’s influence on the Sudan. He argued that Pan-Africanism was dangerous to the Southern cause because some countries wanted to see Sudan—the first Sub-Saharan country to achieve independence from Great Britain—united: ‘Panafrikanism would wish to see a continental unity of Africa and would not like further divisions in the geographical setup of the existing countries.’<sup>709</sup> This was not merely one man’s opinion; indeed, despite the fact that colonial borders sliced through mountains, rivers, and ethnic groups, most African leaders were hesitant to tamper with them out of fear that redrawing the map would open up a Pandora’s Box of contestation. This conviction was perhaps best illustrated when the Organization of African Unity immediately recognized colonial-era borders when it was founded in May 1963.<sup>710</sup>

Saturnino had earlier written to another priest that he suspected that African countries

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<sup>707</sup> ACR.A/107/2/119; The Constitution of the ALF (Azania Liberation Front), 1. These aims were also included in an ALF membership form; see ACR.A/107/5/73, ‘Application Form for ALM Membership’, 1.

<sup>708</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008; 79.

<sup>709</sup> Saturnino to the Southern Front, ACR.A/107/2/124 [1963-1966], p. 3.

<sup>710</sup> Jeffrey Gettleman, ‘In Sudan, a Colonial Curse Comes Up for a Vote’ *The New York Times* (8 January 2011)

could help but were still influenced by foreign nations that were firmly opposed to seeing an independent Southern Sudan.<sup>711</sup> These statements suggest his thinking that Pan-Africanism was ultimately encumbered by non-African elements and that, as a result, Southern Sudan could not fully benefit from the support of other African nations. Saturnino acknowledged that Pan--Africanism would be welcomed if member states were ‘selfcontained [sic] and free from inlaid roots of dissention.’<sup>712</sup>

That other African liberation struggles seemed to garner more attention than the Sudanese situation irked some commentators, creating a situation whereby attempts to align the South within African unity were coupled by lamentations over its relative lack of attention continent-wide. Brazzaville’s *La Semaine* expressed surprise that the 1965 OAU Congress had not listened to the Southern argument that the Khartoum government should cease its genocidal acts. As the paper believed that the problem in Sudan was a racial one, it blasted the Congress for not condemning racism on the pretext that it did not want to meddle in the affairs of independent Sudan.<sup>713</sup> Rev. John Gatu, writing from Nairobi, opined that it was objectionable to argue that the Southern Sudan issue was an internal matter: ‘Why is the O.A.U. discussing Rhodesia? Why has...Sudan broken her diplomatic relations with Britain about Rhodesia...Are we to believe that because the [a]partheid policy of...South Africa effects just those in the Cape, the other African States must keep away and keep their mouths shut?’ To this Gatu added that the Sudan issue had been discussed in the Arab League but not in the OAU (Sudan was a member of both), to which he acknowledged that it was known that Arab countries were aiding

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<sup>711</sup> ACR.A/107/19/9; Saturnino to Rev. Fr. Bartolucci (3/9/62), p. 1.

<sup>712</sup> ACR.A/107/2/124; Saturnino Lohure to the Southern Front [1963-1966], p. 3.

<sup>713</sup> ‘The Church in the World’ *The Tablet* (27 November 1965); 1336.

the government's fight against the South.<sup>714</sup> Joseph Lagu expressed similar disappointment at the OAU's relative lack of attention on Southern Sudan to OAU Chairman and Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda. Writing on behalf of the Anyanya's AEGIS [Africans for Ending Genocide in Sudan] Committee, Lagu opined that Southerners had endured more suffering than all other African freedom movements together, 'yet the Organisation of African Unity will not even allow our story to be heard in its councils.'<sup>715</sup> The frustration and anger generated by the perception that southern Sudan was being consciously ignored was poetically expressed by Regina Akuany in an ALF memorandum to the September 1967 OAU Summit Conference in Kinshasha:

'I mourn my black brothers of the Southern Sudan...in our country, the Southern Sudan  
Our villages and...churches are laid waste and burned down...But most of all I lament  
Because we the Negroes of the Southern Sudan are abandoned  
By all the people who call themselves our "brothers"...the black people of Africa,  
They come together in the O.A.U...They come together at Dakar to celebrate Negritude,  
Why do they not come together  
To rescue us?'<sup>716</sup>

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The heavy emphasis on the war as a racial one, however, does not diminish the religious elements that were also at play. Indeed, the 1963 *The Problem of the Southern*

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<sup>714</sup>ACR.A/93/15/4; John Gatu, "Sudan Situation" (March 2, 1966); p. 1.

<sup>715</sup>'An Open Letter to His Excellency Kenneth Kaunda, President of the Republic of Zambia Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity. From a Commander of the Anya Nya', p. 1. [published pamphlet, though catalogued in ACR with E/674/3/2 designation]

<sup>716</sup>Regina Akuany, "A Lament by a Southern Sudanese Girl", taken from ALF memorandum to O.A.U. Summit Conference, Kinshasha, September 11, 1967. *Voice of Southern Sudan* (Supplement), April 15, 1969; 3.

*Sudan*—which listed William Deng and Joseph Oduho as authors<sup>717</sup>—provides an important glimpse into the pattern of thought that framed the war as a chapter in Sudan’s religious history. After outlining various aspects of the South’s position in the Condominium era and independence, the book shifts to a discussion of six ‘subjections’ heaved upon the South—political, administrative, educational, economic, social, and religious. The section on religious subjection concluded with a statement—borrowed from the 1961 *Sudan Almanac*—that during “the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Christianity was finally destroyed in North by Arab Muslims”, leading Oduho and Deng to ask whether Christianity in the South would now succumb in the same way.<sup>718</sup> Similar to the way that Christians inserted themselves into a script in which they were assured victory, *Problem* envisioned this war as an arena in which a great historical tragedy—the earlier ‘destruction’ of Christianity—could either be repeated or prevented.

There were important ways in which one’s Christian identity was very much related to their position and involvement in the war. Many Anyanya leaders were mission-educated Christians, and many soldiers converted to Christianity upon reaching Pilual after living in close proximity to Nuer Christians who had established the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCS) in Ethiopian Nuerland.<sup>719</sup> Anyanya soldiers infused

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<sup>717</sup> Despite the fact that Oduho and Deng grace *The Problem*’s cover, Richard Gray intimated that the manuscript was largely the work of Fr. Saturnino. Gray recalled that when he encountered Saturnino in Rome in 1962 the priest gave him a typescript which he felt could not be published under his name but rather Oduho’s (who was prepared to offer his name). When Gray returned to London Deng brought Gray another manuscript. ‘With the agreement of all three,’ Gray noted, ‘the texts were collated and published by the Institute of Race Relations, but essentially that little book was the work of Saturnino.’ See Richard Gray, ‘Some Reflections on Christian Involvement 1955-1972’, 119-120.

<sup>718</sup> Joseph Oduho and William Deng, *The Problem of the Southern Sudan* [London: Institute of Race Relations, Oxford University Press, 1963], 58 as taken from ACR.A/86/26, ‘The Southern Front Memorandum to O.A.U. on Afro-Arab Conflict in the Sudan’, 51 (quotation is taken from ACR.A/86/26); ‘Political Parties’ *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 347; Oduho and Deng, *Problem*, 58.

<sup>719</sup> Christiane Falge, ‘The Cultural Resilience in Nuer Conversion and a ‘Capitalist Missionary’” in *Changing Identifications and Alliances in North-East Africa: Sudan, Uganda and the Ethiopia-Sudan Borderlands*, Vol. III. Ed. Günther Schlee and Elizabeth E. Watson. Berghahn Books, 2009; 207.

their faith into their military regimen by marching to hymns like “The Bible is our gun”, and as many evangelists became soldiers Christianity increasingly became a unifying identity-marker for soldiers and laypeople. Anyanya veteran Stephen Kuey Mayan stated that “During Anyanya-I we were all Christians and we would always put God in front of fighting. Soldiers used to go to church. We prayed before fighting...Christianity was part of the struggle against Muslims.”<sup>720</sup> A contemporary lens into the Christian influence on Anyanya life comes from Jean-François Chauvel’s *The Sudan: Africa Bleeds*’ which was published in *Le Figaro* in March 1966. Chauvel describes the actions of Emidio Tafeng, an Anyanya leader who converted to Christianity while serving time for his alleged role in starting the Mutiny:<sup>721</sup>

‘A gold cross gleams around his neck. An order is given and all the “Anya Nya” lay down their arms...The “general” then raises his hands to the sky, imploring the protection of the Almighty, and using the leaves torn from a sacred tree he sprinkles water on the rifles, bows and spears...This is a very ancient rite of his own tribe, the Latuka...the only difference this evening being that the blessing of Jesus, the Christian God, is sought.’<sup>722</sup>

It is a striking example of the degree to which the violence of the first war could be sacralized not only in rhetoric but in ceremonial practice. It has elsewhere been argued that the common soldier’s Christian faith came to be assumed, and that conversion to Christianity was a public political statement that symbolized disapproval with the government. Said Rev. Duoth Dul, “accepting Christianity...was the fact that ‘coming

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<sup>720</sup> Ibid, 207; for this quotation Falge cites 2004 interview with Stephen Kuey Mayan.

<sup>721</sup> Jean-François Chauvel, ‘The Sudan: Africa Bleeds’ *Le Figaro*; p. 28 [ACR.A/87/7/1]. It should be noted that Tafeng converted to Christianity while serving prison for his participation in the mutiny. See Chauvel, “The Sudan: Africa Bleeds”, p. 28 [ACR.A/87/7/1].

<sup>722</sup> Ibid; p. 22.

out [becoming a rebel] to be a refugee' meant to join a religious movement".<sup>723</sup> The association between Christianity and the rebel forces was apparent to the Sudanese government, as illustrated by a letter from Bahr El Ghazal Provincial Commissioner Hassan Dafalla to Bishop Ireneo Dud lamenting the death of Fr. Barnaba Deng.<sup>724</sup> Commissioner Dafalla, after expressing bereavement for Fr. Deng's death, warned Bishop Dud that his clergymen should be wary of meddling in politics or associating in any way with the rebels. Curiously Dafalla stated that he would not object to their becoming politicians or Anyanya agents as long as they renounced their ecclesiastical work, but that it was 'highly intolerable for us, and...it is dangerous too for the church, to have amongst its staff, politicians disguised in holy dress.'<sup>725</sup>

While Christianity may have been a defining characteristic for many Anyanya soldiers, the Anyanya movement was in no ways officially Christian. As Anyanya veteran Rev. Eliaba Obed explained to me, Muslim participation in the force testified to this reality. Born into a Christian family, Obed was a student living in Uganda as a refugee when Obote announced that Sudanese refugees could not attend university. This impediment to his educational progress compelled him to join the Anyanya, and he went on to serve as a rebel for four years. Stating that it was a secular movement fighting for separation from the Arabs, Obed remembered that most soldiers were Christian but there were plenty of Muslims as well: 'Arabs did not care whether you were a Muslim or not,

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<sup>723</sup> Falge, 'The Cultural Resilience in Nuer Conversion and a "Capitalist Missionary"', 207-208; for this quotation Falge cites 2004 interview with Rev. Duoth Dul. For information on coming out, see same page range.

<sup>724</sup> A Comboni priest of Dinka Malwal background, Deng had the distinction of being ordained by Cardinal Giovanni Montini—the future Pope Paul VI—in 1959. Police mounted a deadly search for him after he was accused of assisting the rebels. Deng fled to Wau was eventually arrested, killed, and consumed by hyenas. See 'Barnaba Deng, mcej' in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From the Beginning to 2006. SCBC General Secretariat*—P.O. Box: 6011 Khartoum, 33.

<sup>725</sup> ACR.A/98/1/12; Hassan Dafalla to Bishop Ireneo Dud, 3 August 1965; 1-2.

[you are] a Black man...so it was a secular fight...it has nothing to do with Christianity or wanting to become Christians, no.’ He also stated that Muslims could pray without being questioned by Christians.<sup>726</sup>

His perception that government forces would readily kill any Black soldier despite their religious identity supports the claim that from the Southern perspective religious motivation was not a serious factor. The first issue of the SANU’s *Voice of Southern Sudan*<sup>727</sup> stated that Southerners did not believe that Christianity and missionaries were a major issue in the conflict but that “They are only scapegoats of Arab religious Chauvinism”. Referencing the reality that Muslims were among the strongest proponents of Southern liberation, the editorial argued that the Southern problem would not vanish even if the South became Muslim; rather, propaganda blasting missionary political involvement was merely meant to mislead African leaders. The article concluded by blasting political Islam and claiming that it did not encourage unity and mutual understanding in Africa.<sup>728</sup> Three Christian guerrillas expressed to *Le Figaro* correspondent Jean-Marie Garraud that “our struggle is not a religious one...Although it is for the Arabs, who have raised the banner of a Holy War against us and want to convert us to Islamism...We are nationalists, we don’t want to become Arabs. For centuries they have hunted us down in order to make slaves of us.”<sup>729</sup> To Obed’s point there are notable examples of Muslim service within both military and civilian arenas of

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<sup>726</sup> Interview with Eliaba Lako Obed; 11 September 2013.

<sup>727</sup> *Voice* was published from Britain with the help of missionaries, and the SANU appealed primarily to neighboring African states, various academics, churchmen and missionaries in Western Europe (the US to a lesser extent), the UN, OAU, and NGOs like the International Commission of Jurists. See Alexis Heraclides, *The Self-determination of Minorities in International Politics*. [Milton Park, New York]: Routledge, 1991 (transferred to Digital Printing 2010 [consulted online version]), 114.

<sup>728</sup> ‘Southern Sudan Today: A test case in Afro-Arab Co-operation’ *Voice of Southern Sudan*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (April 1963), Published by Sudan African National Union. 1 (1963/1964), 4, n.p.

<sup>729</sup> Jean-Marie Garraud, ‘The Sudan: an unknown war has been ravaging the Upper Valley of the Nile for three years’ *Le Figaro*, March 24, 1966; p. 5-6 [ACR.A/87/7/1]

the liberation movement: many former students of the Opari *khalwa* abandoned their Arab names and became soldiers, and a Muslim (Ali Batale) who had been a second lieutenant in the Sudanese Army became a guerrilla leader (though he converted to Christianity during the war<sup>730</sup>). The argument, then, was that one's Islamic identity could not dilute their Africanness. Furthermore, Islam could not Arabize an African. As one writer editorialized in the July 1964 *Voice*, 'We do not know why acceptance of Islam should make us more Arab than African. What can we learn from Modibo Keita and Ahmed Sekou Toure, African Moslems, who are foremost African...who ever though[t]...that they are Arabs because they happen to be Moslems?'<sup>731</sup> Finally, Jacob J. Akol—Secretary and Treasurer for the Southern Sudan Association—offered the following assessment of religion's role in the conflict in the October 1971 edition of *Grass Curtain*. Debunking both the centrality of Christianity's position in the war and the overall utility of religion in African politics, he wrote:

'we are fighting against...the Arab domination, not in defence of Christianity. The accusation that we are new black Crusaders, though serious, is laughable. Apart from the fact that Christianity has been successfully used by the colonialists to retard African progress, religion, be it Islam of [sic] Christianity, is regarded in black Africa today as very unsuitable fuel for a quick take-off towards TODAY...But to make things more complicated, the Christian missionaries were expelled from the South Sudan...The aim was to invite criticism and arouse sympathy from the Christian world—which is associated with neo-colonialism—so as to convince the rest of the world that our problem is purely religious. I am not suggesting that the African Christian, or Moslem, should not fight for his religion if threatened, though religion is but a part of life and therefore cannot be rigidly isolated from the struggle.'<sup>732</sup>

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<sup>730</sup> Ga'le, *Shaping*, 290 (fn. 8)

<sup>731</sup> 'Report from SANU Central Office' *Voice of Southern Sudan* Vol. 2 No. 2. (July 1964), 24.

<sup>732</sup> Akol, 'What we are, and are not, fighting for' *Grass Curtain* Vol. 2 No. 2 (October 1971); 26.



Thus, while racial and religious identities each played important roles in the ways Southerners reacted to Khartoum's policies, the idea of protecting a Black, African community against 'Arabs' from Northern Sudan appeared to be the liberation movement's dominant discourse. The war, in short, was not viewed as a modern Crusade but rather as a conflict between two races divided by history, politics, and culture (of which religion was an important but not, from the Southern perspective, the primary *casus belli*). However, as the last section of this chapter illustrates, many Southerners looked to God for solace and encouragement in politically significant ways. What followed was a religious ideology positioning God as a concerned observer and active intercessor on Southern Sudan's behalf.

#### The Providence of God in the First Civil War

On 23 July 1970 soldiers burned a grass church in the village of Banza, near the Sudan-Congolese border. Before the embers were kindled the congregation, comprised mainly of women and children, had been tied up. Some of the children who attempted to flee were reportedly cast back into the inferno by Arab soldiers who shouted "We shall kill you inside your chapel and your God shall come and save you." Over 50 people died.<sup>733</sup>

While the statement made by Arab soldiers in this grisly scene was certainly intended to be derogatory, many Southerners did carry the conviction that God had a palpable involvement in the war and investment in their welfare. Government attempts to inculcate the South with Islam and Arab culture gave way to violent military operations and atrocities that drove thousands to flee to neighboring countries. In October 1969 the

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<sup>733</sup> James Kabara, 'Slaughter in the Sudan' *Presbyterian Record* (April 1971), Vol. 95, No. 4; 16. [anecdote and quotation taken from that article].

Ecumenical Programme for Emergency in Africa reported that there were approximately 180,000 Sudanese refugees spread throughout several East African countries, West Cameroon, Europe, and the United States. The vast majority were exiled in Uganda and the Congo, which together housed an estimated 137,500.<sup>734</sup> Within this milieu of violence, rebellion, and exile a liberatory religious thought emerged in which refugees, mission students, clerics, Anyanya, and others positioned themselves as God's chosen people. A central component of this paradigm stipulated that God was concerned about the Southern plight and was working out their deliverance towards political sovereignty. This discourse was racialized in the sense that Arabs were positioned as requisite evils<sup>735</sup> while Southerners were conversely framed as God's special people analogous to the Israelites. This current of thought did not undermine the notion that the conflict was not religious—rather, it shows that Southerners reacted to and understood the war with Biblical idioms and narratives. This process contained the demonization of Arabs and the Arab regime, specific instances in which God was credited with interceding on Southerners' behalf, and statements that as they were special in His sight God was leading them to nationhood. Elements of this theology were transmitted in various forms that ranged from private correspondences to international publications, reflecting both individual psychology and public willingness to justify the cause. The dissemination of this thought in personal and public spheres, furthermore, suggests a link between private religious politics and the political goal of national independence in the First Civil War.

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<sup>734</sup> ACR.A/108/3/11; 'The Sudan Question and the Refugees' (July 16, 1970), 1-2.

<sup>735</sup> The Kairos Document argued that 'every...theology needs to have its own concrete symbol of evil. It must be able to symbolize what it regards as godless behavior...It must have its own version of hell.' See 'Challenge to the church: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa. The Kairos Document, 1985' at [<http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/kairos-document-1985-0>].

The foundation of this religious thought rested on the premise that Arabs—whether the Government, soldiers, or people generally—were evil. Arabs were demonized in varying ways, with one of the more popular methods being to cast them and their actions as inhuman. Being somehow inhuman, their horrible acts reflected their nature and should, therefore, be classified as resting outside the bounds of humanity and its assumed benevolence. After witnessing atrocities caused by security forces in Juba and Wau Bishop Dud expressed to the Minister of Interior that this ‘inhuman behaviour’ could not secure God’s protection.<sup>736</sup> The perception that Southerners were struggling against people who were operating outside the confines of humanity and God’s grace embellished the seemingly ingrained nature of Arab cruelty. As an unnamed writer expressed to a priest in 1965, ‘I do not trust an Arab in my life even when an Arab says he has seen GOD I would not believe so...’<sup>737</sup> The notion that one’s actions could expel people (and Arab soldiers specifically) from God’s grace was also expressed in poetic verse by J.M. Deng in the April 1971 issue of *Grass Curtain*. *Grass Curtain* was published from London by the Southern Sudan Association, an organization formed in 1970. The *Curtain*’s forerunner was the SANU’s UK-based *Grass Roots* which received updates through copies of press releases and extracts of documents from Anyanya frontlines. The choice of the term ‘grass curtain’ alluded to the popular belief that with such scant attention given to the war, the region had to be surrounded by one. The SSA was directed by Enoch Garang Madeng and included in its membership Jacob J. Akol

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<sup>736</sup> ACR.A/95/8/1; Ireneo Dud to Minister of Interior, 1 August 1965. It is worth noting that the first significant appearance of the ‘inhuman’ description in the war’s archival record is not cast upon Northerners by Southerners but upon the Torit mutineers in the wake of the mutiny. In the September 1955 *Lakes District Monthly Report*, M. Abu Bakr noted that ‘all interesting news were focused on the brutality and inhumanity of the mutineers in Equatoria’. See pp. 2 and 4. *Lakes District Monthly Report*, September 1955 in SSNA BD 38, Folder 57.B.2 (August 2013 designation)

<sup>737</sup> ACR.A/107/5/63; Letter dated November 29, 1965

(Secretary and Treasurer), MP Sir Douglas Glover (Chairman of the Anti-Slavery Society), and London University Professor Richard Gray (who assisted in the publication of *The Problem of the Southern Sudan*). In time the Anyanya High Command revised and adopted a plan to use the *Curtain* as an effective medium for the movement.<sup>738</sup> Invoking the legacy of past invasions and fifteen years of war, Deng lamented that ‘they feel free now To lay you waste...Defying the Almighty’s great hands In their reckless disregard of humanity’.<sup>739</sup> Joseph Lagu similarly levied the ‘inhuman’ label upon the government when in a 1971 issue he exclaimed that Khartoum’s response to Anyanya development programs in the countryside had ‘always been inhuman, brutal and barbaric’.<sup>740</sup>

Such moments of anti-government villainization in the *Curtain* were coupled by private letters in which some clerics inferred the troubles facing them were devilish schemes. Within such claims was the inference that such policies that stifled the Church and wrought suffering in the South were Evil at work. An October 1965 letter written by Eduardo Mason, Sisto Mazzoldi, Dominic Ferrara, and Herman te Riele to Bishop Dud and all Southern clergy and laity expressed such sentiments. Each author occupied positions in Sudanese Catholic leadership: Mason had been the Vicar Apostolic of Bahr

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<sup>738</sup> See ‘Southern Sudan Association’ in Kramer et al., *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 395; Øystein Rolandsen, *Guerrilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan During the 1990s*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitute, 2005; 24 (fn. 32); School of Oriental and African Studies (hereafter SOAS), CBMS.ICCLA Box 33 (536) Folder ‘K. Sudan 1954-1959’, Alexander C. Wilson (2) to Claude de Mestral and George Carpenter, 18 January 1956; 1; Ga’le, *Shaping*, 247; ‘Announcement: Formation of the “Southern Sudan Association” *Grass Curtain* Vol. 1 No. 1 (May 1970); 8 and Lagu, *Sudan*, 239. The Anyanya Conference was held in August 1971, where the plan concerning the movement’s usage of the *Curtain* was a topic of discussion (Lagu, *Sudan*, 239). Roman Deckert has gone so far as to call the *Curtain* an Anyanya ‘tabloid’ launched in exile. See Roman Deckert, ‘The history of the Sudanese press: Background to conflict’ in ‘The Sudanese press after separation—Contested identities of journalism’ Media in Cooperation and Transition gGmbH (MICT). [<http://www.sudantribune.com/IMG/pdf/sudanstudie2012.pdf>] 2012; p. 10.

<sup>739</sup> J.M. Deng, “Who is Behind Abbass?” [dated January 1, 1971] *Grass Curtain*, Vol. 1 No. 4 (April 1971), 34 and Tia Gitta Tutu, “Who is Behind Abbass—a reply” [dated April 26, 1971] *Grass Curtain*, Vol. 2 No. 1 (July 1971), 16-17.

<sup>740</sup> Joseph Lagu, ‘The Dynamics of Co-Operation Between the Anya-Nya and the People’ *Grass Curtain*, Vol. 1 No. 4 (April 1971), 4, 6.

el-Ghazal before his appointment as Vicar Apostolic of El Obeid, Ferrara was the Prefect of Mupoï, Mazzoldi was the Prefect Apostolic of Bahr el-Gebel, and Riele the Prefect of Malakal.<sup>741</sup> Expressing sorrow at the violent deaths of priests Barnaba Deng and Arkangelo Ali, they cited Matthew 5:11 (‘blessed are those that are persecuted for Christ’s sake’) and acknowledged that the Southern Church ‘carried on valiantly as faithful disciples of Jesus, in the midst of trials and difficulties which were meant by the devil to take the faith from you and to take you out of the Church’. To this was added the reassurance that those who had lost their lives were protecting the Church from Heaven.<sup>742</sup> This message appeared to convey to its audience comfort and the spiritual reality of the times. Members of the Southern Church are framed as Christ’s disciples, with Deng and Ali participating in the persecution described in the Gospel of Matthew. The problems facing the audience, furthermore, were not rooted in actions made by Khartoum but are instead attributed to the Devil. With this second point came not only clarity on who the real enemy was but also the assurance that with heavenly protection they were not defenseless targets. Later that year Fr. Avellino Wani started a letter to Bishop Dud by echoing the belief that spiritual warfare was operating in the conflict: ‘Before greeting you, I would insult [sic] the devil!...How much it tries to destroy and wickedly demoralize and despairingly disperse us! But in vain. Heaven [sic] and earth

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<sup>741</sup> ‘Father Herman Gerard Te Riele, M.H.M.’, Catholic Hierarchy [<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bte.html>]. Consulted 27 August 2014; ‘Bishop Edoardo Mason’ Catholic Hierarchy [<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bmasone.html>]. Consulted 27 August 2014; ‘Bishop Domenico Ferrara’ Catholic Hierarchy [<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bferrad.html>]. Consulted 27 August 2014. ‘Bishop Sisto Mazzoldi’ Catholic Hierarchy [<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bmazzoldi.html>]. Consulted 27 August 2014.

<sup>742</sup> ACR.A/95/9/8; ‘To Our Brother in Christ, Bishop Ireneo Dud, to all of the Clergy and Laity in the Church of Southern Sudan’, October 31, 1965; 1, 2. [quote comes from this statement]

will pass away but my words will not pass.—Deus dedit, Deus abstulit. Sit nomen Domini benedictum!<sup>743</sup>

An anecdote from William Levi sheds further light on the perception that spiritual forces were operating in Sudan. The son of Messianic Jewish parents, Levi's family fled to Uganda in late 1965.<sup>744</sup> He recalls in his autobiography a particular religion class from his days as a grade two student in Nyakaningwa. Although the anecdote took place during the postwar period of the 1970s, it illustrates the way in which the people and events of the day were perceived through a spiritual point of view. Ephesians 6:10-13 was the topic of study in the religion, and as the class contemplated the meaning of the Scripture the teacher (his grandfather) stated:

“There is an enemy...one who would erase the name of Yeshua from our country, and would gladly shed our blood to gain his ground. Who can name our enemy?...It was clear that everyone in the room knew who was seeking to destroy us. A hand went up. ‘The Muslims of Khartoum are our enemies. They would like to drive Christians from this country.’ A murmur of agreement filled the room, until my grandfather silenced it...‘No, you are wrong...Our enemy is not human. We do not struggle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual powers...Satan is our enemy. He blinds the eyes of the Muslims to the gospel message...He deceives human leaders into declaring war on the innocent, spreading genocide and persecution against God’s children.”<sup>745</sup>

It is clear that his grandfather's purpose was not to demonize Muslims, but what is important to glean from this passage was his assertion that they were being used by

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<sup>743</sup> See ‘Avellino Wani Longa’ in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From the Beginning to 2006*. SCBC General Secretariat—P.O. Box: 6011 Khartoum, 26 and ACR.A/95/9/22; P. Avellino Wani to Ireneo [Dud], November 25, 1965, (1). In his statement prior to the Latin phrase Wani is borrowing from Matthew 5:18; ‘For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.’ (NIV)

<sup>744</sup> William Levi, *The Bible or the Axe: One Man's Dramatic Escape from Persecution in the Sudan*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005; 23, 30.

<sup>745</sup> Levi, *Bible*, 89-91, 91-92.

Satan—the true enemy—for destructive purposes. In these instances, then, recognizing the Devil’s work was not intended to spread fear but instead clarify the true nature of the enemy and reinforce confidence that victory was assured *because* the enemy was the Devil. This confidence was based on heavenly protection and Scriptural assurances. After many Arab soldiers had been killed in the regions of Gogrial, Aweil, and Tonj, for example, one writer borrowed from Proverbs 22:8 and stated that “He that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity; and the rod of his wrath shall fail’...So the Arabs have sown and we are reaping now.’<sup>746</sup>

Amid accusations that Arabs were ‘inhuman’ in their cruelty and fighting on the wrong side of a spiritual warfare, Southern clerics and laity requested God’s help in dealing with such foes. These sentiments were often expressed in private correspondences. In a note to Angelo Confalonieri one man reacted to the missionary expulsion by praying that peace could be achieved peacefully: ‘all the priests of ours...are deported back by the Arabs, but nevertheless God is great. Let us pray to God so that we achieve our country without blood(shed).’<sup>747</sup> Fr. Confalonieri, former vice rector of Wau’s minor seminary, would himself be ejected from the Vicariate Apostolic of Wau on grounds that he had entered a nationalized school. The Seattle-based *Catholic Northwest Progress* noted that his ouster was but the climax of ‘a running war against him by the Sudanese regime.’<sup>748</sup> Former mission student Elia Seng Majok, writing as a political refugee in the Central African Republic, prayed that through God’s help the Arabs could be chased out and defeated despite their strength. For this he asked former

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<sup>746</sup> ACR.A/95/15/1; Bernard Bikon to P. Colussi, 9.5.1967, 1.

<sup>747</sup> ACR.A/95/3/14; Michael Maror Liec to Angelo Confalonieri, [1964; inferred from previous two correspondences of the same designation], 1.

<sup>748</sup> ‘Around the World’ *The Catholic Northwest Progress* (24 May 1963): 2.

teacher, Fr. Matordes, to help ‘by praying for us to get our freedom.’<sup>749</sup> Refugee Juliano Kita, writing from the Congo, closed her letter to a Catholic Brother with the hope that ‘God help us from Arabation [Arabization]’ while former mission student Patrice Ugo Natale wrote that all Southern refugees were praying for their collective return to the South.<sup>750</sup> Indeed, the experience of exile compelled many refugees to offer hopes and prayers along the lines of Natale’s prayer not just for safe passage back home but also for safekeeping in the interim. Israel’s experience in the Exodus and Babylon carried special weight. Fr. Jerome Siri, writing from the Congo, had a melancholy tenor when he related his experiences with the Babylonian exile. Writing to Monsignor Dominic Ferrara, Siri expressed hope that God would quickly answer their prayers if He did not intend for them to suffer as long as their Israelite forbearers: ‘Here we feel out of place and homesick. If God does not intend to have our captivity as...long as that of Babilon [sic], let Him listen to our sighs.’<sup>751</sup> As each of the aforementioned letters were addressed to Catholic clergy, they not only provide a valuable lens into the ways in which Sudanese understood their circumstances through a spiritual lens but are also perhaps suggestive of the way that Catholic clergy taught their Sudanese pupils to relate to God in everyday life.

Songs were one of the more popular mediums through which refugees and those who remained in the South expressed their hopes and fears. In many such lyrics God was approached and described as the Providential agent that could change their lot. Several Kuku-Balokole songs written in the mid-1960s are mixed with expectation for God’s deliverance and pleas for pity. Before the Mutiny most of the Kuku people who lived in

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<sup>749</sup> ACR.A/95/3/29; Elia Seng Majok to A. Matordes, April 28, 1964, 1. All of the information concerning Confalonieri, including the quote, was taken from this article.

<sup>750</sup> See ACR.A/95/3/35; Juliano Kita to Bro. Mariotti, April 29, 1964, (1) and Patrice Ugo Natale to Ivo Ciccacci, May 1, 1964, (1).

<sup>751</sup> ACR.A/95/10/36, Fr. Jerome Bidai Siri to Mons. Ferrara, February 11, 1966, 1.



Southwestern Equatoria believed in their ancestral spirits. Their well-being was largely attributed to their relations with these spirits; an abundant harvest, for example, reflected happy spirits while natural disasters were attributed to the societal neglect of these spirits.<sup>752</sup> Christianity's arrival (and particularly the Church Missionary Society) marked a new era in Kuku religious belief systems, and in time more fundamentalist Christians known as the Barokole criticized the association made by the Kuku between attending church and showing off one's 'best' clothes. After the Mutiny many Kuku fled to Uganda, where during funerals 'youth sang hymns, emotionally-laden songs, and beat drums all day and night to alleviate psychological pain among the family members, relatives and friends of the deceased.'<sup>753</sup> Balokole is a Luganda word meaning 'the saved people' and the name by which revivalists in Uganda's Anglican Church were known.<sup>754</sup>

Balokole connections to the Southern Sudan can be inferred from the South's proximity to Uganda, the East African Revival's impact on the South (in the form of the Richard Jones Revival), and the travels of Sosthenes Dronyi. Having graduated as a primary school teacher from Boroboro Teachers' Training College in 1948, Dronyi converted to Christianity in the midst of the East African Revival and became an evangelist. By the 1960s he resolved to undertake itinerant lay preaching throughout the region—including Sudan—and through him it is estimated that thousands in Uganda, Kenya, Congo, and Sudan accepted Christ. As he is remembered in part for advocating

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<sup>752</sup> Scopas Poggo, 'Kuku Religious Experiences in the Sudan and in Exile in Uganda' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 129-130.

<sup>753</sup> The quote comes from Poggo, 'Kuku', 133, while the other information concerning the Kuku comes from Poggo, 'Kuku', 130-31, 133.

<sup>754</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (African Studies). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012; 288-289. See also Kevin Ward, "'Tukutendereza Yesu' The Balokole Revival in Uganda" in *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*. [<http://www.dacb.org/history/uganda-balokole.html>]. Consulted 16 August 2014.

African church music,<sup>755</sup> it is possible that some of these Kuku-Balokole songs were indirectly inspired by or connected to Dronyi or written by Kuku refugees in Uganda.

One such song reads as follows:

Ti yi moronic ko to'diri	Let us in reality struggle
Anyen yi tete'ya	That we may win.
Kujön kune a ti Sudan nikan	The soil of the Sudan is ours
Nun wone konyen	God pity us
Ko yi i döru kata ni	Here in the grass <sup>756</sup>

Another Kuku-Balokole song expressed a similar message, though in a more dreadful tone:

Jur likan lo	My brothers!
Lunasirik kuwe kulo rite ko	Our land is occupied by
enemies	
Merok.	The Sudan is ending
Sudan 'du'dudyö	Brothers, let God pity us. <sup>757</sup>
Lunasirik Nun wone konyen	

Other songs carried more positive sentiments, encouraging listeners to trust in the power of God to relieve them of their burdens. One song expressed this hope in the following lines:

Momo'yi ta Nun	You who are driven to.
Talo juwe i boro kata	The bush—pray to God.
Yesu ko rinit duma lwögu	Jesus has great power
Na nutu	To save people. <sup>758</sup>

Bishop Allison noted that during one journey through a Bari-speaking area he encountered Matayo Nyombu, a teacher he had not seen in years. Students at his school were singing a song from the forest that read as follows:

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<sup>755</sup> Christopher Byaruhanga, 'Dronyi, Sosthenes Yangu Ayume' in *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*. [[http://www.dacb.org/stories/uganda/dronyi\\_sosthenes.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/uganda/dronyi_sosthenes.html)]. Consulted 16 August 2014. The claim that Dronyi brought thousands to Christ comes from Lusania Kasamba, a team leader in Uganda's Revival Movement, who was interviewed by Byaruhanga and is cited in his article on Dronyi.

<sup>756</sup> SAD.393/2/17 [chap. 5, p. 9]. These songs, though crafted in the mid-1960s, were translated in the late 1970s.

<sup>757</sup> SAD.393/2/26

<sup>758</sup> SAD.393/2/27

‘These are our years of suffering  
‘We must try to learn...  
Our God is with us  
He protects us...  
Cry to God, cry to God every day...  
Let us tell Him our sufferings.  
Oh God, oh God, look at our tears,  
Father our suffering is too great.’

To these lines Allison added that “Although this has the note of sadness, behind it is the recognition of the loving hand of God.”<sup>759</sup>

The Comboni Archives are flush with letters written by those who acknowledged ‘the loving hand of God’ in the inexplicable ways that their lives had been preserved. Several cited God as directly intervening in their encounters with Arab soldiers. Fr. Adelino Fuli, Rector of St. Augustine’s Minor Seminary at Tore, recounted to Fr. Renato Bresciani an attack from Arab soldiers in which Fuli he expressed that God had helped them escape with the effect of bullets passing over their heads. Dom Penisi similarly recalled to Ferrara that when the army fired at the Meridi mission in an attempt to kill priests and Church congregants, ‘God did not allow anyone to die there...we were surrounded at service with all the Christians of Mupoï present. But God saved us all and they could not fulfill [sic] the purpose for which they came.’<sup>760</sup> Fr. Siri, despite sustaining injuries as a result of gunfire, believed that God was still present by preserving him from death. He told Ferrara that ‘I am bearing scars of bullet shots on my right arm...I am sure

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<sup>759</sup> For the anecdote, lyrics and quotation see Oliver Allison, *Through Fire and Water*. London: Church Missionary Society, 1976; 58-59.

<sup>760</sup> See ACR.A/95/7/12; Adelino Fuli to ‘Fr. Bresciani’, June 14, 1965 and ACR.A/95/7/19; Dom Penisi to Mgr. Ferrara, July 14, 1965. Fr. Renato Bresciani spent ten years in the Sudan from 1954 to 1964 (when missionaries were expelled). See ‘Father Renato Bresciani: Comboni missionary and founder ASCE’ Association Comboni Service Migrants and Refugees (translated from Italian) [<http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://www.centroacse.it/padre-renato-bresciani/&prev=search>] 2013. Consulted 6 July 2015.

I was saved only by the special intervention of the good Lord.’<sup>761</sup> Fr. Philip Ukel told an unnamed recipient that three clerics escaped after soldiers surrounded a compound. After doing so a car attempted to pursue them—a pursuit that would be in vain, as the car’s ‘petrol got finished in the midst of the bush, and that was through Divine Providence’.<sup>762</sup> Athian Joseph shared with Fr. Nebel a similar story of God’s saving action in the lives of three men who were heading to Juba despite shooting and house-burning in the area: ‘the Arab soldiers...began firing them across the Nile’, Joseph wrote. ‘One of the soldiers said: “Dak Abuna Kabir; be human edrib” (shoot him), but God had put an unseen shield [sic] behind which H. Lorship stood with his flock. Three-four bullets passed by them but none of them so far was touched.’<sup>763</sup> Felix Kule similarly described God as assisting Anyanya forces in a clash against Arab soldiers. After stating that the Anyanya had shot down a plane in Maridi (killing every passengers) Kule wrote that ‘the Almighty God punished them that day by confusing them thus shooting each other meanwhile the tactful Anya-Nya made their way off without any losses.’<sup>764</sup>

Whether protecting men like Fr. Siri from further bodily harm, allowing bullets to fly over potential human targets, providing a supernatural shield of protection, or vexing Arab soldiers into shooting at one another, such anecdotes contain clear inferences that God was invested in protecting the authors from Arab soldiers. Because these letters were private correspondences that were mostly addressed by or to Catholic priests, one may

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<sup>761</sup> ACR.A/95/9/18; Jerome Bidai Siri to Mons. Ferrara, November 19, 1965; 1, 2.

<sup>762</sup> ACR.A/95/8/5; Philip Ukel, August 6, 1965. See ‘Philip Mayom Ukelo’ in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, 43 for his biographical/clerical information.

<sup>763</sup> ACR.A/95/8/11; Athian Joseph to Rev. Fr. Nebel, August 18, 1965; 1. Nebel, along with Fr. Santandrea, invented alphabet characters for the Dinka language and Ndogo language for the Fetit ethnicity in Western Bahr el Ghazal. In their late 80s they were given expulsion orders to leave the country. See Bona Malwal, *Sudan and South Sudan: From One to Two*. Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York; Palgrave Macmillan, 2015; p. 34.

<sup>764</sup> ACR.A/95/10/37; Felix Doka Kule to Alexis Gangi, February 11, 1966; 1.

presume that clerical status was directly linked to the letters' abundant references to Providence. Men of the cloth, according to this line of thought, would be more prone to look for, detect, and acknowledge God's work. Even if this were true, however, it would in no ways lessen the importance of these anecdotes as they relate to the role of religious thought in the war. Rather, the letters are illustrative of the fact that elements of this liberatory thought were articulated in private and public spheres by clerics and laypeople alike. Just as clerics would note the miraculous work of God in their encounters with Arab soldiers, others would note the hand of God and relate their experiences to Biblical precedents (see concluding portion of this section).

Recognitions of intervention were regularly featured in exilic stories. Levi recalled that 'My parents trusted that God would be with us, just as He had been with the Israelites as they wandered through the wilderness so long ago', and during their stay in Uganda he recognized that despite the conditions and scant resources he 'grew up depending completely on God to take care of me...Everything was under God's control.'<sup>765</sup> A letter written by 'D. Paul'—presumably Fr. Paolino Doggale—recounts a tale in which priests at Tore Minor Seminary, upon being accused of harboring Anyanya soldiers, were pursued by government troops with orders to arrest them and destroy a mission nearby. After mentioning that physical destruction had taken place Doggale followed that 'through God's Providence the Priests and the Seminarists managed to escape and fled to Congo.'<sup>766</sup> Writing from the Central African Republic, Alfredo Akot Bak wrote to an Italian priest that his trek to the Congo 'was assisted by Almighty God', and despite sadness upon hearing that missionaries had been expelled expressed that only

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<sup>765</sup> Levi, *Bible or the Axe*, 24, 39.

<sup>766</sup> ACR.A/98/1/5; 'D. Paul', 'Clergy: Activities, After the Expulsion of the Missionaries from the S. Sudan in February, 1964.' p. 3.

God knew when the South would be delivered from the Arabs' hands.<sup>767</sup> Bro. Gabriel Ngor similarly recognized God's hand in his passage to Uganda. After stating that the towns of Juba, Torit, Maridi, and other towns were nearly empty because of widespread killings done by government forces, Ngor explained to Fr. Giuseppe Gusmini that after eight days roaming in the bush in adverse conditions his well-being could only be attributed to God's help.<sup>768</sup>

Providence was also recognized in one of the more famous escape stories to emerge from the war. A few days after the 1965 Juba Massacre Canon Ezra Lawiri, Acting Principal of Mundri's Bishop Gwynne College, was summoned a half-mile away to report to the Army. When shooting was heard later that evening, Lawiri ordered students and their families to flee into the bush while he and two Bishops stayed at BGC. He shared with Elinana Ngalamu, one of the aforementioned Bishops, that he had a premonition that trouble was approaching. Ngalamu—who during the war was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for preaching against government policies—replied that 'God will protect us.'<sup>769</sup> On 19 July the Army killed Christians in the parish church and surrounded the College. Eyewitness Christopher Mame, however, recorded that he along with the Bishop and other students were able to travel for 20 days in the bush before reaching Uganda (Lawiri and other students arrived there as well). It was when he described this series of events that Mame cited God with guiding them on their journey as He had the Israelites from Egypt.<sup>770</sup> Allison opined that this anecdote, along with other

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<sup>767</sup> ACR.A/95/3/25; Alfredo Akot Bak to Fr. Ciccacci, April 22, 1964.

<sup>768</sup> ACR.A/98/45/22; Gabriel Ngor to Giuseppe Gusmini, July 30, 1965. For Gusmini's title see 'April 2004', *comboni.org* [<http://www.comboni.org/en/contenuti/100204-april-2004>] Consulted 29 May 2015.

<sup>769</sup> Allison, *Through Fire and Water*, 9. Information on Ngalamu was taken from James Lomole Simeon and Oliver Meru Duku, 'Elinana Ja'bi Ngalamu Dudu' in *Dictionary of African Christian Biography* [[http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/ngalamu\\_elinana.html](http://www.dacb.org/stories/sudan/ngalamu_elinana.html)]. Consulted 28 August 2014.

<sup>770</sup> SAD.803/9/41; 'The Story of Bishop Gwynne's Destruction' [1966], 19, 20.

tales of harrowing experiences and escapes, illustrated that the same ‘Rescuing Angel’ that saved Peter from prison in the Book of Acts was busy working in southern Sudan in 1965.<sup>771</sup>

The concluding object of this liberationist theology was the confidence that Southerners were special in God’s sight, and that as His children God was concerned with their success and liberation. This sense of national destiny did not negate the thought that the war was not religiously-motivated. Nor did it remove a sense of personal agency in the liberation effort (that with God acting no agency from their part was needed). Rather, it provided a sense that God would ultimately reward Southern efforts in the face of circumstance, providing an important spiritual undercurrent and confidence to the struggle. An anonymous writer asserted in 1965 that ‘The present conflict...is not only a Political, social, Economical, but also a Religious and [Racial]...issue. How it is going to be solved, and when, the answer rests with God and his abandoned children of the South, who are beseeching Him to bring peace’<sup>772</sup> While the imagery of God’s children praying for peace was perhaps meant to evoke sympathy, a 1967 *Nouvel Observateur* report of ‘Anyanya dances with the refrain “We the children of Mary will kill the Arabs”’ illustrated the union of spiritual identity and racial warfare in the Anyanya.<sup>773</sup>

Several war songs reveal the resolute confidence that victory through the Lord would be achieved. One such song reads as follows:

‘The war is hot: Enemies are strong;

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<sup>771</sup> Allison, *Through Fire and Water*, 12. The story he references comes from Acts 12, which records a story in which an angel helps Peter escape from prison and, by doing so, save him from imminent death.

<sup>772</sup> ACR.A/93/14/14; ‘Report on the activities of the Arab Security Forces against the Church in Rumbek Vicariate’ [1965], 19.

<sup>773</sup> See ACR.A/108/1/23; Richard Gray, ‘Christianity in Post-Colonial Africa’. Paper for discussion on November 15<sup>th</sup>: the churches’ role in the Sudan. Centre for African Studies; p. 3. Here Gray cites *Nouvel Observateur*, March 1967. See also Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity: 1950-1975*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979; 134.

But Lord's people will not be defeated at all.  
 If we are with him, he would save us,  
 He who can't change, we shall defeat...  
 You be his supporters in this world,  
 Because he had agreed you, to be his people;  
 In the work of the King let us [trust],  
 Let us be strong in his power.<sup>774</sup>

One Kuku political song expressed the author's request of God for deliverance:

	'...Yi kwkwaddu nun lo	...We pray to God
	Yi kwkwaddu nun lo gweja yi	We pray to you who created
us		
	Yi kwkwadou lepen ti yne tiki yi	We pray let Him give us
	Toliyen nikay na Southern Sudan	Our freedom of Southern
Sudan <sup>775</sup>		

Finally, a Moru political song crafted between 1964 and 1972 tells Arabs exactly what was sought after:

'Although you Arabs,  
 Came, in...thousands,  
 With your bad culture, and Attitudes...  
 You evils, what we need is recognition of our full rights for  
 Independence...<sup>776</sup>

The thinking that Southerners were God's chosen people and guaranteed ultimate success could make the sufferings of wartime much more frustrating (i.e. Mabuong's Lamentations insertion), but the conviction that victory was assured because of their special relationship to God remained steadfast. Rodolfo Deng expressed such conviction to Fr. Nebel when he reflected upon the recent deaths of priests Arkangelo Ali and Barnaba Deng at the hands of Arab soldiers. Despite their losses and others, Deng was convinced that the righteousness of their cause and divine assistance would ensure their eventual success: 'we shall not surrender...the road to Liberty is 'de facto' one of

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<sup>774</sup> SAD.393/2/35; '52'.

<sup>775</sup> SAD.393/2/50

<sup>776</sup> SAD.393/2/52



bloodshed. We shall win because the truth is on our side...Confident in God's Providence, of History and in our Bl. Mother Mary we shall fight on...we have the mightiest of all weapons—Prayer'.<sup>777</sup> When Pope Paul VI visited Africa in 1969, Major-General Emidio Tafeng conjectured that the papal visit was a sign from God meant specifically for southern Sudan. Tafeng, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and President of the Anyidi government, addressed a letter to the Pontiff and conjectured to him that 'Perhaps Your visit is a God sent occasion to mark the beginning of our human recognition and eventual Liberation from the hands of our destroyers [sic]'.<sup>778</sup>

Autobiographies written by Anyanya veterans offer a glimpse into the way Southerners learned to envision their struggle in a spiritually-infused, liberatory framework. For example, Wöndu recalled that during his time at the Loka School the favorite opening hymn was Sabine Baring-Gould's 'Onward Christian Soldiers' which spoke of marching to war with the cross of Jesus, anthems raised, banners going, and Satan's host fleeing.<sup>779</sup> At the time the Loka school was experiencing the government's Islamicization policies in tangible ways: for example, a mosque with a fully-funded staff had been built at the school gate and history had been removed from the study schedule. On the latter point he remembered that the 'big boys' said that this was because the history was about the Arab enslavement of Africans. Amid the religious conflict between the students and school authorities that Wöndu noted as 'obvious', he recalled that student-led Sunday services ended with George Duffield's martial 1858 hymn:

'Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross;

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<sup>777</sup> ACR.A/95/9/3; Rodolfo Deng to Rev. Fr. Nebel, October 20, 1965; 1. In 1995 Deng became Bishop of Wau. See "Rudolf Deng Majak" in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy*, 47-48.

<sup>778</sup> ACR.A/90/14/11; Emidio Tapeng [Tafeng] Lodongi, 'We Aclaim [sic] His Holiness' Arrival in Africa', 31 July 1969; 2. For biographical information on Tafeng see 'Tafeng, Emidio.' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition; 287.

<sup>779</sup> Wöndu, *Bush*, 33.

Lift high His royal banner; it must not suffer loss.  
From victory unto victory His army shall He lead,  
Till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed...  
Where'er ye meet with evil, within you or without,  
Charge for the God of battles, and put the foe to rout...<sup>780</sup>

By August 1965, after experiencing the Juba Massacre firsthand, Wöndu had joined at Anyanya as a child soldier.<sup>781</sup>

In his 2002 autobiography Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le referenced ways in which Old Testament narratives were applied to contemporary circumstances. Severino noted that before leaving for Uganda he had read the Old Testament passage in which a Patriarch (Abraham) was asked by the Power above to sacrifice his only son (Isaac). Like the Patriarch, Severino stated, he offered his children and others who were 'sacrificed, deserted or thrown into destitution for national objectives'.<sup>782</sup> Once in Uganda he framed a fortuitous development with another moment in Biblical history; the Israelite journey to the Promised Land. In 1967 the Parliament of Uganda passed a Trophy Act that allowed Ugandans to sell an unlimited number of tusks, rhino-horns and reptile hides. One day he was shown a particular batch of trophies that 'was to be known from then on as the ANYA-NYA MANNA. Like in the case of Israel's Manna which maintained the Jews until they reached the promised land, the ANYA-NYA MANNA also sustained and indeed saved the ANYANYA-Eastern Command from collapse until...1969.'<sup>783</sup> Severino also makes two notable mentions of God's intervention. The first concerned an episode in which one hundred and eighty visitors carrying trophies (and needed to help lift the sick) were traveled nine miles through villages inhabited by Ugandans without causing alarm.

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<sup>780</sup> Ibid, 34; for information on the services and Islamicization at the Loka school see 33-35.

<sup>781</sup> Ibid, 49-52, 54

<sup>782</sup> Ga'le, *Shaping*, 221.

<sup>783</sup> Ibid, 331-332; see 325-327 for more on the Act, trophies, and uses for the liberation movement.

This was done, he opined, because God sent a torrential downpour followed by a cold, wet evening that kept people indoors.<sup>784</sup> Like Doggale's mention of God's protection of fleeing seminarians like He had protected the Israelites in their journey to the Promised Land, Severino offered an elaborate description of God's assistance after reaching Uganda. After advancing fifty meters past the Ugandan border he relates that he called a halt. Kneeling down and facing Nimule (in Sudan) he prayed the following:

'Lord Jesus Christ...I thank you for the wonderful assistance you have accorded us in our flight...guide my kids and indeed the entire family-members who have been thrown into destitution in Defence of your Christian faith and our cultural identity and origin...which are being annihilated by the Arab North Government...we have now taken up arms justly in defence of our rights: we request your heavenly leadership to give me courage and bravery...Help me, Lord, to stand up like a man and like a man die, if necessary, in defence of our Christian Religion and Faith.'<sup>785</sup>

Despite comments in the *Grass Curtain* and *Voice of Southern Sudan* insisting that the war was not religious, Severino's prayer is a powerful indication of the way in which the conflict could be viewed as a defense of the faith.

Seventeen years after the Torit Mutiny, the First Sudanese Civil War ended in 1972. Rather than achieving national sovereignty, Southern Sudan remained a constituent piece of a united Sudan.

#### Conclusion: Can the Leopard Change Its Spots?

After seventeen years of civil war, the conflict reached its conclusion when President Nimeiri announced on 3 March 1972 that a peace settlement had been reached in Addis Ababa. The specifics of the Agreement were multi-layered, but the key component was the granting of regional autonomy to the Southern Sudanese under the

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<sup>784</sup> Ibid, 327.

<sup>785</sup> Ibid, 222-223.

governing umbrella of the Sudanese government. The long awaited day of complete separation and nationhood had not yet come. Juba became the capital of the regional government and guidelines were established for the creation of political (the People's Regional Assembly) and administrative (the Higher Executive Council) structures to the regional government. The Church played a crucial role in efforts to broker the Agreement, with the World Council of Churches, All Africa Council of Churches, and Sudan Council of Churches each working as intermediaries and messengers for both sides. This work, however, went largely unpublicized until after terms had been met. Haile Selassie recognized the WCC's work by stating that "As instruments of God, you have carried out his will for peace and justice...You were able to bring two brothers together again."<sup>786</sup>

Reaction to the Agreement throughout the country was mixed, though many were relieved that the military conflict was finally over. Many religious factions in the North perceived the Agreement as a threat to national unity and Islam's position in public life. The Muslim Brotherhood would express angst not only because of its opposition to an Islamic constitution—which, in its 1973 form, stated that 'Islam is the religion and society shall be guided by Islam'—but also because of the perception that Nimeiri's support from the South reflected what Hassan Ahmed deemed "an unholy alliance between the Church and the Junta."<sup>787</sup> Disappointment at the Agreement was shared by

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<sup>786</sup> See 'The Bishop's Letter' [by Allison], March 29, 1972 in *Sudan Diocesan Review*, Vol. 23, No. 66 (Spring Number, 1972), n.p.; Lambeth Palace [hereafter LP], Ramsey Papers, Vol. 242; Stephen Whittle, 'A Peaceful Prospect for the Sudan' *Ecumenical Feature Service*, pp. 2, 4 [pp. 45, 46, 48 of Vol. 242; Selassie quote is taken from Whittle's piece, p. 4 (48)] and Philippa Scott, 'The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Liberation Army (SPLA)' *Review of African Political Economy* No. 33 (August 1985), 69.

<sup>787</sup> See Gino Barsella and Miguel A. Ayuso Guixot, *Struggling to Be Heard: The Christian Voice in Independent Sudan, 1956-1996*. Faith in Sudan No. 4. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998; 49 and *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment*, 446-447; *Devastation* takes Ahmed's quotation from Hassan

some Southern extremists, those who had advocated for complete separation and—according to some Northern authors—Catholics who did not accept the Agreement.<sup>788</sup> This last point concerning Catholics seems plausible enough when considering that the Catholic Church, more than any other Christian denomination, was during the war never loath to voice loud disapproval of government measures it deemed oppressive. Indeed, the open participation of men like Saturnino Lohure and Paolino Doggale could be said to have given the liberation movement a Catholic feel.

However, there was little if any doubt that the multitude of people who had been displaced from their homes and lived in exile were ready to return home. Levi attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Chinyaquia (along the Sudan-Uganda border) where Lagu and Nimeiri commemorated the Agreement. ‘As the fragments of the delicate ribbon fluttered to the ground,’ he noted, ‘a great roar erupted...southern Sudan would have the authority to govern her own affairs without interference from the North. For millions of Sudanese refugees, it was a chance to go home at long last.’<sup>789</sup> The theme of Babylonian exile was employed to memorialize the massive return when a group of exiles carried a sign between bamboo poles with a quote from Jeremiah 23:3: “Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them. The returnees.”<sup>790</sup> While it is impossible to measure the true impact of exile on Southern Sudanese politics, society, and consciousness, it is evident that that it brought some a deepened sense of their relationship with their God. Rev. Samuel Marial related to me that ‘when people were being taken away...the church was already there in exile, and the church was in the

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Makki Mohammed Ahmed, *Sudan: The Christian Design* on p. 446 and I cite Article 16 (a) of the 1973 constitution from p. 447.

<sup>788</sup> Barsella and Guixot, *Struggling to Be Heard*, 49.

<sup>789</sup> Levi, *Bible*, 69.

<sup>790</sup> See Allison, *Through Fire and Water*, 81-82 and *Sudan Diocesan Review*, No. 69 Vol. 24 (Autumn Number, 1973), 46, which contains a picture of this scene.

bush...what was the driving force of these people? In that particular time, to me, I saw it as the church...taking its identity in the nation. And the church was being indigenized.’<sup>791</sup> Given Mabuong’s earlier borrowing from Jeremiah’s Lamentation to decry the South’s situation, the recognition that God—by having their circumstances in His control all along—was now bringing the refugees back to the South was quite compelling.

Amid feelings of relief was a tangible sense of uncertainty about Sudan’s immediate and long-term future. Doubts lingered over whether Arabs or the government could be trusted. A final anecdote to close this chapter captures the sense of trepidation and mistrust that lingered in the coming years. As news of the Agreement spread, Levi’s father expressed the following concern to his wife; “I don’t trust them, Anna,’ he said, striking the palm of his hand down on a table emphatically. ‘Even when the British left in 1956, I knew deep down that they would plot against our people. There can never be unity between the North and the South—can the leopard change his spots?’”<sup>792</sup> It is possible that he borrowed this rhetorical question from Jeremiah 13:23, where the prophet explains that captivity and exile would be coming for Judah because of its many sins (and the assertions that just as an Ethiopian couldn’t change his skin or a leopard his spots, those so accustomed to doing evil were incapable of doing good—Jeremiah 13:20-23). His wife countered the suggestion that Arabs could never be trusted or become trustworthy by encouraging him to change his mindset:

“Then hope,’ Mother said. “But hope in the Lord. Just like it says in the Bible, there are some who trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” A trace of a smile softened Father’s expression. “I knew there was a reason I married the

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<sup>791</sup> Interview with Samuel Galuak Marial on 11 June 2012 (Juba, South Sudan). At the time of our 2012 interview Marial was a Professor of Church History at Bishop Gwynne College.

<sup>792</sup> Levi, *Bible*, 63-64.

preacher's daughter." He paused for a moment. "Thank God we have something more than politics to give us hope. I have to tell you, Anna, as much as I agree—well, I just can't. There's too much history telling me otherwise."<sup>793</sup>

His faith, and those of others with lingering concerns about the feasibility of a unified Sudan, would be tested in the coming decade. War resumed in 1983.

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<sup>793</sup> Ibid, *Bible*, 64. His mother was quoting Psalm 20:7.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Persecution to Promised Land: Fr. Angelo Tutuo, Religious Thought, and Separatist Politics during the First Civil War**

‘I have resigned my office of priesthood due to some frequent recurring troubles and misunderstandings...I am undergoing a mild form of persecution and exile.’<sup>794</sup> Angelo Tutuo penned these sentiments in 1953. Beyond his entry in *Sudanese Catholic Clergy* [ca. 2006] and a small number of letters in Rome’s Comboniani Archives, one will be hard-pressed to locate documentary evidence on the first Zande priest. However, in recent years I have uncovered and examined documents written by and about Tutuo revealing hitherto unpublished information on his life, including racially-motivated abuse from the Verona Fathers. When analyzed alongside his written memoranda as a member of the Anyanya liberation force during the First Civil War (1955-1972), there are striking similarities between his responses to mission racism and Khartoum’s enforcement of Arabization and Islamicization in the South. The idioms Tutuo used to castigate the Italians mirror those he employed against Arabs, Muslims, and Khartoum. Similarly, his responses to clerical racism parallel his anti-Arab nationalist sentiments.

The previous chapter explored the emergence and elements of a liberatory theology that framed Arabs and Khartoum as evils, Southern Sudanese as God’s oppressed people, and provided a narrative of ultimate ‘liberation’ in the form of independence. In this vein I showed that Sudanese clerics were among the chief architects

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<sup>794</sup> South Sudan National Archives, Juba (SSNA) Box EP 377 Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo, Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) [to Governor of Equatoria], 22 Jun. 1953. Recipient information is inferred from SSNA Box EP 377 Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo to Governor of Equatoria, Janson Smith (A.D.E.S.P.) and Bullen (Prov. Education Inspector), 23 May 1953.



of this theology. This chapter builds upon these findings by seeking to more closely examine the roots of separatist, liberationist thinking among Sudanese clerics of that era. I suggest here that one ‘root’ may have been missionary racism. I fashion this argument by interrogating the writings of Angelo Tutuo, a Catholic priest who learned how to make claims against racial oppression from his experiences with the missionaries and later employed them in a political milieu more than a decade later. When he directed his theory of racial oppression towards Arabs, he added a sense of divine calling: that more than simply waging war and fleeing oppression, God was invested in liberating the oppressed Southerners towards independence.<sup>795</sup> Thus, theories and actions birthed from his engagement with missionaries made their way into Tutuo’s nationalist politics. This latter discursive move to spiritualize the Southern struggle not only calls attention to similar techniques employed by other Southerners but also to the genealogy of this religious thought that contributed a significant yet understudied religious element to Southern separatist discourse during the war.

Angelo Tutuo’s story links contentious clerical race relations with separatist political sentiment in Southern Sudan. In arguing that his response to missionary racism spurred his ideology against Arab oppression I build off of Heather Sharkey’s assertion

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<sup>795</sup> I credit the 1985 Kairos Document, a theological treatise written in apartheid South Africa, as the chief foundation from which this component of the argument was formed (the dissertation in its final form will more fully expound on its driving influence on my project). The KD authors mention that every theology requires a symbol of evil, mentions the evil nature of Biblical regimes like Rome and Babylon, and positions God with a primary task of liberating the oppressed (which repeatedly occurs in the Bible and will, according to Scripture, occur at the end of time). At one point the KD frames the South African conflict not as a racial one but rather between the oppressor (the state) and oppressed (Black South Africans). See the ‘Challenge to the church: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa. The Kairos Document, 1985’ at <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/kairos-document-1985-0>. I am arguing that the Southern Sudanese developed the same line of argumentation but emerged in a starkly different social, racial, political, and religious environment (and was espoused by a unique set of actors) with a different result—the creation of a new nation state. Thus, my argument builds upon and complicates understandings of Black and African Theologies, their political uses and objectives, and Diasporic identity politics.

that highly-educated, British-trained colonial employees privately shared grievances amongst each other concerning ‘their professional subordination to Britons, and...their opposition to foreign control...As their confidence grew in their collective abilities, so did their calls for greater autonomy and, ultimately, self-rule.’<sup>796</sup> The historiography concerning religion and nationalism in Africa has shown that Africans could take Christian ideas and use them to achieve political objectives. Scholars have examined ways in which religious work and thought contributed to racialized political movements in Africa, but this work has focused predominantly on colonial contexts in which the racial dynamic was characterized by white ruler and Black ruled. Examples include Sylvia Jacobs’ work on Black missionaries in South Africa, Karen Fields’ research on the Watchtower Movement in Central Africa<sup>797</sup> and, more recently, Daniel Magaziner’s focus on the ways Christian theology could be used to help fashion ideas about racial identity and destiny in South Africa.<sup>798</sup>

While scholars who usually investigated the period between Sudan’s 1956 independence and South Sudan’s 2011 independence focused on explaining these conflicts, detailing Southern suffering and coping, and emphasizing their alienation from Khartoum regimes,<sup>799</sup> Cherry Leonardi has suggested that this period can be told in other ways; ‘people told personal histories of war...but these were intertwined with struggles to

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<sup>796</sup> Heather Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2003; 139.

<sup>797</sup> See Sylvia M. Jacobs, ‘The Historical Role of Afro-Americans in American Missionary Efforts in Africa’. In Sylvia M. Jacobs (ed.), *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982; 5-30; Sylvia M. Jacobs, ‘The Impact of Black American Missionaries in Africa’. In *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa*, 219-228; and Karen Fields, *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.

<sup>798</sup> Daniel Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets: Faith, Hope, and Politics in South Africa, 1968-1977*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010.

<sup>799</sup> Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with Government in South Sudan: Histories of Chiefship, Community and State*. Oxford: James Currey (Eastern Africa Series), 2013; 144.

find schooling...deal with difficult neighbours and relatives, redress and revenge grievances...War appears as a context for people's life stories, rather than as the focus in itself of their narratives.'<sup>800</sup> This reality opens up the possibility of a more detailed examination of that period's political history, leading Douglas Johnson to ponder the factors that led Catholic priest and MP Saturnino Lohure to become a separatist in the 1960s.<sup>801</sup> While many of the most prominent figures in Southern Sudanese political life were products of mission schools (including Catholic priests like Lohure), the missionary impact on Southern political ideologies remains open for interrogation. What did priests like Lohure and Doggale take from their ecclesiastical training and experiences to lead them to embark on such public acts of political dissent? Building upon Leonardi's claim, how might their personal recollections and histories change modern understandings of the wartime context in which they wrote? What links can be drawn between clerical experience and separatist ideology during the First Civil War?

This chapter is my attempt to address these questions. Like Magaziner it concerns Christianity's role in shaping ideas about national destiny, but this chapter diverges in my interest in emphasizing experience and mistreatment as engines driving political dispositions and Biblically-based identities. I analyze Tutuo's writings not only as a lens into the ways his experiences of discrimination informed his political ideology but also as a microcosm of a broader linguistic strategy characterizing nationalist thought. His sense of 'enslavement'—an idiom which, as I have shown, gained increasing political currency during the war years—was not just a rhetorical strategy to invoke sympathy but was also

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<sup>800</sup> Ibid, 144.

<sup>801</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, 'A New History for a New Nation: The Search for South Sudan's Usable Past'. Keynote address given at the 9<sup>th</sup> International South Sudan and Sudan Studies Conference. Bonn, 23-25 July 2012. [accessed through Rift Valley Institute], 5.

rooted in an understanding of history and his perspective of mission discrimination. When his petitions to colonial and Catholic authorities failed he used the evidence to justify his clerical resignation. Rather than this narrative concluding with his departure into the proverbial sunset, I show how these experiences continued to shape Tutuo's career and ideological trajectory as he moved from the ecclesiastical to the political arena of the Anyanya liberation movement. In carrying ideas from one context of racial oppression to another, he diagnosed the problem of domination from the North and identified the remedy: national independence.

### **The Verona Fathers and Racial Politics**

During the Condominium period which lasted from 1899 to 1956, Southern mission work was led by three organizations: the Church Missionary Society, the American (Presbyterian) Mission, and the Catholic Verona Fathers. Under the mission 'sphere' system instituted in the early twentieth century the Catholics possessed, at least into the late 1930s, a monopoly of educational work in Western Equatoria and on the Nile's West Bank in Upper Nile Province. The Catholic Mission also exercised similar, though not officially mandated, influence east of the Nile in Southern Equatoria. By 1937 there were roughly one hundred and eighty to two hundred Verona Brothers, Sisters, and Fathers of mostly Italian nationality working in the South, which translated in practical terms to there being about five times as many Italian Catholics as there were Protestants—British and American—put together.<sup>802</sup>

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<sup>802</sup> Sudan Archive Durham, Durham (SAD) 664/7/8, letter from C.W.M. Cox, 'Italian Missionaries in the Southern Sudan', 13 Oct. 1937 and SAD 663/12/29, C.W.M. Cox, 'Secret. Extract, Dealing with the Catholic Missions, from Mr. Cox's Report on his journey in the Southern Sudan—May to July, 1937.' [containing extracts of 664/7/8] [1937]. For date see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, 'Christopher William Machell Cox' <http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/coxcwm.xml;query=C.W.M.%20Cox;brand=default#1>. Accessed 29 May 2014.

Verona mission work with the Zande at Mupoi began in the early twentieth century. Over time education became perhaps the most preeminent feature of Catholic mission work among the Zande, with chiefs eager to have schools and churches established in their villages.<sup>803</sup> Though the Zande were among the most receptive groups to Verona education many Southerners were initially suspicious that education was another means of subjugation. For example, when the British asked the Verona to extend their work from Wau northwards towards the Dinka, the people of Kwajok were initially reluctant to send their children to school. However, after one chief agreed to bring his son on the premise that he would not be baptized others followed suit. At the end of the school year those chiefs who had brought high-achieving boys were awarded a prize, and in time chiefs brought cows to school to support the work and eventually accepted baptism.<sup>804</sup> By the end of World War II Verona work in Bahr el Ghazal was still marked by an emphasis on education. Schoolboys and schoolgirls were recruited through the chiefs, as missionary Eduardo Mason would form friendships with chiefs and persuade them to send their sons to school first. Still, when many Dinka accepted Christianity it did not come with the complete acceptance of all missionary teachings. Strong pressure was exerted on schoolboys and girls to be baptized, with some Christians remembering weekly gifts of sugar and salts as attempts to buy their faith.<sup>805</sup>

Mission schools throughout Africa were crucibles for future Church and nationalist leaders, with mission-educated elites often serving at the forefront of movements that challenged European dominance. This may reflect, in part, the fact that

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<sup>803</sup> William Anderson, Roland Werner, and Andrew Wheeler, *Day of Devastation Day of Contentment: The History of the Sudanese Church Across 2000 Years*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Sudan Church History, volume 10), 2001 [1<sup>st</sup> reprint]; 225-226, 291-292.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid, 273-274.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid, 342-343.

students attended those schools for intentional political, social, and economic reasons.<sup>806</sup> In the Sudan, for example, people engaged with missionaries in the Nuba Mountains were ‘constantly seeking new sources of material wealth and spiritual power’,<sup>807</sup> while the Dinka ‘saw that they needed enough of their own people capable of thinking in foreign ways, of meeting foreigners on their own ground while remaining Dinka in their loyalties, to understand and circumvent encroachments on their autonomy’.<sup>808</sup> Though some have argued that few Africans attended mission schools for their eschatological message,<sup>809</sup> I later suggest that Tutuo’s religious training and priestly experiences influenced a liberationist thought that he employed against both the Verona Fathers and Arabs. Far from trying to make a case representing Patterjee’s derisive claim that ‘even our imaginations must remain ever colonized’,<sup>810</sup> Tutuo illustrates that material learned in mission schools could be harnessed by Africans to fit their political agendas in ways that their educators may have never envisioned.

Allied with the work of mission education were efforts to translate the Bible into Southern vernaculars. During the Condominium period Bible translation was done primarily in the New Testament, with the Gospels considered starting points because narrative was deemed easier to translate and the life of Christ a launching pad for evangelism. Although the goal for publication purposes was the completed New

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<sup>806</sup> Edward H. Berman, *African Reactions to Missionary Education*. New York and London: Teachers College Press, Columbia University (Publications of the Center for Education in Africa), 1975; xi-xii, xv.

<sup>807</sup> Justin Willis, ‘The Nyamang Are Hard to Touch’: Mission Evangelism and Tradition in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan, 1933-1952’ *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33.1 (2003), 33.

<sup>808</sup> R.G. Lienhardt, ‘The Dinka and Catholicism’. in J. Davis (ed.), *Religious Organization and Religious Experience*. London, New York: Academic Press, 1982; 86. As taken and cited in John W. Burton, ‘Christians, Colonists, and Conversion: a View from the Nilotic Sudan’ *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 23.2 (1985), 364 (see fn. 1).

<sup>809</sup> Berman, *African Reactions to Missionary Education*, xi-xii.

<sup>810</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History), 1993; 5.

Testament, some portions of the Old Testament were also translated; for example Nuer, Moro, and Dinka translators did Genesis and Exodus, books considered foundational for understanding the New Testament. The Catholics had Bible histories in several local languages—including Tutuo's Zande—that gave Biblical overviews without being translations in themselves, but by the 1964 expulsion a complete Zande translation of the New Testament had been achieved.<sup>811</sup>

The Verona were not immune from accusations of racism, as missionaries in Sudan and elsewhere on the continent brought their own views of race, culture, and civilization into the communities they sought to evangelize.<sup>812</sup> In Southern Africa, for example, missionaries were initially charged with facilitating 'the cultural reorientation that accompanied black accommodation to the social reality of white power', but by the 1890s the American Zulu Mission experienced a crisis with the advent of settler rule and the growing issue of self-control.<sup>813</sup> Deborah Gaitskell, who has examined religious interactions between black and white women through the lives of missionary women who worked with African congregations in an around Johannesburg, concluded that 'Race, but also church status and authority, gave these women power in a late imperial setting and on towards the end of empire—but white male clergy or increasingly self-sufficient and confident African churchwomen could undermine or reject their overtures.'<sup>814</sup> Missionaries were thus critical figures in the execution of broader racial colonial

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<sup>811</sup> Janet Persson, *In Our Own Languages: The Story of Bible Translation in Sudan*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Faith in Sudan No. 3), 1997 [1998 reprint]; 9, 20-21.

<sup>812</sup> Eugene A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975; xi.

<sup>813</sup> Clement T. Keto, 'Race Relations, Land and the Changing Missionary Role in South Africa: A Case Study of the American Zulu Mission, 1950-1910' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 10.4 (1977): 600, 601, 612, 626.

<sup>814</sup> Deborah Gaitskell, 'Female Faith and the Politics of the Personal: Five Mission Encounters in Twentieth-Century South Africa' *Feminist Review* 65 (2000): 69, 70, 87.

schemes, and their individual interactions with others became spheres in which racial dynamics and hierarchies were molded, reinforced, and traversed.

In a similar fashion, missionaries in Southern Sudan operated within a complicated web of racial projects and prejudices. From the onset of Condominium rule the British were adamant about protecting the South from ‘Arabizing’ and ‘Islamicizing’ influences from the North. The North was conceived as an Arab milieu while the South was understood as ‘Black’ and ‘African’, and added to these external perceptions were internal racial hierarchies that existed in Sudan long before British rule. Sikainga notes that over the last two centuries Northern Sudanese have developed genealogies allowing them to claim Arab descent and ideologies defining who is free and who is enslavable. Arab ancestry came to define freedom while darker skin and animism were associated with servility.<sup>815</sup> The widely-documented system of slave raiding upon Southern communities on the peripheries of state power during the Turco-Egyptian era (1821-1885) contributed to a general trepidation of all light-skinned outsiders who, regardless of their background, were labeled ‘Turks’.<sup>816</sup> Notwithstanding their own notions of race and civilization, missionaries entering Southern Sudan confronted these internal racial dynamics. Protasio Dut Wol of Gogrial stated that missionaries in Gogrial’s Dinka area were suspected of being ‘men snatchers’: ‘The Dinkas were remembering what Turks did during their time to them. They say there is no difference between Turkish and Missionaries because they are all white people. So they have the same attitudes.’ With this trepidation the chief was reluctant to send boys to school and people were reticent to

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<sup>815</sup> Ahmed Sikainga, *Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labor in Colonial Sudan*. Austin: University of Texas Press (Modern Middle East Series, No. 18), 1996; xiii.

<sup>816</sup> Lilian P. Sanderson, *Education, Religion & Politics in Southern Sudan, 1899-1964*. Neville Sanderson, contributor. London: Ithaca Press; Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1981; 11 and Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism*, 11-12.



convert to Christianity.<sup>817</sup> Anglican Bishop Llewellyn Gwynne likewise recounted an anecdote in which a local chief expressed that they wanted to know if the missionaries were merchants, soldiers, or government representatives. The response that they were God's servants evinced the reply that "We have heard that before from the Turook (Turks) when they came and gave us gifts, spoke kind words and suddenly surrounded our village shooting the old people and seizing the boys and girls sold them as slaves in Khartoum."<sup>818</sup>

If missionaries had to contend with the baggage of being light-skinned foreigners, Dinka students were confronted with what they perceived as prejudicial treatment from the Verona Fathers. While missionaries generally expected Sudanese children to enter the mission compound, some students recalled that when priests entered Dinka compounds they refused to sit on the ground and engage in normal interaction. Rejections of hospitality included the refusal to drink water, and some of the Catholics were noted for washing their hands right after shaking hands (or refrained from shaking hands altogether). A former student even perceived the fact that the Italians had their own language a form of social control: "Why should they attempt to teach us English and Arabic, which was not their own language, but give us no opportunity to learn Italian?"<sup>819</sup> In these ways the Verona missionaries made visible their beliefs that they were different from the Dinka.

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<sup>817</sup> New Sudan Council of Churches Archives, Juba (NSCC), Ngeu Diing Interview with Protasio Dut Wol, 19 December 1997.

<sup>818</sup> Llewellyn H. Gwynne, 'The Gordon Memorial Mission of the Upper Nile'. *The Sudan Diocesan Review* 2.5 (1950), 27.

<sup>819</sup> Mark R. Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity: The Origins and Development of Christianity among the Dinka of Sudan with Special Reference to the Songs of Dinka Christians*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa (Faith in Sudan No. 11), 2001; 201-202 for Verona-Dinka relationship information. For direct quotation see Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 202, where cites J. Ayok and C. Parek.

Internal British correspondence in the 1930s—with its own biases, no doubt—supported Dinka claims of Italian prejudice. In a confidential note on the Roman Catholic missions in Southern Sudan, Resident Inspector for the Southern Provinces A.G. Hickson commented that they generally did not esteem the Sudanese or their potential, social authority, or ‘tribal solidarity’. Noting further that he did not know of any Sudanese who had been trained by the mission to carry responsibility, Hickson acknowledged that this could have been because the Italian staff was so large that they did not need such help. Nevertheless, he expressed his belief that the Fathers wanted to keep power amongst themselves: ‘I do not think the missions are assisting in the development of native administration nor the training of leaders in a sense of responsibility which that development demands.’<sup>820</sup> Governor of Equatoria Martin Parr joined Hickson in his criticisms, opining that ‘By birth and upbringing and by religious training the Italians are out of sympathy with the English attitude to native races and Indirect Rule.’<sup>821</sup> Parr furthermore warned that given the current political state the Italians were loyal to their country and ‘bitterly hostile to England’, suggesting that the increasingly tenuous political situation between England and Italy in Europe may have wrought the racist allegations and additional charges that they might have insidious intentions; ‘The Italians have no interest in the political stability of the Southern Sudan, it is no[t] unreasonable to

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<sup>820</sup> SAD 664/7/4, 5, A.G. Hickson, ‘Note on the Roman Catholic Missions in the Southern Sudan’, 9 Jun. 1937; SSNA Box 381, Folder EP.46.C.5, A.G. Hickson, ‘Sacred Heart Intermediate School Okaru. Visited November 22<sup>nd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>. 1934.’ No. RIL/13-A-3/34; For date see Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, ‘Christopher William Machell Cox’ <http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/coxcwm.xml;query=C.W.M.%20Cox;brand=default#1>. Accessed 29 May 2014.

<sup>821</sup> SAD 669/3/3, letter from Martin Parr to [C.W.M.] Cox, 18 May 1937. For Parr’s biographical information see Durham University Special Collections Catalog, ‘Martin Willoughby Parr’ <http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/parrmw.xml;query=martin%20parr;brand=default#1>. Accessed 23 May 2014.

say they would welcome a real “bust-up” which would both embarrass England and provide political pickings for Italy.’<sup>822</sup>

During this time the Church prepared for independence by undergoing its own form process of Sudanization, with the Catholics ordaining the twentieth century’s inaugural cohort of Southern priests including Saturnino Lohure, Ireneo Dud, and Angelo Tutuo.<sup>823</sup> Despite the racial progress these ordinations may have signified, relations between Sudanese and European clerics were thorny. Sudanese Anglican, Presbyterian, and Catholic clergy have since expressed frustration at the ways missionaries ran their churches, with claims that they were treated as second-class and excluded from important Church decision-making. Some Sudanese clergy who emerged in evangelism during the 1940s and 1950s voiced resentment at the negative characterization of their people and cultures and immediately began to demand respectful treatment from the missionaries. As their number grew and education increased, they became more assertive in their demands. On the other side of the racial divide, Euro-American missionaries responded angrily to Sudanese challenges to their attitudes and behaviors.<sup>824</sup>

#### Angelo Tutuo and the ‘Color Bar’

*Sudanese Catholic Clergy* is, along with Vittorino Dellagiacomà’s 1968 *Sudanese Clergy*, the only published work with ample information on Tutuo’s life. From those two sources we learn that he was a Zande born at Ndoruma in around 1917 to parents Tutuo and Inipayo. Baptized at Mupoi in 1930, he was accepted at Bussere Minor Seminary in

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<sup>822</sup> The aforementioned Parr quotes come from his May 18, 1937 letter to Cox [SAD.669/3/1-5]; the first quote comes from 669/3/3, the latter from 669/3/4. More on Anglo-Italian relations and its impact on the missionary complex in Southern Sudan in the 1930s can be found in Sanderson[s], *Education, Religion & Politics*, 212-216.

<sup>823</sup> *Sudanese Catholic Clergy: From the Beginning to 2006*. Khartoum, 24-28. At least three Sudanese priests were ordained between 1865 and 1887, but no more until 1944. See *SCC*, 23-24.

<sup>824</sup> Philip Pitya, ‘History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan: 1898-1964’ Diss., Boston University, 1996; 625-626.

1933 and Gulu Seminary in 1939. After serving years of probation for reasons unknown, he was ordained in Mupoi as the first Zande priest in 1946. After working among the Azande and Dinka for some years he retired from ministry in 1965. Suspected of being poisoned for denouncing an illegal trading permit, Tutuo died as a District Commissioner in Tombora in 1980.<sup>825</sup> From the South Sudan National Archives (SSNA) we learn that during his pre-ordination schooling Tutuo attended Philosophy and Theology schools with Ireneo Dud, Archangel Ali, and Saturnino Lohure—three of the most prominent Catholic clerics during the 1950s and 1960s and two of whom, in Ali and Saturnino, are lionized as martyrs killed in the war.<sup>826</sup> Although his primary distinction in the historical record is being the first Zande priest, SSNA correspondence reveals that rather than leaving the ministry in 1965 as *SCC* maintains, Tutuo had by the end of 1955 resigned from the priesthood after a series of sordid experiences with the Verona Fathers.<sup>827</sup>

Tutuo had legion desires for resigning. He began by alleging that Monseigneur Dominic Ferrara had confiscated his pocket money on the grounds that he had taken Tutuo to Italy: ‘I found it unjust oppression because I would not have gone round Italy on my account, that I should pay.’ Adding insult to injury, Zande Christians had raised money to allow him to travel to Italy. In addition to taking his money, Ferrara confiscated pictures Tutuo had taken on the return trip to Juba.<sup>828</sup> These grievances were followed by two accusations involving relations with two schoolgirls, offering a peak into the

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<sup>825</sup> *SCC*, 25 and Victor Dellagiacoma, *Sudanese Clergy* [from ACR], 1968; 2.

<sup>826</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Tambura, [1955]. See also ‘Joint Christian Protest Against Killings in South Sudan’ *Voice of Southern Sudan: Negritude and Progress* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1965): 3.

<sup>827</sup> SSNA Box EP 377 Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo, Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) [to Governor of Equatoria], 22 Jun. 1953 and SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, 11 Mar. 1955.

<sup>828</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, undated letter [immediately follows SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo letter from Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) {to Governor of Equatoria}, 22 Jun. 1953].

missionaries' sexual politics. During his stay at the Catholic mission at Rimenze, Yambio, Tutuo was accused of having formed a friendship with a schoolgirl. Curiously he did not refute this charge but instead retorted that several Catholic Fathers and Brothers in Zandeland had made the same mistakes, but that rather than spreading rumors the Verona Fathers had in those cases tried to quell such charges. To this end he added that 'no Verona Fr. will deny that they even had a daughter here with a Zande girl...why should they blame me so much...as they now do if they don't punish the same mistakes in their brothers?'<sup>829</sup> Tutuo was removed from Yambio to Mupoi, where he was accused of raping a schoolgirl. Though he denied this charge the Prefect and some Fathers backed her claim and brought him to court, where he was forced to pay a fine.<sup>830</sup> While Tutuo made no mention of the evidence brought against him, celibacy was difficult to enforce and sexual misconduct became a primary target of clerical discipline. In 1956 an Italian priest at Kwajok was accused of impregnating an unmarried Dinka girl. With the president of the appeal court threatening the priest's life, the Mission quickly had the priest transferred. Said one Catholic observer,

“We never expected a priest to be involved with sexual relationships...The opinion among the Dinka population dropped concerning the missionaries....a girl, in a normal situation is the future investment of a Dinka family...but if you spoil her, pregnate her, nobody will be interested in marrying her...The people didn't want to trust missionaries by then.”<sup>831</sup>

Though this anecdote suggests that Italians were not exempt from being held accountable for sexual misconduct, the Mission's decision to transfer the priest—rather than

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<sup>829</sup> Ibid.

<sup>830</sup> Ibid.

<sup>831</sup> For anecdote and comments on issues concerning clerical celibacy see Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 210; For the quotation Nikkel cites a 1991 interview from an unnamed source in fn. 135. See also Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 209.

suspending or removing him from the priesthood—was ostensibly done to insure his safety rather than as a disciplinary measure. Conversely, when considered among the host of other complaints expressed by Tutuo, the rape charge he received from the Italians was almost certainly done to impugn his integrity.

When Monseigneur Ferrara traveled to the United States in 1951, Tutuo alleged that Fathers at Mupoi treated him with disdain. He maintained that the Italians refused to give him food on the basis that he was merely a ‘guest’ of the Verona Fathers, and he was also refused permission to give Mass with Chalices every priest in the country should have been allowed to use. At that point Tutuo joined other Zande priests in sending complaints to Ferrara concerning their mistreatment. This show of solidarity not only illustrates that Tutuo was not alone in his abuse but also that on a broader level their willingness to lodge complaints to Ferrara (who, from Tutuo’s perspective, was guilty of wrongdoing). These Sudanese priests—new, vastly-outnumbered racial minorities in a staunch hierarchical structure—established a precedent for actions that could be taken to redress offenses. Despite his protest Tutuo was suspended from saying Mass, administering Sacraments, refused food, and kept from performing any priestly ministries. These actions compelled him to resign.<sup>832</sup> After meeting with Bishop Eduardo Mason in 1953 Tutuo agreed to leave his Equatoria homeland and travel to Bahr el Ghazal, though with the same Verona Fathers he had worked with. During his stint there he expressed more resentment for Ferrara and the other Mupoi Prefectures who had insisted that he leave Zandeland in the first place. The change of scenery did nothing to stop the mistreatment. In June of that year he expressed conviction that Ferrara and the

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<sup>832</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, undated letter [immediately follows letter from A. Tutuo, Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) {to Governor of Equatoria}, 22 Jun. 1953].

Vicar Apostolic of Bahr el Ghazal had contrived to tell Government officials not to give him employment, compelling him to conclude that ‘in this way I am undergoing a mild form of persecution and exile.’<sup>833</sup>

Tutuo at last decided to stop living with them altogether, amounting to his ultimate withdrawal from priestly duties.<sup>834</sup> Throughout these recollections Tutuo maintained that the Verona Fathers’ mistreatment was racially-motivated by employing the term ‘color bar’ to describe the wellspring of his discontent. In March 1955 he summarized his conclusions with the following declaration:

‘And I can’t help it or do otherwise, because I am a real prisoner & slave living with them, under their authority; and it is what I perfectly know, that they intend for me, or for us Native Priests...inferior to them in every respect...mild slavery. To be always inferior to any Missionary Eouropean [sic] Priest, Brother, or Sister; regardless of Office-age- or right, which is nothing else but COLOUR BAR. I can’t bear such a life, A life of being guarded day and night, criticised & blamed, reported of all possible unbecoming & dirty facts.’<sup>835</sup>

In a subsequent letter Tutuo denounced the charges of his philandering and vented that other African priests had been similarly mistreated by their European counterparts. He claimed, for example, that whenever disputes arose between African and European Fathers punishment was always inflicted upon the African involved. This was so, Tutuo

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<sup>833</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo, Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) [to Governor of Equatoria], 22 Jun. 1953 and SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Catholic Mission Kuajok, 11 Mar. 1955.

<sup>834</sup> My interpretation of the SSNA documents is that Tutuo actually resigned twice; as he stated in April 1955 that he couldn’t tolerate work as a priest anymore but earlier referred to resignation in an undated letter positioned right after a Tutuo-authored 1953 letter. Why he would have resigned twice is befuddling, though the simpler answer would of course be that the undated letter is also from 1955.

<sup>835</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Catholic Mission Kuajok, 11 Mar. 1955. His decision to stop living with them and essentially withdraw from priestly duties is expressed in the same letter.

reasoned, because of the color bar.<sup>836</sup> In one moment he credited the Verona Fathers with bringing God's Word into Sudan and contribution in laying an educational foundation. Nevertheless he noted their role in keeping them ignorant, binding them with religious teaching, and forcing them into servility 'which is all...based on racial or colourbar discrimination...After 8 [eight] years service as a Pries [sic] in such hardship, I would rather become...a mere peasant than continue the life of a priest with them.'<sup>837</sup> Tutuo never returned to full-time religious work; 'I have resigned, and turned myself to the Sudan Gvt. for service to my country, thereby to earn my living as any other patriotic citizen.'<sup>838</sup>

Both Tutuo's story and Dinka complaints of their treatment from the Verona illustrate in quite detailed form what Elizabeth Elbourne termed 'mechanisms of exclusion', or methods framed in terms of race or civilization by which African Christians were kept from being incorporated into white society.<sup>839</sup> From subtle rejections of hospitality to the unequal treatment afforded to Zande priests, it was evident that shared faith did not inhibit efforts to reinforce and perpetuate racial hierarchies within the mission compound. As Elbourne 'Christianity may have become in some senses a shared language, but Christian missions were still often sites of confrontation. Missionaries were often abusively scornful of their targets' societies, for example, and

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<sup>836</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, 'SUBJECT: Points of Complaint', Catholic Mission Kuajok, 4 Mar. 1955.

<sup>837</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo (Yambio) to Governor of Equatoria, 28 Apr. 1955.

<sup>838</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Tambura, [1955].

<sup>839</sup> Elizabeth Elbourne, *Blood Ground: Colonialism, Missions, and the Contest for Christianity in the Cape Colony and Britain, 1799-1853*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002; 11.



this scorn had costs'.<sup>840</sup> Still, in many ways Tutuo's resignation and subsequent political theology each represent vestiges and consequences of such actions.

His petition to Ferrara allows us to critique his strategy of appeal. Who else did he complain to, and what might his choice of recipients reveal about his resistance politics? That the SSNA now houses his correspondence evinces the fact that Tutuo drew British officials into his argument against race-based oppression. In addition to his ecclesiastical superiors Ferrara, Mason, and the Apostolic Delegate, Tutuo copied his correspondences to British officials including the Governor of Equatoria (presumably J.C.N. Donald, Governor in 1954 and 1955), G. Janson Smith (Assistant Director of Education for Southern Provinces), and H.B. Bullen (Province Education Inspector, Yambio).<sup>841</sup> In 1942 Tutuo studied in a Primary Teachers' Training Course under Janson Smith, who would later advocate for training Southern Sudanese for the priesthood in the Sudan rather than Uganda. Over a decade later Tutuo sought Smith's assistance in finding a job, but their prior pupil-teacher relationship did not appear to help; when Bullen forwarded his job request to Smith, '[Smith] who being a Catholic, before giving any reply of help had to ask the advice of the Catholic Church authorities—who on their part—a priori—so to speak, had dissuaded him from giving me any support'. Tutuo also mentioned that he was directing the Zande District Commissioner and others to send him word of any

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<sup>840</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>841</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo for Governor Equatoria Province; 23 Feb. 1953; SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. He-Tutuo to Apostolic Delegate, Bishop E. Mason, Mgr. D. Ferrara, Gov. Equatoria, Fr F. Giorgetti, Zande Native Priests, 'Catholic Mission Kuajok 7/3/55, 7 Mar. 1955; SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo (Yambio) to Governor of Equatoria, 28 Apr. 1955.

possible letters or recommendations on his behalf that they received through a ‘trustworthy person’ rather than an Italian or Verona channels.<sup>842</sup>

By seeking out their assistance in finding employment, Tutuo approached the British as parties capable of ensuring that he would not have to suffer indefinitely from the racial mistreatment that forced him into resignation—and unemployment—in the first place. It is thus tempting to argue that his strategy was to use the British as co-laborers in fighting the mistreatment he framed to the Governor of Equatoria as ‘fundamentally based on racial or colourbor [sic] discrimination’.<sup>843</sup> The British, from his perspective, could do so helping him find work and continue with his life. This move was not altogether different from a similar maneuver made by other members of ‘oppressed’ African groups who appropriated abolitionist idioms to draw authorities in London to pay attention to local inequalities. Activists in the Tanganyika African National Union, Kikuyu detainees in government-run camps, and individuals in the Uganda’s Mubende District each adopted the word ‘slavery’ to illustrate unequal power relations with the colonial government. The enslavement accusation transformed partisan interests into a moral question that demanded attention. As Derek Peterson has noted, ‘abolitionist rhetoric...dramatize[d] petitioners’ plight as exploited subjects, suffering under local authorities’ tyranny. By positioning themselves in this way, African entrepreneurs obliged British administrators...to act in order to uphold British honor.’<sup>844</sup>

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<sup>842</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Roman Catholic Mission Kuajok (Wau) {to Governor of Equatoria}, 22 Jun. 1953]; SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo, Catholic Mission Kuajok, 11 Mar. 1955; FOR SSNA Box EP 378, Folder 46.C.1.7, G. Janson-Smith to Governor Equatoria, ‘Land Lease’, 9 November 1948.

<sup>843</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, A. Tutuo to Governor Equatoria, 28 April 1955.

<sup>844</sup> Derek R. Peterson, ‘Abolitionism and Political Thought in Britain and East Africa’. In Derek R. Peterson (ed.), *Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa, and the Atlantic*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press (Cambridge Centre of African Studies Series), 2010; 1-3.

If Tutuo and others looked to the British to uphold their honor by coming to their assistance, it can conversely be argued that Tutuo's accusations of 'slavery' and his actions to redress this wrong were historically-rooted attempts to defend his honor as a Zande. Iliffe argues that it is essential to account for changing notions of honor when seeking to understand African behavior, and that honor—the chief ideological impulse driving African behavior before the introduction of world religions—remained a strong motivation for those who accepted such faiths.<sup>845</sup> The Dinka and the Nuer, in this regard, typified armed resistance that drew on traditions of heroic honor and the duty of revenge, often regarding their war against the North to specific insults that included slavery idioms: "The Arabs called us dogs and slaves and said that we were no better than the dirt under their feet."<sup>846</sup> The Zande could also fuse its perceptions of Arabs with slavery, as they had in their history been forced to confront the reality of slave raiding and Arab intervention. In southern slaving grounds slave armies and settlements spread south in a process that affected Zande country, and though the arrival of Sudanese slave raiders into the Central African Republic in the mid-nineteenth century compelled some Zande rulers to ally with the raiders, many suffered mightily from the arrival of African slave raiders.<sup>847</sup> Given this context Tutuo may have had an historical understanding of the significance of the term 'slavery' in Zande history, lending more weight to his use of the term in his modern circumstance.

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<sup>845</sup> John Iliffe, *Honour in African History*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005; 1.

<sup>846</sup> Ibid, 352; Iliffe takes quote from Sharon Hutchinson, *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War, and the State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996; 133.

<sup>847</sup> E.E. Evans-Pritchard, 'The Organization of a Zande Kingdom' *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 1.4 (1960): 29, 31; Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (African Studies). Second Edition. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000; 193 and Richard A. Bradshaw, 'Central African Republic: Nineteenth Century: Gbaya, Banda, and Zande'. In Kevin Shillington (ed.), *Encyclopedia of African History*. Volume 1. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2005; 232.

It is important to note that while Tutuo was accusing the missionaries of creating conditions of ‘mild slavery’, other Southerners were tapping into the legacy of Sudanese slavery to levy their concerns about the prospects of a Northern-dominated government. In the late 1920s the ‘Southern Policy’ effectively divided Sudan by placing severe restrictions on trade and movement between the North and South. As a result, education in the North progressed along far more superior lines than predominantly mission-run Southern schools. Over time Northern elites who envisioned Sudan as a member of the Arab world assumed leadership of the nationalist movement, and many Southerners became incensed at their relative exclusion from discussions and decisions concerning the future political make-up of the country. When an Anglo-Egyptian agreement was reached in 1953 on the right of self-determination and temporary self-government, Southerners had no say due to their lacking a political party. In October 1954 the Sudanization Committee accorded Southerners six out of 800 senior administrative posts. The Mutiny of Southern troops in Torit in August 1955 marks the common starting point for the First Sudanese Civil War, though Rolandsen notes that violence did not reach the level of civil war until 1963.<sup>848</sup>

Leading up to independence anti-British thought entailed a popular argument that their departure was merely developing into a “change of masters”.<sup>849</sup> Two notable

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<sup>848</sup> Øystein H Rolandsen, ‘A False Start: Between War and Peace in the Southern Sudan, 1956-62’. *The Journal of African History* 52.1 (2011), 105 and Gino Barsella and Miguel Guixot, *A List of Major Dates in the Modern Sudan*. Nairobi [n.d.; housed in Combiani Library, Rome], 1-3. See also Abd al-Rahman Souley interview in Francis M. Deng and M.W. Daly, *Bonds of Silk: The Human Factor in the British Administration of the Sudan*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press (African Series No. 1), 1989; 236-237.

<sup>849</sup> Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism*, 12, where Sharkey takes the “change of masters” quote from Deng D. Akol Ruay. 1994. *The Politics of Two Sudans: The South and North, 1821-1969*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 72. Gordon Muortat stated that when Sudanization was complete ‘...there was not any doubt in the mind of all the southerners that this was nothing but a change of masters.’ See *Silk*, 201.

instances include Benjamin Lwoki's March 1955 statement that northern administrators "behaved as if they were Black British masters"<sup>850</sup> and the 'slave' aspersion thrown from an Arab officer to Black sergeant-major which, according to one account, actually sparked the Torit Mutiny.<sup>851</sup> In no insignificant way, then, Tutuo was also employing a calculated use of the terms 'slave' and 'slavery' to discredit white Catholic priests while other Southerners were doing the same to castigate Northerners. This illustrates not just the transferability of idioms to accomplish similar objectives in different fields, but also the interconnectedness of contemporaneous struggles in Southern Church and political spheres. As spheres were linked and overlapping people could harness similar idioms in different spaces while carrying ideas about their conditions and futures with them.

Tutuo began looking for work and eventually joined the Sudanese Government as a Bookkeeper in Juba Council.<sup>852</sup> Meanwhile, following the Torit Mutiny the Republic of the Sudan officially became a sovereign, independent state in January 1956. On 24 April 1956 Tutuo, listed as both 'Father' and 'Accountant', was among eleven people to meet with the Ministerial Committee for Southern Development to discuss the best ways of achieving Southern improvement.<sup>853</sup>

### Tutuo's Nationalism as Outgrowth of Anti-Verona Thought

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<sup>850</sup> Peter Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*. London: Rex Collins, 1979; 206. See fn. 28, where Woodward cites Lwoki from *Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, 3 March 1955.

<sup>851</sup> SAD 721/3/193-194, Alberto Marino, "The Southern Troops Mutiny". This is a section of his larger memoir entitled 'The Sudan'. See 'Alberto Marino' on Durham University Library Special Collections Catalogue, <http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ead/sad/marinoa.xml;query=marino;brand=default#1>. Consulted 22 August 2014.

<sup>852</sup> SSNA Box EP 377, Folder EP.46.B.4.1, letter from A. Tutuo for Governor Equatoria Province; 23 Feb. 1953 and SSNA Box ZD 58, Folder ZD.40.A, Superintendent of Police Equatoria, 'Summary of Investigation. Gist of Evidence Arrived at so far', 21 Apr. 1958.

<sup>853</sup> ZD/1.C.5/2; SSNA Box EP 213, Folder EP.SCR.10.C.6 [Aug. 2013 designation], letter from District Commissioner Zande to Governor Equatoria, 28 Apr. 1956 and SSNA Box EP 213, Folder EP.SCR.10.C.6 [Aug. 2013 designation], District Commissioner Zande to Governor Equatoria, 'List of Those to Meet the Southern Ministerial Committee in Yambio on 4.24.56', 28 Apr. 1956.

The period between 1955 and 1962 was marked chiefly by increased political tension, minor episodes of violence, and social/economic stagnation, each of which contributed to government attitudes and policies that increased the likelihood of a Southern insurgency.<sup>854</sup> In July 1956 the Umma Party and People's Democratic Party replaced Ismail al-Azhari's government and elected Abdallah Khalil as Prime Minister. The following month a National Committee was appointed to draft a Constitution to be presented to the Constituent Assembly, and in February 1957 the Ministry of Education announced government intentions to take over Southern mission schools.<sup>855</sup> Southern MPs walked out in June 1958 after the Constituent Assembly rejected federation (the National Committee's Arab contingent had earlier rejected an earlier proposal for a federated state),<sup>856</sup> and General Ibrahim Abboud assumed power after the Umma party invited the Army to assume command. During his tenure a violent program of Arabization and Islamicization was implemented, highlighted by the 1964 expulsion of all foreign missionaries from the South. In October of that year Abboud was removed by a civilian uprising<sup>857</sup> and replaced by Sirr al-Khatim Khalifa, who tried to resolve the conflict by organizing the 1965 Round Table Conference in Khartoum. The Conference did not reach definitive conclusions.

Khalifa was replaced by Mohammed Mahgoub, whose effort to solve the Southern problem with a military solution drove thousands into exile. Sadiq al Mahdi became Prime Minister in 1967 and introduced Islamic features into the constitutional

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<sup>854</sup> Rolandsen, 'A False Start', 105.

<sup>855</sup> Barsella and Guixot, *A List of Major Dates in the Modern Sudan*, 3 and Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, 2005; 14.

<sup>856</sup> Barsella and Guixot, *A List of Major Dates in the Modern Sudan*, 3, 4. See also ACR A/86/26, 'The Southern Front Memorandum to O.A.U. on Afro-Arab Conflict in the Sudan', Oct. 1965.

<sup>857</sup> Barthelemy Corne, 'Thorns from Khartoum' *Worldmission* Vol. 19 No. 4 (Winter 1968-1969), 30-31 and Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*, 14.

proceedings, and the Islamic Charter's Hassan Turabi argued that the South's cultural void would be filled by an Islamic revival and Arab culture.<sup>858</sup> The war concluded when President Gafaar Nimeiri announced in March 1972 that a peace agreement had been reached in Addis Ababa. The Addis Ababa Agreement essentially mandated Southern Sudan's regional autonomy under Sudan's administrative umbrella.<sup>859</sup> Although Sudanese political life during the era was generally dominated from the North, the leading Southern political organization of the era was the Sudan African Closed Districts National Union, founded by Joseph Oduho and Fr. Saturnino. In 1963 it shortened its name to its more well-known appellation SANU. From Kampala the SANU sought to help thousands of refugees who had fled to Uganda and Zaire, and from London it published the *Voice of the Southern Sudan*. By 1963 the Anyanya had essentially assumed its role as the SANU's armed wing.<sup>860</sup>

Tutuo served with the Anyanya in a journalistic capacity and combined anti-Arab vitriol with a nationalistic, liberatory theology. From these writings one can gauge the ways in which theology informed his ideology, and how racial oppression and liberation from suffering permeated his discourse. Of greatest significance is the remarkable semblance between the idioms and ideas from his earlier anti-Verona rhetoric in the subsequent war context, suggesting that his earlier sentiments concerning Verona racism informed his nationalist thinking as a member of the Anyanya. Writing from the Anyanya Intelligence Office in 1969, Tutuo wrote that the world had forgotten and forsaken the Anyanya 'in this warfare and struggle with the Arabs and the Arab Tribes of the Northern

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<sup>858</sup> Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*, 16-17.

<sup>859</sup> Philippa Scott, 'The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Liberation Army (SPLA)' *Review of African Political Economy* Vol. 12, Iss. 33 (1985): 69.

<sup>860</sup> Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination*, 15-16 and Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; 79-80.

Sudan; who have since 1955 launched a campaign of genocide and extermination against us, with full barbarity and every inhuman atrocities [sic] of man-slaughter and massacres'. Through his use of the word 'inhuman' he participated in a wider Southern discourse demonizing Arabs as evil, violent, and absent of redeeming qualities. Conversely, Southerners were portrayed as innocent recipients of unjust and unlawful oppression. Tutuo expressed hope that God would not allow the Southern plight to last for long, using the slavery theme earlier used to describe his troubles with the missionaries: 'we are sure we shall report victories soon or later, because we do not like to become slaves to the Arabs of the Northern Sudan; and God will neither allow that. We are fighting a just war for our liberation, the independence of our country the Southern Sudan...AMEN.'<sup>861</sup> His letter from 15 June 1969 reveals more of his thought concerning Southern troubles and God's future liberatory work. After crediting God's Providence in preserving them from their 'inhuman enemies', he again referenced 'the yoke-domination and slavery of the Northern Sudanese Arabs and Muslims. [sic]' His religiously-infused language of suffering and redemption under to auspices of Southern political liberation is further exemplified in the following words from the same letter:

'in the jungles of our dear motherland- the Southern Sudan...patiently awaiting our salvation- Liberation and Independence through the future victories to be reported; God will definitely crown us with soon or later. We are very much concerned now in seeking among our Anyanya military and political heads and leaders, real constant men of determination...real nationalists and pioneers, instructing, insisting and interesting into their minds, hearts and will's initiative...the right Southern Sudan Policy...the

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<sup>861</sup> Each of the preceding two quotations come from Comboniani Missionari Archives, Rome (ACR), A/98/39/5a, A. Tutuo, 'Information from the W.E.R.C. January-April 1969' 22 Apr. 1969.



Heavenly glory God will crown us with in his eternal life to follow among his Holy Angels and Saints'<sup>862</sup>

That Tutuo had by that time attained a relatively high position within the movement can be inferred from the fact that this letter was copied to, among others, leaders Joseph Oduho and Gen. Joseph Lagu.<sup>863</sup>

Perhaps the most intriguing—if not baffling—letters written by Tutuo in the late 1960s was addressed to none other than Dominic Ferrara. The Comboni archive contains two letters written by Tutuo to Ferrara (the first in Italian and the other in Latin) from 1968-69, and though both relate to aid in the midst of the war his sentiments in the Italian-language letter reveal a striking about-face from the 1950s. In his February 1968 correspondence Tutuo tells Ferrara that he is writing like a son to his father, and that since he, the Fathers, and the Sisters had departed (following the 1964 expulsion) his 'children' were suffering from extreme poverty and misery. The misery from the war afflicted both body and soul, Tutuo lamented, and that for this he felt compelled to reach out to Ferrara and other missionaries to come to their rescue.<sup>864</sup> A paucity of correspondence between the mid-fifties and late-sixties makes it impossible to explain his willingness to communicate with Ferrara—one of his principal foes from his earlier priestly days. Nevertheless the letter suggests several possibilities: perhaps they to reconciled following his resignation, or the immense sufferings facing both Sudanese and Euro-American clerics mitigated their former angst towards one another. Tutuo may have

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<sup>862</sup> ACR A/98/39/5b, 'The Voice of the Anyanya', letter from Chairman and Secretary for Defense and Commissioner WERC/H.Qs. to Biki and Ringasi [Councils; inferred from ACR A/98/39/5a, letter from Chairman and Secretary for Defence WERC/H.Qs. to Ringasi and Biki Councils, 22 Apr. 1969], WERC/H.Qs. Ringasi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information Eastern Region (Joseph Oduho) and Chief of General Staff New Liberation Front S.S. Eastern Region (Joseph Lagu), 15 Jun. 1969.

<sup>863</sup> Ibid.

<sup>864</sup> ACR A/98/39/3; A. Tutuo to D. Ferrara (15 May 1969) and ACR A/98/39/3a; A. Tutuo to D. Ferrara (24 February 1968)

also felt that the situation had become so desperate that he was forced to humble himself and plea for help from the last person he actually wanted to ask. Without the benefit of knowing how their relationship changed from his resignation to 1958, it is a perplexing and painfully incomplete moment in this narrative.

Despite the lengthy period between his travails with the Verona Fathers and work with the Anyanya, it is evident that words, ideas, and actions he used to combat Italian missionary racism informed his subsequent nationalist thought as an Anyanya member. To illustrate the framework of his ideology, in both instances Tutuo describes the injustices wrought upon Southerners by racial Others (Italian missionaries and Arabs). With the Italians he likens their treatment of himself and other Zande priests to slavery, persecution, and exile, each of which are rooted in racism and the ‘color bar’ imposed upon them. With the Arabs he referenced yoke-domination and slavery in addition to their genocidal, barbaric, ‘inhuman’ characteristics. In both cases his decision to frame his enemies as enslavers not only allowed him to do the political work of delegitimizing their authority (whether clerical or official) but also laid the foundation for what he deemed as appropriate steps moving forward. Tutuo responded to the Verona racism by filing a formal complaint on behalf of himself and his Zande companions, and when this ultimately failed he separated himself by resigning the priesthood. His resignation—prompted by racism—became the catalyst for his service as a ‘patriotic citizen’. Ten years later Tutuo’s response to Arab ‘barbarities’ and ‘genocide’ mirrored his reaction to Italian racism: espousing complete Southern separation. Joining the Anyanya, he adopted a martial yet liberating Christianity to underline his calls for Southern independence and freedom from Arab ‘yoke-domination’. Given the similar rhetorical strategies and

responses he employed, my contention is that Tutuo's experiences with Italian racism armed him with the models for action used to excoriate Arabs and argue for Southern independence.

The connection between Tutuo's clerical experiences and his subsequent politics exemplifies the broader political 'implications'<sup>865</sup> of Christianity in Africa. J.F. Ade Ajayi argued that nationalism was rooted in the missionary movement, as missionaries possessed the notion of the European nation-state.<sup>866</sup> With new levels of racial discrimination and social exclusion in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries, Africans like the Yoruba were compelled to reassert 'their dignity as a race/nation by a new insistence on the worth of what was distinctive of them'.<sup>867</sup> At the Cape Colony Khosian converts used one form of Christianity against that of settlers and administrators in order to assert their own humanity, further exemplifying the edifying use that Christianity could have in communal identity-formation in a particular sociopolitical context.<sup>868</sup> Thus, despite the tendency for Black, African, and Liberation theologians to reject the cultural imperialism wrought by the missionary movement<sup>869</sup> there is room to interrogate Church/mission influences on the development of such theologies. Tutuo's quotation in which he references eternal life and the fact that God would 'crown' Southern Sudan, for example, illustrates his divergence from the traditional Zande outlook. The Bible is geared towards the millennium, as Christianity looks into the future, pronounces what is to come, and proclaims a coming age of ultimate fulfillment marked

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<sup>865</sup> Here I borrow Elbourne's use of the term when describing Christianity at the Cape Colony (*Blood*, 156).

<sup>866</sup> See J.D.Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2003; 279, where he cites J.F. Ade. Ajayi, 'Nineteenth-Century Origins of Nigerian Nationalism' *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 2 (1961), 196-211.

<sup>867</sup> Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, 279.

<sup>868</sup> Elbourne, *Blood Ground*, 156.

<sup>869</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

by a world history that concludes with its salvation. Conversely the Zande outlook lacks the idea of a culmination to history or a final age of salvation;<sup>870</sup> ‘God was not conceived of as the guardian of morality and social order...He was not a vigilant divinity to some detail of the life of his creatures.’<sup>871</sup> By following his statement that God would bring Anyanya/Southern victory and liberation with the acknowledgement that ‘Heavenly glory’ was also assured, the Zande Tutuo paired his political aspirations (earthly liberation) with a Christian eschatology that spoke of a broader future salvation.

If, as Sharkey has illustrated, colonial structures served as a crucible for Sudanese nationalism in the North, the thread of activism running from the Catholic mission to Southern politics suggests that the priesthood was also a space where future national leaders were prepared. Fr Saturnino Lohure served in Parliament, led the famous 1958 walkout of Southern MPs, co-founded the liberation organization Sudan African National Union, and co-authored the magnum opus of Southern nationalism *The Problem of the Southern Sudan* (1963). Taking up arms, he was killed in 1967. Fr Paolino Doggale was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1957 and arrested for protesting the abolition of Sunday as a public holiday (he lent his typewriter to striking school students to prepare their memorandum). Doggale was jailed in Khartoum for four years.<sup>872</sup> Their trajectories not only recommend their positions as important members of the post-Torit cadre of Southern intellectuals working at the forefront of the liberation movement, but also invite an interrogation of the motivations driving them to act.

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<sup>870</sup> David Sahatini, ‘The Christian Church in Zandeland’. Unpublished paper, 1996; 8. Sahatini’s paper can be found in the Comboniani Library in Rome.

<sup>871</sup> Sahatini, ‘The Christian Church in Zandeland’, 9.

<sup>872</sup> See ‘Saturnino Lohure’ in SCC, 26 and ‘Paolino Doggale’ in SCC 28. See also ‘Sunday is Back’, *Voice of Southern Sudan* 2.4 (1965): 12-13.

Although I have argued that Tutuo derived his rhetorical idioms condemning the North from the negative experiences with the Catholics, those same experiences left theological vestiges and informed his dispensationalist ideology. This claim can be made by taking a closer look at what Sudanese Catholic seminarians were learning in the mid-twentieth century. The first stage of Catholic seminary education was a preparatory five-year period, while the second consisted of approximately eight years of priestly formation at a major seminary (which entailed two years of Classical Studies and Physical Sciences, two years of Philosophy, and four years of Theology). Minor seminarians were given both a secular and religious education, learning subjects like Math, Science, and History with Latin and Religion. As evidenced by the curriculum at St. Paul's National Seminary (founded in 1956), the religious program was quite intensive. After two years of secular subjects and a Philosophy section, the third section of theological studies included Dogmatic (Systematic) Theology, Fundamental Theology, Christology, and Sacramental Theology. A strong emphasis was placed on the study of Sacred Scriptures (Old and New Testament), Moral Theology, Canon Law, Sacred Liturgy, Church History, Patrology, Pastoral Theology and Homiletics. As an element of the seminary curricula major seminarians were encouraged to teach catechism, which during the mid-century included teaching about God's providential role in history: 'the catechumens learned about God and God's action in creation...In the second part, they learned about salvation, or God's action in history through Jesus, the incarnate Son of God...In the third part, the catechumens learned about God's action in history through the Spirit.'<sup>873</sup> There is room to consider the possibility that Tutuo's confidence that God would come to the South's aid was a manifestation of his earlier religious training.

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<sup>873</sup> Pitya, 'History of Western Christian Evangelism in the Sudan', 548-549, 616-619

Tutuo was not alone in espousing a politicized style of religious thought. The idea that Southerners were a ‘chosen people’ whose liberation would be brought about by a concerned God was expressed by other clerics who borrowed from Biblical precedents to construct a setting in which Christian devotion in the face of an oppression could be played out. To begin, this oppression was often framed in the language of enslavement and slavery. As the conflict progressed Southerners often accused Arabs from the North of intending to ‘enslave’ the South, a calculated maneuver which not only invoked the historical legacy of slave-raiding during the Turco-Egyptian era but also framed the push for Southern self-determination and nationhood as one marked by ‘liberation.’ President Ibrahim Nyigilo of the Southern Sudan Christian Association, for instance, stated that ‘In such a nation as the Sudan is constituted today, the African shall remain nothing but a slave...We have no choice but to fight for freedom.’<sup>874</sup> In 1963 Zacharia Duot de Atem wrote to his former teacher, Rev. D.T. Casson, that ‘the Northern Sudanese...are actually attempting to transform the Southerners into a servile people who will always be the servants of the muslims [sic]...They are determined to convert us into an abundant source of slaves for the Arab World.’<sup>875</sup> Indeed, the ready conflation made by those like Saturnino and Atem between Islam and racial slavery stoked fears of Islamicization and further added to the idea that of the Sudan was, for all intents and purposes, a religious battlefield. Fr. Saturnino Lohure, also participated in the discourse framing Arabs as voracious enslavers bent on establishing mastery over their Black, Southern counterparts. Writing as a refugee in 1962, Saturnino opined to a fellow priest that the Southern situation was ‘a question of life or death on one hand and a racial servitude on the other

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<sup>874</sup> SAD 804/8/52-53, 56; Ibrahim Nyigilo, Southern Sudan Christian Association (Kampala) to Heads of Christian Churches, Heads of African States, and Secretary-General of the UN.

<sup>875</sup> SAD.804/8/65-66, Zacharia Duot de Atem to D.T. Casson, 8/4/63, p. 1.

in which Christian South faces complete destruction [sic] and its place being taken by Islam...Our situation does not differ from the moslem threat to Europe in the early centuries'.<sup>876</sup>

Amid the mounting refugee crisis wrought by the war, Southerners looked to the Bible for confirmation that God was present in the midst of their suffering. Bishop Oliver Allison recalled that after the Anyanya was formed and the exodus of refugees was beginning, Canon Ezra Lawiri encouraged him not to worry: "we know our Bibles; we have read the Acts of the Apostles. That is what happened at the beginning of the Church, and it was hard and dangerous for the early Christians. Why not for us?"<sup>877</sup> Stories of exilic journeys drew ready comparisons to the Hebrew Exodus from Egypt, when God led the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery to freedom. Fr. Paolino Doggale described God's protection in protecting seminarians fleeing to Uganda by recalling God's similar protecting prowess with the Israelites in their journey: 'we all managed to reach our destiny safe. Here, I see clearly the finger of God who protected us throughout our dangerous journey as He led the Israelites in their exodus to the holy Land. We are indeed very grateful to our GOOD GOD, so mindful of us.'<sup>878</sup> Writing from the Congo, Bishop Gwynne College Vice President Rev. Christopher Mame expressed hope that God would similarly keep watch over the Sudanese refugees and ensure their passage back home:

"There is much to praise the Lord for because of His guiding us through the difficult journey and saving us from the hands of our enemies. Yet He told the children of Israel that they should return to the land of Canaan when the

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<sup>876</sup> Saturnino Lohure to Rev. Fr. Bartolucci, 3/9/1962; ACR.A/107/19/9, p. 1.

<sup>877</sup> Oliver Allison, *Through Fire and Water*. London: Church Missionary Society, 1976; 1.

<sup>878</sup> ACR.A/95/7/34; Paulino Doggale, 'Account of Kit (Juba-Southern Sudan) Major Seminarists' Departure to Uganda'; July 31, 1965, p. 1.

Babylonians had taken them. And I am sure that in the long run we shall return to our country...<sup>879</sup>

Such invocations to episodes in Biblical history bring to mind Adrian Hastings' argument that Biblical Israel's harmonic religion, government, and territorial sovereignty was the prototype for nationhood, and that societies appropriate their own separate identity when confronted with external state-intrusion.<sup>880</sup> If one is to accept the notion that religious thought rests at the foundation of the secular state,<sup>881</sup> it is crucial to consider the significance of religious appropriations within the broader context of contemporary Southern self-determination and separatism. Not only did they allow people to make sense of their situations but also provided them with a script for the futures that were possible.<sup>882</sup> Anyanya leader Gen. Joseph Lagu opined that as God's children they were destined to defeat the Arabs, using this sense of chosenness as a mechanism to convince international parties to lend support: 'we the indigenous Sudanese people have completely promised before God and Man to become free, or to be completely annihilated... We are absolutely convinced that we are also God's beloved children. It is, therefore, better for us to die than to permanently remain the slaves of any greedy Arabs...'<sup>883</sup> Finally, in the midst of the growing refugee situation the Ugandan periodical *New Day* published a piece by Michael Ngamunde expressing hope that change was on

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<sup>879</sup> Allison, *Through Fire and Water*, 65-66. See also SAD.803/9/41; 'The Story of Bishop Gwynne's Destruction. An eyewitness account given by the Vice-Principal, the Rev. Christopher Mame' [1966], 19, 20.

<sup>880</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; 18, 31.

<sup>881</sup> Lamin Sanneh, 'Religion, Politics, and National Integration: A Comparative African Perspective'. In John O. Hunwick (ed.), *Religion and National Integration in Africa: Islam, Christianity, and Politics in the Sudan and Nigeria*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1992; 151.

<sup>882</sup> I thank my dissertation chair (and primary editor for this paper) Derek Peterson for providing me with the intellectual framework of scripting. See also Derek Peterson, 'Wordy Women' and *Creative Writing*.

<sup>883</sup> Joseph Lagu, 'It is Better to Die than to be Slaves of Greedy Arabs' *Grass Curtain* Vol. 1, No. 2 (August 1970): 18.



the horizon. Ngamunde scoffed at Khartoum's military strength by declaring that it could not stand in the way of God's will for the South to become independent: 'We all know very well that God...is much stronger than the tiny Khartoum security forces. We believe strongly in a separate state for the Southern Sudan, which God will separate in whatever way and date He has fixed'.<sup>884</sup> He went into exile after Prime Minister Mohamed Mahgoub's July 1965 outburst concerning military operations in the South.<sup>885</sup> In these ways there was an opportunity created for Southerners and the Church to make their own history.

#### Closing Assessments

I have proposed that Angelo Tutuo's response to racial discrimination was directly linked to his nationalist ideology and rhetoric with the Anyanya liberation movement. In both cases the idioms and actions he employed against the Italian missionaries, Tutuo was equipped with models to combat oppression from another racial Other (Arabs) as a leader in the liberation movement. In both cases he specifically detailed the oppression in print, joined others in confronting the 'oppressor', and ultimately considered total separation—whether by priestly resignation or calling for complete Southern sovereignty—as the best option. By linking the missionary racism to his subsequent political views, my broader contention is that Southern Church and political history may be connected in deeper ways than previously imagined or considered.

Tutuo's story invites scholars to more deeply interrogate the reasons former priests entered the political sphere. Were other Southern Catholics similarly driven to

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<sup>884</sup> Michael Tawili Ngamunde, 'The Agony of Depopulation' *New Day* (30 September 1964): 3.

<sup>885</sup> Severino Fuli Boki Tombe Ga'le, *Shaping a Free Southern Sudan: Memoirs of Our Struggle 1934-1985*. Limuru: Loa Catholic Mission Council, 2002; 28.

work in the political spectrum after learning certain lessons as priests? A look at Dinka Catholics ordained between 1944 and 1988 becomes particularly enlightening. Of the 135 Sudanese ordained in that period, 18 were Dinka—of which half voluntarily renounced their vows or were suspended for unacceptable conduct. Several Dinka priests entered education and politics. One such figure was Salvatore Atak, who was ordained in 1957 and suspended from holy orders after fathering two children as a refugee in the Central African Republic during the war. After repenting Atak was briefly restored to the ministry but then abandoned the priesthood, becoming a secondary school teacher and writing a book on political issues entitled *Sudan Back to the Stone Age*, which critiqued the Abboud and Hassan Bashir period. Others, including Arkangelo Bak, Alipio Akec, and Mark Mathon, left holy orders to become teachers. Angelo Makur, who was ordained in 1970, left the priesthood to pursue politics in 1979.<sup>886</sup> With these career arcs, there is room to further examine the ways in which such priestly experiences were intertwined with their professional choices, political actions, and ideologies moving forward.

Stories like Tutuo's exemplify the need for a close examination of the roles of Southern Christianity and clergy in the development of Southern nationalist thought during the First Civil War. In recognition of the Church's continued role as a leading influence on Southern politics—which has grown increasingly contentious since the civil unrest began in December 2013—more needs to be done in examining Southern religious and political histories in tandem. Revelations like those from the burgeoning SSNA concerning Angelo Tutuo allow us to do so with renewed vigor.

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<sup>886</sup> Nikkel, *Dinka Christianity*, 208-209. See also SCC, 'Salvatore Atak Awembil Aryak', 31 and 'Angelo Makur', 48.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Khartoum Goliath: The Martial Theology of the *SPLM/SPLA Update*, 1992-2002**

The Second Sudanese Civil War was rooted in the failure of the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. Having almost lost power to Sadiq al-Mahdi's Umma party, President Gafaar Nimeiri sought peace with al-Mahdi and Muslim Brothers' leader Hassan Turabi. Al-Mahdi and Turabi advocated for an Islamic constitution and opposed the Southern autonomy that the Agreement had mandated. From their 1977 meeting at Port Sudan onwards, Nimeiri found it more politically expedient to work with the North. Amid growing ethnic divisions in the South, Nimeiri seized the opportunity to go against the Addis provisions by dissolving the national and regional governments and calling for elections. To this political flurry was added the fact that Chevron discovered oil in Southern Sudan in the late 1970s, spurring some Northern politicians to attempt to redraw provincial boundaries so that the oil fields could be relocated to the North. Thus, Northern efforts to channel profits from newly discovered oil and Nimeiri's political manipulation of the South constituted two primary ingredients in the recipe for conflict.<sup>887</sup> A 1983 mutiny of Southern Sudanese troops officially inaugurated hostilities,

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<sup>887</sup> See 'Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA)' Richard A. Lobban Jr, Robert S. Kramer and Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Third Edition. Lanham, and London: The Scarecrow Press (African Historical Dictionaries, No. 85), 2002; 279 and Yosa Wawa, *Southern Sudanese Pursuits of Self-Determination: Documents in Political History*. Kampala: Marianum Press, 2005; 18-19. Though the *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* cites Nimeiri's political machinations as a point of Southern contention, Wawa states that 'No Southern Sudanese raised an objection about the violation of the Addis Ababa Agreement when Nimeiri interfered with the administration of Lagu [replaced by an interim government in 1980] and Alier [who essentially led the South until 1974]' (19)

and the rebel Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement on was founded on 3 March 1984 under the leadership of John Garang de Mabior. Along with the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, the SPLM served throughout the war as the main resistance movement operating against the government.<sup>888</sup>

The anthropological work of scholars like Douglas Johnson, Sharon Hutchinson, and Marc Nikkel has revealed the ways in which Southerners ‘on the ground’ have historically responded to contemporary circumstances by infusing religious themes into their thought and action.<sup>889</sup> On an organizational level Heather Sharkey has noted that the SPLA/M ‘did not resort to crusader discourses even though Christianity was becoming increasingly influential as a cultural force among much of its rank and file.’<sup>890</sup> Despite Sharkey’s assertion that the SPLA did not participate in Crusader rhetoric, one of its main propaganda mediums in the 1990s and early 2000s was fraught with such language: the *SPLM/SPLA Update*. Although the organization had a secular position, the *Update* was inundated with articles and poems referencing God, Satan, and Biblical stories within the context of the conflict. Elements of a martialized theology pitting the SPLA’s fight

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<sup>888</sup> See ‘Sudan: The Nuba Mountains—Straddling the North-South Divide’ *IRIN* (humanitarian news and analysis), November 2009. [<http://www.irinnews.org/report/86994/sudan-the-nuba-mountains-straddling-the-north-south-divide>]. Consulted 7 October 2014 and Julie Flint, ‘Yusif Kawa’ *The Guardian* (3 April 2001). [<http://www.theguardian.com/news/2001/apr/04/guardianobituaries>]. Consulted 7 October 2014.

<sup>889</sup> See, for example, Douglas Johnson, *Nuer Prophets: A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York; Oxford University Press, 1994; Sharon E. Hutchinson, ‘A Curse from God? Religious and Political Dimensions of the post-1991 Rise of Ethnic Violence in South Sudan’ *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Jun., 2001): 307-331; and Combiani Mission Library [hereafter CML], M 624 266.009 AAV Brack IV; Marc Nikkel, ‘The Cross as a Symbol of Regeneration in Muonyjang Bor Society’.

<sup>890</sup> Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Jihads and Crusades in Sudan from 1881 to the Present’. In Sohail H. Hasmi, ed. *Just Wars, Holy Wars, and Jihads: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Encounters and Exchanges*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2012; 276. For information on how the SPLM/A responded to the regime’s Islamist ideology, Sharkey directs readers to Steven Wöndu and Ann Lesch, *Battle for Peace in Sudan: An Analysis of the Abuja Conferences, 1992-1993*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000 [in fn. 80, p. 282]

against the National Islamic Front as an existential battle between good and evil could be found in its content.

Despite this ideological duplicity, no one has dedicated an article or chapter that devotes serious attention to the *Update*'s significance in the war effort. While information on the newspaper's publication, relation to other media forms, and other minor data can be found in scattered sources (see footnotes), its content has been marginalized in Sudanese historiography. One indication of this reality comes from Øystein Rolandsen's 2005 *Guerrilla Government* (which concerns political change in Southern Sudan in the 1990s) and cites the *Update* once.<sup>891</sup> Its marginalization in the content and footnotes of Southern scholarship could perhaps be attributed to the difficulty involved in tracking down specific editions, as issues have hitherto not been made wholly available online and physical copies are scattered in archives the world. During my doctoral research I examined *Update* editions in archives in Rome, Durham (UK), Cairo, and Washington DC, leading me to believe that I have seen almost every issue currently housed in a public collection and published between 1992 and 2004.

While scholars have hitherto not utilized the *Update* as source material to a significant degree, I approach the newspaper as an important space where contributors fashioned new theories of conflict and identity. This chapter analyzes the *Update* as a space where contributors attempted to lend a unified political theory—namely a sense of divine 'chosenness' and certain victory over an evil enemy—to a byzantine and evolving

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<sup>891</sup> See Øystein Rolandsen, *Guerrilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan During the 1990s*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitute, 2005; fn. 91 on p. 148. This being said, Douglas Johnson's description of the *Update* in *Root Causes* as propaganda and rebel media more broadly was very helpful in providing me with general information about the newspaper and contemporary rebel media. See Douglas Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*. London: International African Institute in association with James Currey (Oxford), Indiana University Press (Bloomington & Indianapolis), and Fountain Publishers (Kampala), 2003 (updated second impression 2004); xvi and 190.

situation. Rather than necessarily being conduits for religious ideology, contributors but creative intellectuals who sought to organize a spiritual account of the war according to the analytical rubric of liberation. These authors framed specific events in Biblical language and, by doing so, placed contemporary circumstances in a trajectory that might not otherwise have been obvious in the immediate context. With a newspaper that had truly global reach, these authors tried to transform contemporary political history into a spiritual (and historical) chronicle by reinterpreting and reframing events into Biblical templates like the David and Goliath battle, Isaiah's prophecy concerning Cush, and the life of Moses. In the end theology was used to do the political work of confronting not just the Beshir regime but internal problems within the Movement and Southern Sudan more broadly.

#### SPLA Aims and Ideology

In the early years socialism was an official part of the organization's platform. The SPLM's manifesto of 31 July 31 1983 affirmed that "the SPLM/SPLA aimed at engulfing the whole country in a socialist transformation...to establish a united Sudan, not a separate Southern Sudan."<sup>892</sup> It continued that "religious fundamentalism" was being used by the ruling elite in the North and South to exploit the people, and that for this reason it advocated complete separation of state and mosque/church. This secular stand explained the positive response it received from the Northern Left and some Communist states.<sup>893</sup> As the organization began in the South its primary task was to "transform the Southern Movement from a reactionary movement led by reactionaries

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<sup>892</sup> *Manifesto*, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1983, Sudan Peoples Liberation movement, (n.p., n.d), 16-17, as taken from Yusuf Fadl Hasan, 'The Role of Religion in the North-South Conflict with Special Reference to Islam' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan: Papers from an International Conference at Yale, May 1999* (Faith in Sudan, 12). Yusuf Fadl Hasan and Richard Gray (eds.). Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2002; 35.

<sup>893</sup> Hasan, 'Religion', 35; Hasan cites in this explanation *Manifesto*, 24.

and concerned only with the South, jobs and self-interest to a progressive movement led by revolutionaries [sic] and dedicated to the socialist transformation of the whole country.”<sup>894</sup> The SPLM/A’s Ethiopian origins had a considerable impact on its early development and ideology. Bona Malwal of the *Sudan Democratic Gazette* opined that the SPLA had to conceal its true intentions for the South because it did not want to lose Mengistu’s support if it openly called for an independent Southern state. Several realities supported Malwal’s point: Ethiopia allowed the organization refuge, offices in Addis Ababa, military training and equipment, and arranged for the SPLM to broadcast propaganda. By the end of 1985 the movement had grown from the original 500-600 mutineers to roughly twenty thousand. People in the Nuba Mountains and Ingessina Hills—each of which border South Sudan—had joined the SPLM’s fight against their common enemy, Khartoum’s Arab political establishment. Nevertheless the SPLA still had to use the abrogation of the South’s 1972 mandated autonomy as its *casus belli* for initiating war against Khartoum.<sup>895</sup>

Some of my interview participants shed light on the movement’s early socialist orientation. Gordon Buay grew up in a refugee camp and trained with the Red Army. Obtaining multiple graduate degrees at Canadian universities, he served as the South Sudan Democratic Front’s Secretary-General and in September 2014 was appointed by

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<sup>894</sup> Philippa Scott, ‘The Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Liberation Army (SPLA)’, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 33 (Aug., 1985), 72.

<sup>895</sup> See Bona Malwal, ‘The Last Act: The Need to Articulate the Cause of Liberation Now’ *Sudan Democratic Gazette* No. 130 (Year 12) (April 2001): 1; David H. Shinn, ‘Ethiopia and Sudan: Conflict and Cooperation in the Nile Valley’. In *Narrating the Nile: Politics, Cultures, Identities*, ed. Israel Gershoni and Meir Hatina. Boulder: Lynne Reiner Publishers, 2008; 211; ‘Sudan: The Nuba Mountains’; and Flint, ‘Yusif Kawa’

President Salva Kiir as an ambassador.<sup>896</sup> He recalled that during the SPLA's early stages 'there was this communist orientation. The young boys were trained at the Red Army with communist ideology...sharing things. We were taught about these things...saying that if we liberated the Sudan, then we will introduce this new order of socialism...'<sup>897</sup> Rev. John Malesh, Dean of Bishop Gwynne College, shared that the desire to separate religion and state came with the SPLA's association with the Mengistu regime. He also spoke to the level of indoctrination when he shared that during his time in Ethiopia many people went to Cuba; 'I think they brainwashed their minds'.<sup>898</sup> Though many politicians and commentators in the war's early years downplayed religion's relevance in their struggle, the push for secularism was coupled by anti-Christian elements. The SPLA actively repressed the Church, a move that paralleled an anti-Church campaign in Ethiopia. Bishop Nathaniel Garang noted that during that time many SPLA soldiers "smoked the Bible" by rolling pages of Scripture into cigarettes.<sup>899</sup> Despite the SPLA's publicly socialist leanings, some questioned the organization's dedication to creating a socialist Sudan or the general feasibility of the project.<sup>900</sup>

Two events had a major impact on the SPLMA's trajectory for the remainder of the war. The first was the National Islamic Front's rise to power and Omer al-Bashir's ascendancy to national leadership. Organized after Nimeiri's 1985 ouster, the NIF is an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood and represents a broader base pushing for an Islamist political agenda. Its program emphasizes freedom of religious choice but calls

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<sup>896</sup> Interview with Gordon Buay, 16 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan) and 'S. Sudan president appoints Gordon Buey ambassador' *Sudan Tribune* (21, 22 September 2014) [<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52482>] Consulted 16 July 2015.

<sup>897</sup> Interview with Gordon Buay, 16 August 2013

<sup>898</sup> Interview with John Malesh, 6 September 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>899</sup> [ACR E/678/3/1] 'Great Expectations: The Civil Roles of the Churches in Southern Sudan' *African Rights*, Discussion Paper No. 6 (April 1995); pp. 6, 10.

<sup>900</sup> Scott, 'SPLM', 78.



for Islamic jurisprudence as the general source of law while minority populations would have personal law and customs recognized under Sharia. Its program underscored national unity and, as a consequence, presented federalism as an answer to civil war. Perhaps most significant is the policy that Islamic law is the only enforceable law.<sup>901</sup> In 1989 General Omer Al-Bashir came to power in a June coup. A graduate of Sudan Military College, Beshir had fought in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and served as a commander against SPLA forces in Southern Kordofan. On 30 June 1989 he led a coup that unseated Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi's coalition government. Though Bashir insisted on nonsectarianism, he instituted a host of measures centralizing national power and silencing opposition—all political parties were banned, government leaders and scores of military leaders were arrested, and the constitution, national assembly, and trade unions were abolished. The Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation as established as the ruling body. Hasan al-Turabi, the NIF's founder and ideologue, was considered the regime's main theorist.<sup>902</sup>

Southern reactions to Beshir's coup were generally negative. A year into the new regime it had still not had any direct peace talks with the SPLM, and the issue of Islamic law was, generally speaking, a non-negotiable for Southerners.<sup>903</sup> An SPLM/SPLA Radio broadcast after El Mahdi's overthrow indicated its sentiment moving forward. Citing the SPLM Manifesto's statement concerning the ideal separation between mosque and state, the broadcast stated that 'We advise El Bashir not to take the position taken by fundamentalists for that position is dangerous, unhistorical and alien to the Sudan and to

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<sup>901</sup> 'National Islamic Front (NIF)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 205-206 and *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 315-316.

<sup>902</sup> See 'National Islamic Front (NIF)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 205-206 and 'Bashir, 'Umar Hasan Al- (1944-)' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 49-50.

<sup>903</sup> 'Bashir, 'Umar Hasan Al-' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 50.

Africa...Sharia, or any other religious law pertaining to other religions, is personal law, a relationship between the believer and his God.<sup>904</sup> In the years to come Beshir and the NIF were the prime recipients of the *Update*'s discontent.

The fall of the Mengistu regime was the second formative event, signaling important shifts for the SPLA from an operational standpoint and in relation to Christian bodies. It lost its main supply lines and military bases in Southwestern Ethiopia, and 350,000 Southern Sudanese were forced to flee from their hiding places.<sup>905</sup> Mengistu's fall meant that major changes were in store for Radio SPLA. *Radio SPLA: The Voice of Revolutionary Armed Struggle* had been established after the SPLM/SPLA was urged to create a revolutionary radio station. Located in suburban Addis Ababa (Naru), Radio SPLA aimed to lobby Sudanese to join the movement and made its first long-range broadcast in October 1984. It became a medium for broadcasting SPLM/A policy and changes, battles with the Sudanese Government, news, commentaries, war songs and poems that celebrated the SPLA. Broadcasting in English, Arabic, and indigenous vernaculars for listeners in the countryside, it was by 1989 perhaps even more popular than the Sudanese Government-run Radio Omdurman.<sup>906</sup>

Elhag Paul offered some vivid memories of Radio SPLA. Born in Juba in 1960, Paul gained much of his education from the Catholics (at St. Francis Primary School and Khartoum's Comboni College). After being arrested in 1986 for owning a magazine that

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<sup>904</sup> '72—SPLM/SPLA Radio broadcast to the Sudanese people on the continuation of the war after the overthrow of Sadiq El Mahdi by Omar el Bashir (9 August 1989)' as taken from Wawa, *Pursuits*, 379. See also 377 for reference to *Manifesto*.

<sup>905</sup> Sharon Hutchinson, 'Spiritual Fragments of an Unfinished War'. In *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 145.

<sup>906</sup> See Mawut Achiecque Mach Guarak, *Integration and Fragmentation of the Sudan: An African Renaissance*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011; 284 and Arop Madut-Arop, *Sudan's Painful Road to Peace: A Full Story of The Founding and Development of SPLM/SPLA*. BookSurge, 2006; 103. The full name of the radio station (with 'Voice of the Revolutionary Armed Struggle') comes from Madut-Arop, *Sudan's Painful Road to Peace*, 103.

featured an interview with John Garang and again two years later (with accusations that he wanted to burn military barracks), Paul decided to leave the country.<sup>907</sup> He remembers listening to Radio SPLA every day at 3pm. A one-hour program, people (including members of organized forces) would listen to it ‘freely’. Paul noted surprise at the fact that the government did not appear to be bothered by the programming since security rarely arrested or prevented people from listening to it; ‘Nobody was afraid of turning radio SPLM/A on. I think the government...at the time did not think that the SPLM/A propaganda was working’.<sup>908</sup> Paul offered the following insight into Radio SPLA’s programming:

‘Radio SPLM/A [was] to me primarily was a propaganda tool. It used to report about their supposed military success in the theatre of operations. Their programmes included explanations of their objectives with messages encouraging people to rebel and join them...every time someone defected and joined them, they would make a loud noise about it praising such people for being nationalistic and patriotic. The noticeable thing about this programme was the political ideology behind. The language and the words, for instance political commissar, comrade, bourgeoisie of Khartoum etc clearly told one this was a communist movement. I think the programme was geared towards persuading the South Sudanese to shed secessionist ideology and accept unionism.’<sup>909</sup>

The fall of the Mengistu regime, notwithstanding the Radio’s popularity, spelled doom for the SPLM/A in Ethiopia. Radio SPLA went off the air in 1991, and though the movement had plans to use Upper Talanga as a new radio base it was unstable. The

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Elhag Paul Questionnaires

<sup>908</sup> Quotes and information from Elhag Paul Questionnaire Two. The SPLM/[A]’s radio service, in addition to being received in Khartoum, was monitored in Uganda and Ethiopia. See ‘Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition; 279.

<sup>909</sup> Ibid

movement needed to find another foreign communications base and turned to print media as a means to disseminate information.<sup>910</sup>

The collapse not only meant that the SPLA was cut off from its Marxist supporters but also spurred an impetus for Christianization, increasing respect of the Church from military leaders, and various manifestations of Christian spirituality from the soldiery. Without the benefit of having Ethiopia as a refuge for Southern refugees and base for SPLA operations, other sources of support were needed. The evacuation of refugee camps—which were arenas for Christian evangelism—meant that many trained ministers and new Christians reentered Sudan. Creating makeshift chapels during maneuvers and relying on Christian civilians for encouragement and prayer, combatants brought the Cross to the battlefield in a variety of ways: it was worn around necks, carved it on trees, and sewn it into uniforms.<sup>911</sup>

From an organizational standpoint, appropriating Christianity and inserting it into the war effort came with tangible political benefits. Following the coup the SPLA agreed to allow Church leaders more freedom of activity within New Sudan and in their contacts with supporters overseas. In one of its biggest moves Church leaders were allowed to form the New Sudan Council of Churches, which was joined by all Southern Churches in 1989 (the Sudan Council of Churches in Khartoum could no longer maintain contacts with Churches in SPLA-controlled areas). By 1991 the NSCC was servicing people in an SPLA-controlled area that was larger than the size of Kenya. This positive shift in SPLA-Church relations resulted in improved credentials with industrialized countries (by

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<sup>910</sup> Guarak, *Integration and Fragmentation of the Sudan*, 285. Lawrence Soley states that Radio SPLA returned to the air from Southern Sudan in October 1991, though it's unclear for how long. See Lawrence Soley, 'Heating Up Clandestine Radio After the Cold War' in Edward C. Pease and Everette E. Dennis, eds. *Radio--: The Forgotten Medium*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1995; 139.

<sup>911</sup> See Nikkel, 'Cross', 23 and 'Expectations', 10-11.

suggesting religious freedom and Christian identity). The movement also hoped that this could encourage the West to give aid to the South, with the NSCC providing channels for assistance from Christian organizations abroad.<sup>912</sup> Following the SPLM/A split in 1991 the NSCC found religious activists in the United States that were eager to pressure the American government to get involved in the conflict. This effort to link with US activists led to a coalition of religious and anti-slavery human rights organizations which ultimately sought to pressure the government to work towards ending the Sudanese war. The conflict, in the coalition's eyes, was a three-pronged conflict between masters and slaves, Arabs and Africans, and Christianity and Islam. To this end support for the Southern Sudanese cause—if not the SPLM/A—was almost universal.<sup>913</sup>

Christianity was also viewed by most Southern Christians as a unifying mechanism that could curtail ethnic strife and bind the region together as a unified front against the North.<sup>914</sup> Ethnic strife, to be sure, had proven itself to be a devastating issue in Southern Sudan since the early years of the war. Arop Madut-Arop has opined that Nimeiri might have been thinking about exploiting traditional animosities to destabilize the South when he invited the three provincial governors for a meeting to discuss how to respond and counteract the insurgency. He told them that he had divided the Southern Region in order to prevent the majority Dinka from dominating smaller groups. Nimeiri

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<sup>912</sup> See 'Great Expectations', 10; ACR.E/677/7/5, *Sudan: A Cry for Peace. Report of a Pax Christi International Mission January 1994*. Prepared by Jan Grueters and Efrem Tresoldi. Brussels: Pax Christi International, 1994, p. 43; CMA.E/676/9/3, New Sudan Council of Churches Press Release (September 18, 1991), 1.

<sup>913</sup> Stephan Hamberg, 'Transnational advocacy networks, rebel groups, and demobilization of child soldiers in Sudan' in Jeffrey T. Checkel (ed.), *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013; 161-162. Despite such support, however, Ashworth referenced interference from American evangelical groups and white South Africans who entered Sudan with guns and Bibles in the following manner: 'It suited their agenda, not South Sudan's agenda necessarily, but it suited their external agenda. To speak of the SPLA as a Christian army fighting against the Muslim cause'. Interview with John Ashworth, 15 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>914</sup> 'Great Expectations', 38-39.

continued by instructing the governors to form ethnic militias among the smaller groups to protect themselves against ‘the master tribe [Dinka] and its rebel organisation.’ A vast sum of money was made available to allow them to recruit and train militiamen to keep the insurgents from spreading.<sup>915</sup> One such ethnic militia that the government employed against the SPLA and its related civilians was the Anya-Nya II. Founded by a largely Nuer leadership in 1975 and revived after the war began, it had initially received support from the Ethiopian government before the Derg promoted the founding of the SPLA. Given the SPLA’s link with the Ethiopian state, the Anyanya II turned to the Sudanese government for military support. Though the Nuer were divided among both the SPLA and Anyanya II, an increasing number joined the latter. While the split was based on ideology (including secession or union and support for the post-Nimeiri transitional government) and internal power struggles, it was also framed in the language of age-old enmity between the Nuer and Dinka. The government capitalized on the rivalry between the Nuer-led Anyanya II and Dinka-led SPLA, and the Anyanya II—with arms from the government—attacked SPLA recruits.<sup>916</sup>

Conflict drawn along ethnic lines in the 1980s was not limited to the Dinka and Nuer. Under Nimeiri the Murle of Pibor and Mundari of Terekeka were armed as anti-Dinka militias and actively raided civilian targets. After Nimeiri’s ouster Sadiq al-Mahdi, elected Prime Minister in 1986, used government-backed militias against the SPLA. The

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<sup>915</sup> Quote and information regarding Nimeiri and the three governors comes from Madut-Arop, *Sudan’s Painful Road to Peace*, 105.

<sup>916</sup> See ‘Anya-Nya II’ in Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 65; Douglas Johnson and Gerard Prunier, ‘The Foundation and Expansion of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army,’ in *Civil War in the Sudan*, ed. M.W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga. London: British Academic Press, 1993; 130; and Dereje Feyissa, *Playing Different Games: The Paradox of Anywaa and Nuer Identification Strategies in the Gambella Region, Ethiopia* (Integration and Conflict Studies; Vol. 4). New York: Berghahn Books, 2011; 198. In description of SPLA-Anyanya II rivalry Feyissa cites quotation from Sharon Hutchinson, 2000.

SPLA armed its own militia groups and exploited local disputes. The free distribution of arms, undisciplined and vicious behavior by SPLA units, and the emergent use of militias led to an alarming level of human rights abuses.<sup>917</sup> In response to Murle and Mundari action against civilian targets, the SPLA attacked and burned most of Pibor in 1984 and turned its attention to the Mundari militia. In September of the following year 60,000 Mundari were forced to leave Terekeka for the relative safety of Juba.<sup>918</sup> Signs of cross-ethnic unity in the SPLA did appear: in 1986 Shilluk leader Lam Akol broke with the North and joined the SPLA, and group commanders from various southern regions were established under the leadership team that was built around Garang. This period of Southern unity from 1986-89 did not last, however. The SPLM's civilian leadership was thought to be under the leadership of Joseph Oduho, but as the war continued SPLA militarists came to achieve predominate influence.<sup>919</sup>

Against this backdrop of ethnic violence the thinking went that since Muslims were not fighting one another a Christian South could be similarly united, and for this reason Christianity was seen to stand in direct opposition to the Government's political Islam. A militant Christianity, in other words, could stand in the face of militant Islam.<sup>920</sup> In the late 1980s Riek Machar—who I will return to shortly—was one of the early SPLA commanders who, having recognized Christian conversion's potential to galvanize

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<sup>917</sup> Johnson and Prunier, 'The Foundation and Expansion of the Sudan People's Liberation Army,' 130; 'Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA)' In *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 279-280; and Africa Watch Committee. *Denying the Honor of Living: Sudan, a Human Rights Disaster: an Africa Watch Report*. New York, N.Y.: Africa Watch Committee, 1990; 66, 153.

<sup>918</sup> Johnson and Prunier, 'The Foundation and Expansion of the Sudan People's Liberation Army,' 130.

<sup>919</sup> 'Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA)' In *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 279-280.

<sup>920</sup> 'Great Expectations', 38-39.

Southern resistance, began to actively encourage a civilian turn to such conversion.<sup>921</sup> As one civil official in Bahr el Ghazal explained, ‘Christianity is needed to stand firm against encroaching civilisations. We need a Christian Fundamentalism.’<sup>922</sup> The following section examines the ways in which this shift towards Christianity and its uses in the SPLM/A’s war effort were illustrated in its newspaper, the *SPLM/SPLA Update*.

The *SPLM/SPLA Update*: Origins, Composition and Context

John Garang once said of Radio SPLA,

“I must mention an unconventional Battalion, Radio SPLA. I congratulate Atem Yaak Atem and his staff for effectively combating the enemy’s obnoxious lies and propaganda, and for correctly informing the Sudanese people and educating them in the realities of the new Sudan we (SPLM) aim to build.”<sup>923</sup>

With Radio SPLA off the air, a new communications base (and medium) was needed. Enter *SPLM/SPLA Update*. Created as a monthly newspaper after the SPLM/A fled Ethiopia, the *Update* was purposed to keep accurate records and reach those who could not be ordinarily reached through traditional means of communications. Alternate Commander George Akol—who is now said to be a deputy minister in Juba—was appointed as its first director. *Update* was based in Nairobi and disseminated throughout East Africa free of charge. Between 1992 and 2004 it was published almost every week and became an important channel of communication between the national leadership, Diaspora, and general Sudanese public. Most issues included commentaries, field

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<sup>921</sup> Hutchinson, ‘Spiritual Fragments of an Unfinished War’, 148.

<sup>922</sup> ‘Great Expectations’, 39.

<sup>923</sup> Quote taken from Madut-Arop, *Sudan’s Painful Road to Peace*, 104. Atem Yaak Atem is a veteran journalist who served in nearly all of the Regional Governments, the liberation movement, and most recently in the Government of South Sudan as the Deputy Minister for Information and Broadcasting. See Ajak Deng Chiengkou, ‘Interview with Mr. Atem Yaak Atem’ *SBS* 22 February 2015 <http://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/dinka/en/content/interview-mr-atem-yaak-atem>. Consulted 3 June 2015 and ‘Atem Yaak Atem’ *Sudan Tribune* <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?mot1165>. Consulted 3 June 2015.



updates, official reports, and a concluding poetry section. Along with SPLM Radio the *Update* was a main media outlet on organizational policy, positions, and activities, and after 1992 it was one of multiple propaganda publications issued by the main SPLA factions (Mainstream [led by Garang], Nasir, and United).<sup>924</sup>

The *Update* was a global forum; indeed, its expansive breadth can be established from a number of factors. Tracking down physical copies of the paper entailed a great deal of international travel; namely, examining copies at the American University in Cairo, Rome's Comboni Archive, the Sudan Archive at Durham University (UK), and the Library of Congress. In addition to being distributed to liberated areas within the Sudan, the paper was distributed to all SPLM Chapters abroad and countries including Uganda, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, and the United States. Atem Yaak Atem, who after sending in his first articles was invited by the editor to continue feeding the newspaper, noted that in a short period his column attracted a wide readership but particularly among the non-Sudanese expatriate community in Nairobi. He further noted that Sudanese SPLM-sympathizers from the Gulf and areas controlled by the Khartoum government secretly read the *Update* and sent in letters praising his column.<sup>925</sup> Elhag Paul, who received the *Update* in the United Kingdom, remembers first becoming aware of the newspaper around mid-1993, when he was posted a copy by the SPLM/A London office. From that point he received it frequently by mail or collecting it himself whenever he was near their offices. Noting that 'many South Sudanese in the UK also read it [the

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<sup>924</sup> See Guarak, *Integration*, 285; Pa'gan Amum Okiech, 'Organisational Report.' Presented to the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Convention of the Sudan People Liberation Movement, [2008]. [<http://www.splmtoday.com/docs/statements%20and%20speeches/2012%2003%20Organizational%20Report%20-%20SG%20Amum%20-%202nd%20NLC%20Meeting.pdf>]; p. 18; Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*, 190; and Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>)

<sup>925</sup> Atem Yaak Atem, 'Juba Diary 4: Please Don't Call Me "Far Away From War" *Gurtong* 4 February 2010. <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/3132/Juba-Diary-4-Please-Dont-Call-Me-Far-Away-from-War.aspx>. Consulted 28 April 2015.

*Update*]', Paul stopped receiving the publication after he began voicing opposition to SPLM/A behavior in the late 1990s.<sup>926</sup>

The *Update* was also international in its content and geographic distribution of its contributors. There was, for example, coverage of apartheid's demise in South Africa; Sudanese Archbishop Benjamin Yugusuk's visit to the Kakuma refugee camp in Western Kenya; and a letter of condolence to the American people (addressed to President George Bush) after the 9/11 attacks.<sup>927</sup> My scan of roughly ten years of *Update* editions showed that the paper published contributions from around the world, including Nairobi, Lesotho, South Sudan (Maridi and Torit County), Germany, New Jersey, Dar es Salaam, London, and Harare.<sup>928</sup> This reality may reflect the SPLM/A's attempt to involve the Sudanese Diaspora and Africans more generally in the liberationist project. The war pushed many Southerners into exile, and most of the well-educated South Sudanese continue to live in the Diaspora. The Diaspora, according to Paul, 'was being constantly wooed by Dr John Garang...because he wanted to be the sole leader of South Sudan with the national agenda for the country. Members of the Diaspora used their connections with senior members of the SPLM to influence the agenda.'<sup>929</sup> He continued that the Diaspora wrote letters—signed by hundreds of signatories—to the Intergovernmental Authority on

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<sup>926</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (2<sup>nd</sup>)

<sup>927</sup> 'Transitional Executive Council Takes Over in South Africa' *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 2 no. 48 (Dec. 12, 1993) p. 4; 'Archbishop Visits Refugee Camps' *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 3 no. 31 (Aug. 15, 1994), pp. 1, 5; Nyandeng Malek, 'Condolences to the American People' *SPLM/SPLA Update* no. 6, 2001 (Sept. 2001); p. 10.

<sup>928</sup> [all are from *SPLM/SPLA Update*]: Francis Oliha A. Kalulu (Nairobi), 'Wake up the South calls' v. 4 no. 6 (9 February 1995), p. 11; Kichere Joseph Luri (Lesotho), 'The Truth Shall Tell' v. 4 no. 10 (13 March 1995), p. 3; Isaac Odyongo Paulo (Torit County), 'Song of a Mother' v. 4 no. 14 (10 April 1995), p. 11; Deng D'Agwang Atem (Maridi), 'Man in Africa' v. 4 no. 16 (24 April 1995), p. 11; Amosa Johnson Michael (Germany), 'Weapons to Defeat the NIF in the Bible' v. 4 no. 29 (24 July 1995), pp. 5-6; Sabit Alley (Paterson, NJ) 'Dear Editor' v. 2 no. 42 (31 October 1993), p. 6; L. Lomuro (Dar es Salaam) 'Dear Editor' v. 2 no. 42 (31 October 1993), p. 6; Akuol Riny Thiik (London), 'The Soldiers of the SPLA' v. 3 no. 24 (June 27, 1994), p. 11; and Mawien Dhor Arik (Harare), 'I Hate You' v. 4 no. 25 (June 26, 1995), p. 11.

<sup>929</sup> Diaspora information and quote from Elag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>)

Development (IGAD) and the Troika of the United States, United Kingdom, and Norway demanding the right of self-determination.<sup>930</sup> Similar to the efflorescence of Southern Sudanese student organizations around the globe during the First Civil War, Diaspora organizations played an active role in the Second Civil War by drawing attention to Southern Sudanese wishes to secede. The Sudan Christian Fellowship (SCF) and Sudanese in Diaspora (SID) were two organizations based in the United Kingdom which spoke about the wishes of Southern Sudan. Run by Josephine Lagu—daughter of Anyanya I leader Joseph Lagu—the SID was established in London in 1997 in response to the influx of Southern refugees into the country. Working closely with the House of Commons' All Parties Sudan Parliamentary Group, the SID's two-pronged goal was to raise awareness of the refugee plight to policy makers and agencies in the UK and provide assistance for asylum applications (among other services).<sup>931</sup> According to Paul the Diaspora also played a critical role by affecting soldiers within the Sudan; 'the fighters on the ground began to echo the Diaspora and I believe this tipped the balance forcing self determination to be included on the agenda in the IGAD talks.'<sup>932</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned organizations, perhaps the prominent contribution to emerge out of the Sudanese Diaspora in the United Kingdom was Bona Malwal's *Sudan Democratic Gazette*. The only Diasporic newspaper that rivaled the

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<sup>930</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>). Founded in 1986 by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya, the IGAD was created with a focus on development and environmental control. See John Chol Daau [Good Shepherd College & Seminary], 'South Sudan peace talks update' (email received from Daau to author on 13 March 2015).

<sup>931</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>) and 'Faith' questionnaire (received 23 June 2015). Though the SID's membership was primarily South Sudanese, it also provided services to refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world, particularly Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East. The ASG consisted of at least 100 Parliamentarians and the Secretary for International Development coordinated between the ASG, the British Government, and the George W. Bush White House. It also participated in the peace process that led to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the war and 2011 independence referendum. 'Faith' Questionnaire.

<sup>932</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>) and 'Faith' Questionnaire

*Update* in coverage and duration, the *Gazette* was birthed in October 1989 and published from London until April 2004. Malwal used the newsletter to articulate Southern Sudan's right of self-determination. Like the *Update* it was circulated internationally and was, in Malwal's words, 'set up...if for no other reason then [sic] at least to become an active member of the opposition to a regime in Khartoum that had declared its hand...at the time of taking power.'<sup>933</sup> Paul noted that the *Gazette* spoke about Southern Sudan wishes to self-determine and stated that once Malwal became supportive of the SPLM/A he toned down the newspaper's secessionist agenda to accommodate the SPLM/A goal of unionism. In differentiating the two newspapers Paul acknowledged that the *Update* was filled with propaganda while the *Gazette*—being independent of the SPLM/A—reported what it wanted and was of richer quality.<sup>934</sup> This is not to say that Malwal did not support Garang; he persistently denounced the Nasir coup and helped organize the 1991 Adare conference of Southern Sudanese intellectuals in Ireland, which was purposed to rally support for the SPLA in Western Europe and America. Though he maintained a relationship with Garang, Malwal later noted his decision not to become an official SPLM/A member because it would have 'meant taking part in the hero worship of the colonel.'<sup>935</sup>

Having examined the circumstances that gave rise to the paper, its international scope, the role of the Diaspora and its differences from the *Democratic Gazette*, it is to

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<sup>933</sup> Bona Malwal, *Sudan and South Sudan: From One to Two* (St Anthony's Series). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014; 56 (direct quote from 186)

<sup>934</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (2<sup>nd</sup>). He also stated in his second Questionnaire that the two papers were also different in that they targeted different readerships; 'I think the difference between the democratic Gazette and the SPLM/A Update is primarily around their readership. The former was targeted to both the international and local communities...the latter was...targeted mainly to the local community.' It is difficult to reconcile his conclusion considering the fact that *Update* published contributions from around the world.

<sup>935</sup> Malwal, *Sudan and South Sudan*, 188-189 (direct quote from 187-188)

the content of the *Update* that this analysis now turns. As stated earlier, the fall of the Mengistu regime not only spurred the SPLM/A's exodus from Ethiopia but compelled the organization to more closely align itself with the Christianity. Despite the fact that its increasing Christian reorientation has been acknowledged and examined by scholars, the *Update*—perhaps the organization's most powerful print medium during the War—has been hitherto unexamined in relation to this shift. How and when did Christian theology enter the newspaper's content, and to what effect? What can such instances further illustrate about the SPLM/A's ideological project?

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The *Update*'s use of the David and Goliath clash from 1 Samuel 17 is a suitable place to begin. The Biblical account relates that the giant Goliath and the Philistines were defying the armies of Israel. The shepherd boy David, whom Samuel had earlier anointed as Israel's future king, impugned Goliath for mocking God's armies and claimed that he would be killed because of this outrage. According to David, deliverance from Goliath would not come from his own fighting prowess but rather from the Lord Himself. Although Goliath fought with sword and spear, David continued, he came in the name of the Lord. His Parthian rhetorical shot to the Philistine was that 'the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give all of you into our hands.' (1 Sam. 17:46-47 [NIV]) David proceeded to slay and decapitate Goliath, illustrating God's ability to bring victory and deliverance despite seemingly insurmountable odds.

More than representing the archetypical story of the underdog winning the day, from a theological standpoint there are additional elements from this narrative that are useful to consider when addressing the Sudanese appropriations. Goliath's physical and sartorial description represent the reality of superior Philistine wealth, militancy, and technology. Despite this advantage the Israelites had God on their side. As Goliath and David represent each of their respective armies, it is not only a battle between two men but also between lifestyles and gods, with the superior position in a master-slave hierarchy at stake.<sup>936</sup> It has also been surmised that though race in the modern sense has no real basis in 1 Samuel or its ancient contexts, Biblical tradition often casts the Philistines as an 'Other' to Israel in a higher degree than its other neighbors. One indication is that the Philistines are castigated as uncircumcised (Israel and most of its neighbors practiced circumcision). Matthew Arnold stated that based on the German use of the word 'Philistine' the term "must have originally meant...a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people...They regarded [the Philistines] as...enemies to light; stupid and oppressive, but at the same time very strong".<sup>937</sup> In the mid-1990s Southern Sudanese wanted the Bible to address them directly so that their identity and legitimacy in the world could be recognized, and apart from the Bible they had few other sources with which to interpret their position.<sup>938</sup> Episodes from Old Testament Israelite history—including David's clash with Goliath—became popular narratives from which to borrow to fit the modern situation. The David and Goliath

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<sup>936</sup> Uriah Y. Kim, *Identity and Loyalty in the David Story*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008; 189-191.

<sup>937</sup> David Jobling, *1 Samuel* (Berit Olam Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry). D.W. Cotter, J. Walsh, C. Franke (Eds.) Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998; 197, 208, 215. Jobling takes the Arnold quote, found on p. 208, from R.H. Super (ed.), *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*. 11 vols. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960-1977, vol. 3, p. 112.

<sup>938</sup> 'Expectations', 14-15.

parallel was made on several occasions in the *Update* as a shining parallel to the SPLA's own struggle against Khartoum, and in many ways the paper's martial brand of Christian thought adopted the theological and racial themes and arguments from that story.

As David represented God's chosen people and Goliath the powerful, sinful 'Other' bent on mastering them, *Update* contributors made a similar declension between themselves and the Beshir/NIF regime. Kong P. Chang, writing from Nairobi, referenced David's example in his larger argument that Southern youth had to ensure that the work of their elders did not go in vain:

'I salute you all Southern Sudanese Youths...David, the Israelite youth who was quite religious not only killed Goliath (an enemy of Israel)...but was also deemed fit to be King of Israel...our elders...did fight in many parts of the country in Southern Sudan with achievement and success. Now the torch is with you. History will judge you harshly if it burns out in your hands.'<sup>939</sup>

The implied sense of chosenness that Southern Sudanese youth were, like David, fighting in defense of God's peculiar people was echoed by other contributors (though applied to those fighting for New Sudan more loosely). In his poem 'Reason to Live' Isaac Dongrin [Malith] wrote that the people of New Sudan were 'God made and sacred...For sure there will be New Sudanese in Paradise'.<sup>940</sup> In line with this statement Anyanya veteran I and commentator Steve Wöndu sacralized SPLA efforts by claiming that its soldier stood on ground God had designated to himself and his children.<sup>941</sup> Chang's mention of the 'elders' can be read as an allusion to those who fought during the First Civil War, suggesting that the modern struggle should be won to ensure that those prior victories

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<sup>939</sup> Kong P. Chang, 'Time for Southern Sudanese Youth to Stand Up' *SPLM/SPLA Update* Vol. 4 No. 38 (25 September 1995): 3.

<sup>940</sup> Isaac Dongrin Malith, 'Reason to Live' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 12 (March 12, 1995), 11.

<sup>941</sup> Steve Wöndu, "SPLA OYEE!" *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 3 no. 35 (Sept. 12, 1994), 2.

would not be in vain; it was time for the next generation to ensure to that the symbolic torch was taken up. His sentiment that ‘History’ would hold them accountable adds a unique flair to the mode of Biblical insertions examined thus far in this study: rather than reading the Bible as a script to encourage readers of inevitable victory, Chang highlights the fact that agency on the part of Southern youth was needed. With ‘harsh judgment’ on the horizon, there is a sense of great responsibility associated with being likened to a modern-day David.

If Southern Sudanese youths were scripted as David, it stood to reason that someone or something had to occupy the role of the Philistine foe. Surely enough, following the First Abuja Conference the *Update* published a commentary that likened the regime to ‘the Biblical Goliath’. Prompted by Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida amid growing concern at the conflict, the Conference was convened in May 1992 and was intended as a space where the SPLM and Sudanese government could attempt to resolve basic issues of division (namely questions of national identity and the relationship between religion and politics). The government argued that the Muslim majority had a right to establish an Islamic constitutional system, that the South could be exempt from Islamic punishments (*hudud*) but not Islamic laws, and that Sudan would in the long-term be transformed into an Arab-Islamic country. Both SPLM wings rejected the government’s position and maintained that the country’s diverse nature be upheld by a secular, democratic system. The SPLM-Nasir’s Lam Akol went further by arguing that Sudan was composed of Northern and Southern nations. Despite such disagreements both parties devoted time to discussing political and economic arrangements during an interim



period.<sup>942</sup> Discontent at the government's position was expressed in a commentary entitled 'Reliable Enemy' in the 29 June 1992 edition:

'Like the Biblical Goliath, the enemy went to Abuja...to arm twist the SPLM/SPLA. The SPLM/SPLA entered the conference room carrying the banner of modern civilization as the basis for negotiating a peaceful settlement...The enemy...told the SPLM/SPLA to cave in or die...the South stood its ground firm...and chose to be free or dead...the South parted with the middle-of-the-road compromises and set its course towards self-determination...The Abuja Declaration sent Goliath reeling [sic; reeling].'<sup>943</sup>

Three years later Isaac D. Malith further appropriated the David v. Goliath theme to convey a sense of assured SPLA victory despite overwhelming odds:

'Like Biblical Philistine Goliath The NIF enemy looks giant and great...gives terror and destruction To the people of Southern Sudan, Nuba and Ingessena But Alas! The brave furious confident SPLA Like...small David with stone and sling...keeps Goliath at bay The stone and sling of our SPLA will smash and mash the skull of NIF Falling dead face downward...Like Goliath defeated by little David The NIF brutal enemy is doomed...With sure triumphant victory We shall shout SPLA Oyee...'<sup>944</sup>

While Malith's language is certainly romantic, it contradicts the realities of the situation (namely the SPLA was fighting with figurative 'sling and stones'). Given arms and support by the Ethiopian government, by 1989 the armed, experienced SPLA force may have comprised a soldiery of 25,000. In the early 1990s it was recognized as having the capability of mobilizing 50,000 soldiers that could attack numerous parts of the country (including all Southern provinces) in concert with northern allies like the Sudan Alliance Forces. The military structure was highly structured, with Garang as chief of staff for the Military High Command, Convention Organizing Committee, logistics, and

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<sup>942</sup> Ann Lesch, 'Abuja Conferences' *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 46-47.

<sup>943</sup> 'Commentary Reliable Enemy' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 1 no. 13 (Jun. 29, 1992), 11.

<sup>944</sup> Isaac D. Malith, 'SPLA Keeps Goliath at Bay' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 9 (Mar. 3, 1995), 11.

administration. The army had at least seven regional battalions with names like Tiger, Bee, Crocodile, and New Cush. These battalions were mobilized for offensive and defensive actions, mining operations, ambushes, and sieges of provincial capitals.<sup>945</sup> In addition to its size and structure the real weapons with which the SPLA fought with were not exactly ‘sling and stones.’ The military acquired arms by capturing weapons, weapons supplied from Ethiopia, arms purchases, and weapons obtained from sympathetic movements SWAPO and the ANC.<sup>946</sup> The SPLA threatened Southern Sudanese air traffic with SAM-7 hand-held anti-aircraft missiles, Soviet-made weaponry included AK-47 assault rifles, mortars, machine guns (medium and heavy), RPGs, mines, and recoilless rifles. Southern defectors from the Sudanese army often took their weapons with them, and during the capture of army garrisons the SPLA seized armored vehicles and other military hardware. In addition to arms and safe haven Ethiopia had provided cross-border artillery fire and air support for attacks within Sudan, while Libya contributed weaponry for the rebels before switching to the Northern side following Numeiri’s 1985 ouster. East Germany and Bulgaria, each Communist states, trained fighters while Southern Sudanese were once spotted aboard a Soviet ship en route to

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<sup>945</sup> ‘Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan* [Third Edition], 280, 281; Africa Watch Committee. [Denying the Honor of Living](#), 153; and G. Norman Anderson, *Sudan in Crisis: The Failure of Democracy*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999; 71. The Sudan Alliance Forces were committed to overthrowing the Islamist regime and, rather than fighting the central government in the South, fought along Sudan’s eastern border of the North. See ‘Sudan Alliance Forces’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Third Edition, 270 and ‘Sudan Alliance Forces’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 400.

<sup>946</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, ‘Twentieth-Century Civil Wars’ in John Ryle, Justin Willis, Suliman Baldo, and Jok Madut Jok (eds.), *The Sudan Handbook*. Suffolk, Rochester: James Currey, 2011; 129 (Table 12.1 ‘Anyanya and SPLM/A: a Comparison’). It is useful to note that the Anyanya acquired arms during the First Civil War in a similar vein; it stole and captured government weapons, captured weapons from ‘Simba’ in 1965, and had weapons supplied by external supporters Uganda and Israel towards the end of the war (129).

Cuba to receive military instruction (though the Soviets denied providing weapons to the SPLA directly and indirectly).<sup>947</sup>

The David appropriation covered up the structural realities that the SPLA was fighting with modern weaponry, received military supplies and training from several countries, and had a force in the tens of thousands. Soldiers like Garang who had fought a war before could not be convincingly compared to a shepherd boy who had never participated in war. Nor could Soviet weaponry be likened to sling and stone. Considering the real weapons and personnel with which the SPLA fought—not to mention the duration of fighting that had already taken place when these references were made—one can conclude that each side posed a serious threat to the other. Nevertheless, what may have been more important than the realities that the David-Goliath comparison covered up was the sense of destiny and righteousness that such parallels imparted on the SPLM/A project. Appropriating this narrative when victory was still uncertain was undoubtedly meant to script the outcome of the war. However, if the SPLM/A was going to convincingly frame itself as following Biblical Israel's script of deliverance and victory it would need to use the most famous Biblical tale of liberation; the Exodus to the Promised Land. Enter John Garang.

SPLA/SPLM leader and co-founder John Garang occupied a focal role in the *Update's* religious propaganda as a modern 'Moses' called to lead Sudan into a new Promised Land. Born in 1945, Garang attended school in Rumbek before fleeing to Uganda and attending secondary school with future Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. After joining the Anyanya in 1970, Garang earned a bachelor's degree from Grinnell College and was named Joseph Lagu's chief aide. He later earned a doctorate in

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<sup>947</sup> Anderson, *Sudan in Crisis*, 71.

agricultural economics from Iowa State University and taught at the Sudan Military College. When the Southern mutinies in 1983 occurred Garang—then a colonel in the Sudanese Armed Forces—was sent by Nimeiri to quell the revolts. Rather than following this order he decided to join the resistance instead.<sup>948</sup>

Fr. Thomas Attiyah framed Garang as a Moses archetype in his comparison between the Sudanese context and circumstances that faced Old Testament Israel. In an article under the subheading ‘Let my people go’, Attiyah noted that slavery united New Sudan with the historical Jews. While those in New Sudan were ‘slaves in their own land’, he continued that the Jews were freed by God’s direct intervention by sending Moses to lead them to the Promised Land; ‘Eventually the Jews established a new nation for themselves where they could be at long last happy.’<sup>949</sup> Acknowledging that God always worked through human history, Atiyah suggested that Garang could fill Moses’ position in leading his people to an independent state:

‘In April...in South Sudan, the people of the New Sudan, by a unanimous consensus elected Dr John Garang de Mabior, their leader, for the next phase of liberation so that he could lead them to freedom and establish a State in which they would live full human life of truth, justice and freedom. Dr. John promptly accepted the difficult task. He is ‘our Moses’...Dr John...Be courageous!...be humble like Moses of old, full of trust and confidence in the Lord and lead the people to their total freedom and peace.’<sup>950</sup>

Esteemed cleric Paride Taban echoed the Moses-Israel comparison. Born in Katire in 1936, Taban was educated in the Loa Catholic Mission and Okaru’s Minor Seminary. In the midst of the missionary expulsion he graduated from the Major Seminary in Tore and

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<sup>948</sup> ‘Garang de Mabior, John (1945-2005)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 171-172.

<sup>949</sup> Both of the aforementioned quotes and information come from Thomas Attiya, ‘The Cost of Freedom’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 3 no. 39 (Oct. 11, 1994), 5.

<sup>950</sup> Attiya, ‘The Cost of Freedom’, 5.

was ordained a priest in May 1964. By 1980 he had been consecrated as a Bishop in Kinshasha by Pope John Paul II and was appointed the first Bishop of Torit three years later.<sup>951</sup> Speaking before the SPLM/A's First National Convention in April 1994, Bishop Taban shared that 'Many people who remain under SPLM/A areas are very brave and courageous people like the People of Israel who followed Moses to the end.'<sup>952</sup>

Despite such flowery rhetoric, leadership divisions and ethnic conflict appeared to undermine the notion that Southern Sudan/New Sudan constituted God's chosen people united by a shared destiny of liberation. Amidst accusations that Garang had become a dictator and responsible for human rights abuses,<sup>953</sup> in August 1991 Riek Machar (along with Gordon Chol) became a leader of a breakaway group of the SPLA called the Nasir faction. By the following year guerrilla forces led by Machar and William Bany were engaged in a civil war with Garang's mainstream SPLA. Joseph Oduho and Bany sought a more civilian-based SPLM while Nuer leader Riek Machar, Lam Akol, Kerubino Bol, and Arok Arok had support in various Southern regions. In 1993 Machar became leader of an SPLM-rival group called the Southern Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), and three years later Oduho and Bany were killed. In 1996 Machar and Arok shifted their allegiances to Khartoum when they signed a "Political Charter", but in February 1998 Arok was killed in a plane crash along with Vice President Zubayr Muhamad Salih. After breaking with the government in 2000 and forming another faction (the Sudanese Peoples' Democratic Front), Machar rejoined the SPLA in 2002 and merged the SPDF with the SPLA. He was made commander of the Dok and Jikany Nuer areas. Though

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<sup>951</sup> Sergio Vieira de Mellon Foundation, 'Profile and Career of Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban' [http://www.sergiovdmfoundation.org/wcms/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=146%3A2013-laureate-bishop-emeritus-paride-taban&catid=45%3Athe-award&Itemid=209&lang=en](http://www.sergiovdmfoundation.org/wcms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=146%3A2013-laureate-bishop-emeritus-paride-taban&catid=45%3Athe-award&Itemid=209&lang=en). Consulted 10 September 2014.

<sup>952</sup> ACR E.677/11/1, 'SPLM/A First National Convention' (April 2, 1994), p. 2.

<sup>953</sup> Mark Hubbard, 'While the People Starve' *Africa Report* (May/June 1993); 37.

Machar wanted to transcend ethnic dimensions, many of his alliances were drawn along ethnic lines. Garang, amidst these political divisions, maintained SPLA leadership until his 2005 death.<sup>954</sup>

Organizational and leadership divisions were coupled by violent ethnic conflict on a destructive scale. There were years of violence that destroyed many Dinka and Nuer communities through Bahr el-Ghazal, Jonglei, and Upper Nile Provinces.<sup>955</sup> Between April and October 1991, in the wake of the Anyanya II's breakaway from the mainstream SPLA, armed bands of Nuer swept across the Bor land raiding or killing nearly one million cattle. Tens of thousands of Dinka civilians were killed or abducted while an estimated 250,000 fled. Nikkel noted that the objective of these raids—which were partially orchestrated by Khartoum—was not only to acquire cattle but also demoralize and eliminate the SPLA's Bor heartland. 'In eliminating their cattle, the central symbol of wealth, sustenance, and spiritual continuity, it was expected that the Jieng Bor would capitulate, ceasing to exist as an ethnic entity.'<sup>956</sup> In the mid-1990s SSIM forces—and particularly those loyal to Dinka Kerubino Bol—became more brutal in their attacks against Dinka and Nuer civilians in Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile. Garang's forces retaliated by driving deep into Nuer areas of the Western Upper Nile in 1995.<sup>957</sup>

Within this milieu of division and violence the example of Moses was, along with other Biblical examples, referenced in statements decrying tribalism and political

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<sup>954</sup> See 'Machar, Riek Teny Dhurgon (1953-)' and 'Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM)/Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 271-272 and 409-410 respectively.

<sup>955</sup> Hutchinson, 'Spiritual Fragments of an Unfinished War', 137.

<sup>956</sup> Marc R. Nikkel, 'Christian Conversion among the Jieng Bor' in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 164. See this page also for the description of anti-Dinka violence in the wake of the Anyanya II-SPLA split.

<sup>957</sup> Jok Madut Jok and Sharon Elaine Hutchinson, 'Sudan's Prolonged Second Civil War and The Militarization of Nuer and Dinka Ethnic Identities' *African Studies Review* Vol. 42 Iss. 2 (September 1999): 129.

factionalism. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that such references were meant to argue not only for a sense of chosenness and liberation but unity as well. When Attiyah likened the Sudanese to the Israelites in a homily at Hekima College in May 1995 [published in the *Update*], he stated that the Sudanese shared the Israelite experience of suffering but that, more than this, they should not lose hope and instead ‘get united like the Israelites of Old and confront the beast in unity and solidarity’.<sup>958</sup> His charge that the Israelites represented a model of unity was followed six years later in Benjamin Izale’s poem ‘Joint Front’, which likewise mentioned their example as an argument against tribalism: ‘We fight the divisive policy, Divide and rule, No Madi No Latuko No Dinka...“Moses” at Sudan echoes, A joint front, Unity, Equality Progress.’<sup>959</sup> The stories of Moses and the Exodus, then, were not merely meant to convey the shared experiences of slavery, liberation, and chosenness but were also employed to make the political argument that unity was required for victory to be achieved.

While the Old Testament received the lion’s share of borrowings, the New Testament was also used to convey the importance of unity. The *Update* published another article by Attiyah in which he borrowed from the Book of Colossians to express the new unity they had in Christ:

‘Unity is important and necessary in the diverse ethnic society of the South...Unity is strength; division is weakness...Every individual Southerner and every ethnic group in the South has the Christian responsibility to unite with fellow men and women in the South Today our unity in the South is a matter of life and death. To paraphrase St. Paul: “As Christians, we have put on the image of Christ...in that image there is no room for distinction between Dinka and Nuer, Shilluk and Zande, Bari and

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<sup>958</sup> Thomas Attiya, ‘Christ The ‘Good Shepherd’*’ SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 22 (6 June 1995), 7.

<sup>959</sup> Benjamin Izale, ‘Joint Front’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, no. 7 (Oct. 2001), 8.

Otuho. Toposa and Acholi, Kuku and Madi... There is only Christ”<sup>960</sup>

Attiah’s use of Paul’s message further evinces the way in which Christianity was interpreted as being capable of unifying different Southern ethnicities under a common identity. When Garang and Machar signed the Nairobi Declaration (merging the factional movements), the January 2002 edition included two statements from Rev. John Sudan Gaduel expressing God’s approval of the merger. A caption under an image showing SPLM/A spokesman Samson Kwaje and Rev. Gaduel reading Bible verses stated that Gaduel’s message to the two leaders was that anyone who tried to revive the inter-factional fighting would die that year. This, he claimed, ‘was God’s command revealed through him.’<sup>961</sup> The same issue published his letter to Garang and Machar thanking God for their unification. Writing on behalf of all churches and communities in New Sudan, he wrote that the step to unity taken by the SPLM/A and SPDF was ‘the answer of our Prayer and our Prophetic Statement that we made by giving this year a name which we declared as GOD IS WITH US....Now God has shown us that He is truly with Us through this Peace agreement’.<sup>962</sup> In these ways the *Update* became a space in which God, the Bible, and Christianity were presented as bases for arguing that unity was needed to achieve victory and that tribalism was to be condemned.

The second theological element gleaned from the *Update* is the demonization of Beshir, the NIF, and Arabs in general. Latio Lo Jaden, son of renowned Southern leader

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<sup>960</sup> Attiyah, ‘The Challenge of Peace in Sudan’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* No. 8, 2000 (December 2000), p. 8. Attiyah borrows from and cites Colossians 3:10-11, which states ‘and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.’ (NIV)

<sup>961</sup> ‘Moi to merge IGAD and JELI Initiatives’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* No. 2 (January 2002), 3 (see also ‘In the Name Of Our Fatherland, We United’ on p. 1 of same edition).

<sup>962</sup> John Sudan Gaduel, ‘A Letter of Thanks To God And Appreciation Of The New Sudan Leaders For The Brave Step They Have Taken On Peace And Unity Of SPLM/A And SPDF In Nairobi Kenya On 7<sup>th</sup> Of January 2002’ (addressed to Garang and Machar). In *SPLM/SPLA Update* No. 2, 2002 (January 2002), p. 5.



Aggrey Jaden,<sup>963</sup> participated in this trend. In 1952 Aggrey Jaden became the first Southerner to graduate from the University of Khartoum. Appointed as an Executive Officer in Kordofan, when British officers were departing he refused to obey the government's order to lower the Union Jack in his district. Transferred to Malakal, he escaped to Nairobi and joined the liberation movement at the urging of refugees. He became a founding member of the SANU, became President of the organization in 1965, and abandoned the group in 1967 (the same year he founded the Southern Sudan Provisional Government). Following the Addis Ababa Agreement—which he vehemently opposed and never signed—Aggrey was appointed a department director in the Southern Regional Government. He died in Juba in the early 1980s.<sup>964</sup> The *Update* published his son's poem 'Khartoum By Night' in its 27 February 1994 issue. It included the following lines: 'Oh! Khartoum Holy Khartoum Sodomy possessed souls Drinking at the Brothels and bars...Man to man Man with a donkey...Sinful nights Devils wear Angels faces Behaving like saints Oh! Khartoum...You devilish city.'<sup>965</sup> Jaden's decision to link Khartoum with sodomy hearkened to a similar reference made nearly a century earlier, when in the immediate aftermath of the Mahdist War chaplain Owen Watkins described the Mahdist stronghold of Omdurman as 'a veritable African Sodom' that had

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<sup>963</sup> *Lamentations from the Heart*. <http://richardlatios.blogspot.com/>.

<sup>964</sup> Sam A. Laki, 'Jaden, Aggrey' in *Dictionary of African Biography*. Ed. Emmanuel K. Akyeampong and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012; 185; Sam A. Laki, 'Jaden, Aggrey (1924-1985)' in Emmanuel K. Akyeampong and Henry Louis Gates (eds.), *Dictionary of African Biography*, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195382075.001.0001/acref-9780195382075-e-0939?rskey=e7r9oe&result=939>. Consulted 8 September 2014; Scopas S. Poggo, 'Jaden, Aggrey (?-1980s)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition; 227-228.

<sup>965</sup> Latio Lo Jaden, 'Khartoum By Night' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 3 no. 8 (Feb. 27, 1994), 11. For information on Aggrey Jaden see 'Lagu, Joseph Yakobo (1931-)' in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 258.

experienced God's wrath (see chapter one).<sup>966</sup> At some point in Sudan's mission history Khartoum even became known as the "Capital of Hell".<sup>967</sup> Thus, Jaden's description of Khartoum as a city with sodomy-possessed souls not only aimed to soil its reputation but also linked to a broader history of framing Northern Sudan's biggest cities as paragons of wicked civilization.

Continuing in the tradition of the religious thought disseminated in the first conflict, Biblical archetypes were used to describe the level of Khartoum's baseness. The 9/11 attacks spurred a Crucifixion analogy from Nyandeng Malek. Malek lamented that Southerners had long been forced to suffer from the same enemy that had struck the United States:

'We, the survivors of the suffering civil society of South Sudan...share the grief with the American leadership and the relatives and friends of the victims of the barbaric attack... We strongly condemn all sorts of violence and wanton massacre of innocent human beings... This has been the plea of South Sudan civilians during the last half century of unmatched brutal atrocities by the same enemies of civilization and democratization... We are being forced... to drink from the same cup of the deadly liquid served to Jesus on the Cross...'<sup>968</sup>

Nyandeng Malek Deliech took her oath of office as Governor of Warrap State in May 2010 as the only female governor of a South Sudanese state.<sup>969</sup> By referencing the idea that Southerners were 'drinking from the same cup' Jesus drank during the Crucifixion,

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<sup>966</sup> Owen S. Watkins, *With Kitchener's Army: Being a Chaplain's Experiences with the Nile Expedition, 1898*. London: S.W. Partridge & Co., 1899; 207.

<sup>967</sup> Andrew Wheeler, 'Gateway to the Heart of Africa: Sudan's Missionary Story'. In Francesco Pierli, Maria Teresa Ratti, and Andrew C. Wheeler (eds.), *Gateway to the Heart of Africa: Missionary Pioneers in Sudan* (Faith in Sudan No. 5). 1<sup>st</sup> reprint. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1999 [originally published 1998], 11.

<sup>968</sup> Nyandeng Malek, 'Condolences to the American People' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, no. 6 2001 (Sept. 2001), 10. Malek's letter was addressed to George W. Bush with condolences following the 9/11 attacks.

<sup>969</sup> See 'Nyandeng Malek Deliech' *Sudan Tribune*, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?mot980>. Consulted 12 September 2014.

Malek was perhaps making a subliminal critique of Khartoum: His being crucified by a powerful state that would attempt to violently stamp out the faith. However, the added message that they were victims of the ‘same enemies’ is revealing when considering the ties that Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda had with the National Islamic Front. In 1991 Bin Laden moved from Afghanistan to Khartoum, where he was nominally involved in development projects but actually engaged in furthering his Islamic causes. During his stint in Sudan he was implicated in several terrorist attacks and accused by the United States of running militant camps in the country. The US charged Sudan as a ‘state sponsor of terrorism’ after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Sudanese foreign minister Ali Othman Taha asked American diplomats what his country needed to do to shed the terrorist label, and after US Ambassador Tim Carney applied pressure bin Laden was forced out in May 1996.<sup>970</sup> If Christianity had been used to curry Western support, 9/11 appeared to present an opportunity to express a sense of shared victimhood—given Bin Laden’s ties to Beshir, Southern Sudanese could claim to have suffered from ‘the same enemies’.

Most prominent in the stream of anti-government vilifications were allegations that Khartoum was fundamentally evil. In the same *Update* article in which Attiyah likened Garang to Moses, he criticized Khartoum’s political system as being ‘unjust’ and ‘evil’. Stating that no human being had the right to dominate another, ‘Social justice requires that evil system be destroyed and replaced with the just one that considers the common good and the dignity of the human person.’<sup>971</sup> When in September 2002 the

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<sup>970</sup> See ‘Bin Laden, Usama (1957-2011)’ in *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 94-95 and Dilip Hiro, *War Without End: The Rise of Islamist Terrorism and Global Response*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002 [revised edition]; 174.

<sup>971</sup> Attiyah, ‘The Cost of Freedom’, 5.

*Update* reported on the expulsion of NIF troops from Torit, the spiritual aspersion was once again utilized: ‘The National Islamic Front...forces of evil and darkness estimated at 8,000 officers and men were routed out of this historic city that is the cradle of the struggle of the people of Southern Sudan’.<sup>972</sup> Such castigations were not limited to prose; one comic depicted slaves stating that God would free them from a demonic-looking Turabi, while another comic showed a Sudanese slave master beating slaves.<sup>973</sup> Other examples of demonization from the newspaper included Asst. Commander Gabriel Riak’s assertion that the Sudanese were suffering from ‘blood sucking Lucifers/devils...Fighting our way out means your liberation From feisty hands, who had no cause to hate...’<sup>974</sup> Edward A. Lino contributed a poem entitled ‘Demon’s Breath’ that entailed more demonic descriptions of the NIF. Lino belongs to the Dinka Ngok ethnic group in Abyei (the oil-rich contested zone straddling the Sudan-South Sudan border) and is a leading SPLM figure who has served as a chief administrator in Abyei and SPLA representative in Kenya.<sup>975</sup> His poem reads as follows:

‘...In the name of ‘jihad’, The time starving brutes Roll tanks...Spraying to death damned demon’s breath!..NIF devils beauteous flowers waste!...Omer..., That notorious father of pestilence Blindly obliterates...Is not that draught or plague When you blow on life Dry hot fumes of ‘fundamentalism’, Nothing terrible like it But real demon’s breath!’<sup>976</sup>

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<sup>972</sup> ‘The historic town of Torit is now firmly under the control of the gallant forces of the SPLA’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, no. 5 (2002), 3.

<sup>973</sup> See Untitled Comic, *SPLM/SPLA Update* Vol. 2 No. 5 (5 February 1993), 20 for the Turabi drawing and ‘Anti-Slavery Conference in America’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* Vol. 4 No. 25 (26 June 1995), for the other slavery drawing.

<sup>974</sup> Gabriel Majok Riak, ‘The Land of Sudan’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 5 no. 11 (Jul. 22, 1996), 11.

<sup>975</sup> See ‘South Sudan’ *Sudan Tribune* and Claire Metelits, *Inside Insurgency: Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behavior*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2010; 43.

<sup>976</sup> Edward A. Lino, ‘Demon’s Breath’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 31 (Aug. 7, 1995), 6, 11.

Steven Wöndu similarly used demonic imagery in his indictment of the regime entitled ‘The Knights of Lucifer’. In doing so, however, he made an effort to direct his disdain for Beshir rather than Islam broadly speaking:

‘The moral and ethical decadence of the Turabi-Beshir syndicate is beyond human understanding...Allah and Islam, I thought, represent purity, virtue, kindness...The Turabi-Beshir regime...portray the characters of Lucifer. They are callous, vicious, murderous...Lucifers Khartoum amuse themselves by torturing defenceless citizens...The knights of Lucifer have turned the Sudan into hell on earth, fit only for Turabi himself, Satan Beshir, Devil Ghazi [Ghazi Salah el Din, NIF hardliner]...and the ghosts of their victims.’<sup>977</sup>

The caustic language notwithstanding, it bears mentioning that Wöndu’s decision to mention his association between Islam with goodness and inference that the Turabi-Beshir regime contradicted his understanding shows Wöndu to be ideologically connected with the SANU, which during the first war went great lengths to state that the war was not a religious one directed against Islam. In essence, it was not their being Muslim that made them ‘Lucifers’. I will return to this point shortly.

As evidence of the fact that demonization was made on political rather than religious lines, particular Southerners who sided with the NIF and/or otherwise dissented from the SPLA were given the demonization treatment along with Khartoum, illustrating the transferability of the terms across racial and religious lines. When John Luk, Spokesman for the SPLM/SPLA-United, issued press releases criticizing the Church (and the New Sudan Council of Churches specifically in one release) the *Update* described his action as ‘Satanic’ and in the spirit of John 8:44—“For you are children of your father the devil and you love to do the evil things he does...There is not an iota of truth in him.

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<sup>977</sup> Steve Wöndu, ‘The Knights of Lucifer’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 28 (Jul. 17, 1995), 2. For Ghazi’s ‘hardliner’ description see *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition; lv.

When he lies, he is perfectly normal”.<sup>978</sup> An editorial written by ‘L. Lomuro’ from Dar es Salaam<sup>979</sup> reserved special vitriol for Lam Akol. A politician and soldier of Shilluk origin, in 1991 Akol broke from the SPLA-Mainstream force after the formation of the SSIM and joined the SPLA-Nasir faction with Machar. By the following year, however, he had been expelled from the SSIM and created the rival SPLM-United force that he operated in Upper Nile.<sup>980</sup> Lomuro acknowledged the *Update* as ‘the “true” voice’ of Southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, and Ingessina Hills but objected to its coverage of the Nasir group. He combined this sentiment with a recognition that the South would endure and had been created by God for a purpose:

‘I object to too much coverage for this satanic grouping...Satan has no place...“Lucifer” (Lam Akol) and his group will perish but Southern Sudan will not, it will remain for ever and ever Amen. God has created us...for a purpose, it is matter of time. Unless “Lucifer”...and his group repent now they have no place in the Southern Sudan as well as in heaven. Like his masters, his hands are full of blood of innocent people.’<sup>981</sup>

Perhaps the paper’s most notable occurrence of Biblical appropriation for the Sudanese context was Amosa Johnson Michael’s ‘Weapons to Defeat the NIF in the Bible: Letter to All Freedom Fighters’. Published in July 1995, Michael used a plethora of Scriptural references in his encouragement to readers to hold fast and resist the Beshir regime. He continued the demonization custom by borrowing from 2 Corinthians: ‘Let us stand alongside our brethren who are in combat with the demon possessed Omer Beshir and his followers. All of us are soldiers in Christ. We have weapons at our disposal that no other super power has...Our weapons have a divine power for the pulling down

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<sup>978</sup> ‘John Luk’s Satanic Releases’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 2 no. 35 (September 12, 1993), 3.

<sup>979</sup> L. Lomuro letter to the Editor, *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 2 no. 42 (October 31, 1993), 6.

<sup>980</sup> ‘Lam Akol Ajawin (1950-).’ *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 259.

<sup>981</sup> Lomuro letter to Editor, 6.

strongholds.’<sup>982</sup> Michael stated that from the day that one confessed their Christian identity Satan set out to destroy them, and to this end he drew a direct connection between this sense of spiritual warfare and Beshir’s actions:

‘Satan has legions of donors and wicked spirits waging war against you...there are many demons and wicked spirits in the Sudan especially in Khartoum...Their base of operation is the office of NIF in Khartoum and other countries that sponsor Islamic fundamentalism, and...it is in hell that the devil is devising this devastating mission of Christian cleansing of which Omer Beshir is one of the field commanders charged with this awful task. I am convinced that there is an unseen force driving Omer Beshir with madness to finish his bloody task. Now these donors and wicked spirits are our real enemies that we should be fighting, while those who are fighting human vessels through which those unseen forces operate should as well take not[e] of this...Let us come together, plan our warfare and fight the enemy of the children of God.’<sup>983</sup>

This quote is very reminiscent of Rev. Andrew Vuni’s quote from chapter five, in which Vuni makes reference to Satan—rather than Muslims—as the real enemy in Sudan. In this vein his reasoning very much mirrors that of those men in the previous chapter who suggested that spiritual warfare was being waged in Sudan in physical manifestations. After describing Beshir’s insidiousness Michael comforted readers by pointing to Luke 7:1-10, where Jesus heals a centurion’s servant. In that passage ‘we see a classical example of long range missile in the battle field’ he stated. ‘I challenge you in the name of Jesus, stand up and start bombing any satanic targets in the Sudan...you are qualified

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<sup>982</sup> Michael, ‘Weapons to Defeat the NIF in the Bible’, 5. 2 Corinthians 10:4 reads, ‘The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.’ (NIV)

<sup>983</sup> Michael, ‘Weapons’, 5.

for the task.<sup>984</sup> In these ways this martial theology was founded on a cataclysmic struggle pitting the SPLM/A against a demonic regime.

Before moving to final portion of *Update*'s religious thought it is important to return to the treatment of Islam in the *Update* and the fact that—like the SANU's *Voice of Southern Sudan* during the First Civil War—it did not wholly condemn Islam. As *Voice* highlighted contributions to the liberation movement from Southern Muslims like Abdel Sule, *Update* contributors distinguished between Islam and the fundamentalist Islam typified by the NIF. Latio Lo Jaden, who elsewhere spoke of Khartoum as a devilish city with sodomy-possessed souls, expressed this distinction in poetic verse: 'The fresh oozing wounds of crucifixion, amputation...And bombardment. Were the sharia laws meant for the blacks?...Ours is not hatred of Arabism or Islam But this type of Islam. Ours is a just cause To fight for our human rights...justices And for our freedom, long denied us.'<sup>985</sup> Jaden was joined by Alier Riak who, writing from Mangere, appeared to attack the legitimacy of the regime's brand of Islam when he wrote that 'The Anti-Islamism is not a machination of the New Sudan or the South. It is Islam that is against itself. Even the Crusaders had no moral justification than it is now in the Sudan.'<sup>986</sup> Perhaps the most compelling example of this stream of thought came in the wake of Pope John Paul II's visit to Gulu. Writing on behalf of the entire Christian community in South Sudan, nine clerics who participated in the 1993 NSCC General Assembly in Kaya wrote a letter expressing pacific sentiments towards Muslims in Northern Sudan. A portion of this letter, which was published in the 14 February 1993 edition, read as follows:

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<sup>984</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>985</sup> Latio Lo Jaden, 'Politics of Self Destruction' [dated 5/4/1994] *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 3 no. 24 (June 27, 1994), 11.

<sup>986</sup> Alier Riak, 'Behind the Fascade Of the Arab Sudan' *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 4 no. 25 (June 26, 1995) [article is continued from no. 24 (1995)], 10.



‘We do not hate the Arabs and Muslims of Northern Sudan. We do not want their destruction. We know that among them there are many who are tired of this senseless war, who want peace, who want to leave their guns and go back to their families. And we have still hope that those whose hearts have hardened may—with the grace of God—recognise their guilt and recognise that brotherhood and sisterhood is our common call.’<sup>987</sup>

The *Update*’s inclusion of such sentiments represents a discursive connection with the religious thought of the First Civil War despite the disparate political goals of Anyanya I and the SPLA concerning the South.

With the key actors in the narrative set, the final component of the religious thought stipulated that God would protect New Sudan and ensure its ultimate liberation. In his aforementioned article Amosa Michael remarked that there was no need to fear evil with the Lord as their portion; ‘What can Omer Beshir do to us? Jesus is on our side You are on the winning side...stand up for Jesus For the spirit of God is marching on No weapons formed against you shall prevail And the tongue that accuses you, you shall refute This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.’<sup>988</sup> A letter by internally-displaced Southerners and Nubians similarly made reference to the *If God be for us who can be against us* trope. Addressing Christ directly, the letter referenced Hebrew suffering under Pharaoh and their journey to the Promised Land:

‘All the darkness in the Sudan can never put out the light of Christianity in the Sudan...you have seen how cruel your people Israelites were being treated in Egypt under King Pharaoh. Now we in Sudan under new (Arab Islamic fundamentalism) of Sudan...is practising the old law of injustice on us...your chosen ones Israelites reached the

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<sup>987</sup> ‘Christian Leaders Present Our Tragedy to the Pope’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 2 no. 6 (February 14, 1993), 5 (contextual information on p. 4).

<sup>988</sup> Michael, ‘Weapons’, 6. The Bible passage he borrows from is Isaiah 54:17; “no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me,” declares the LORD.’ (NIV)

promised land, as we are suffering looking forward to our promised land...we, your children in Sudan...because we have refused to become Muslims...Lord, open the eyes of the world to see our suffering and lead us to the Promised Land.<sup>989</sup>

While this line of argumentation was not unlike the liberatory theology established during the First Civil War, the most important difference in these years was the emphasis on the prophecy concerning Cush in Isaiah 18. The most popular Biblical chapter in South Sudanese Christianity, the Prophet Isaiah outlines a ‘Prophecy against Cush’ which refers to an aggressive nation of tall, smooth-skinned people ‘whose land is divided by rivers.’ He states that this nation would undergo significant trials and tribulations but that in the midst of their suffering they would present gifts to God on Mount Zion. Before detailing their suffering Isaiah states that the world would see a banner raised on the mountains and hear the sound of a trumpet. To be sure, Christians have referenced the prophecy and its salience for Sudan since at least the earliest days of the Condominium (i.e. Watson in *Sorrow and Hope*).

The *Update* published numerous invocations to Cush as a foundation for Sudanese nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and perhaps the crowning statement in its martial theology: that liberation was at hand through the realization of Isaiah’s prophecy. A special edition of the newspaper from March 1995 published a paper conveying to readers that ‘we’ were the land of Cush described in Isaiah 18 and the dark-skinned people noted for their martial prowess. For New Sudan, Cush provided the example from which ‘we must re-trace our cultural roots and travel to the present to evolve a concept of Sudanese nationalism, which is capable of rallying all the present Sudanese peoples

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<sup>989</sup> ‘Message from displaced people of Southern Sudan and Nuba Mountains in Khartoum and other cities, to their Christian brothers and the Church’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* Vol. 2 No. 33 (28 August 1993); 3.

around “nation-formation”, “nation-building” and “national unity”.<sup>990</sup> Kwarnyikiir Abdelilah Zion addressed a poem to ‘Cushites everywhere’ that admonished readers to trust God for ultimate victory while alluding to solidarity with the African-American struggle for equality: ‘March with hopes and do not despair. For the God of Isaiah is quite aware. That your cause is just and fair...The prophet sowed and now you reap...The present war by all means shall be won...You are with Martin and Malklom [sic]. You have been named by Zion...’<sup>991</sup> Zion’s reference that they were ‘with Malcolm and Malklom’ [Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X] suggested a solidarity with the American Civil Rights Movement and their struggles against racism. In a compelling moment Otto George Dangasuk interpreted the defection of Lam Akol, Riek Machar, and William Nyuon from the SPLM/A as both delaying the establishment of a Cush state and the fulfillment of the prophecy. Citing Isaiah 18:5 (‘before the harvest...He will cut off the shoots with pruning knives and cut down and take away the spreading branches’) Dangasuk conflated South Sudanese with Cushites and called for an end to tribalism and increased cooperation so that a Cush state could be created.<sup>992</sup>

Perhaps the most compelling reference to Cush in the *Update* appeared in Ater Deng Abuk’s poem ‘The Sudan Laugh’. Referring to the common quip that God laughed when He created Sudan, Abuk now rejoiced that the curse on Cush described by Isaiah was no more:

‘Has God stopped His ancient laugh... Yes! Comes a voice  
from beyond Isaiah 18... Cush is uncursed! Lam, Riek,  
Nyuon, Kuanyin *Achan’s sons of Jericho* [italicized in

<sup>990</sup> ‘The New Sudan Brigade (NSB): Notes on the NSB, SPLM and New Sudan’ *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 4 no. 11 (March 20, 1995 special edition), 11 [article is dated February 21, 1995 on p. 9]

<sup>991</sup> Kwarnyikiir Abdelilah Zion, ‘The Military Boots’ (in section entitled ‘Exhortations to the SPLA’) *SPLM/SPLA Update*, Vol. 4 No. 10 (March 13, 1995), 3.

<sup>992</sup> Otto George Dangasuk, ‘1993 a Year of Salvation for South Sudanese (Cushites)’ *SPLM/SPLA Update*, v. 2 no. 7 (Feb. 21, 1993), 18.

original] have removed the curse at *Ngundeang's Sobot Valley of An-chor*...The trumpet sounds!...Cush lost, now regained! You, tall smooth-skinned people feared far and wide! Rise! Rise and fly! Your Hour has come!..Now the New Sudan!'<sup>993</sup>

To grasp the full meaning of Abuk's allusions one must consider the wider political developments that occurred in Southern Sudan that year (1994). Divisions within the SPLA-United resulted in fighting between the two largest Nuer groups, exposing the organization's most glaring weaknesses. The conference purposed to end the Nuer civil war rededicated the SPLA-United (renamed the South Sudan Independence Movement/Army) to achieving Southern independence and dismissed those accused of collaborating with the government—including Nyuon, Kuanyin, and Lam. This move appeared to pave the way for a truce with the SPLA.<sup>994</sup> In this way Abuk must have interpreted their dismissal as addition by subtraction, strengthening the SPLA's fight by removing Khartoum collaborators. The reference to Achan is taken from Joshua 6-7, where the Israelite Achan is punished for taking some of the spoils from Jericho that should have been devoted to the Lord's treasury. God informs Joshua that Israel had violated the covenant by taking some of the devoted things; 'That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies...I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction' (Joshua 7:12). When Achan—along with his family and cattle—are taken to the Valley of Achor and stoned, the Lord turns his anger from Israel. In this way, then, Abuk applied the Biblical narrative to the Sudanese context by conflating Achan's stoning with the symbolic 'stoning' of the Khartoum collaborators. Furthermore, in his thinking, their

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<sup>993</sup> Ater Deng Abuk, 'The Sudan Laugh' *SPLM/SPLA Update* v. 3 no. 38 (October 3, 1994), 11.

<sup>994</sup> Johnson, *Root Causes* (revised 2011 edition), 119.

removal meant that the curse keeping Cush from fulfilling its destiny was removed and God's blessing restored.

Biblical Cush was referenced at the highest levels of SPLA leadership, further illustrating the ways that it came to serve a foundational role in SPLM/A ideology. In the 'Vision, Perspective, and Position of the SPLM' Secretary for Education and Religious Affairs Samson L. Kwaje mentioned that Isaiah 18's mention of Cush was 'an unambiguous description of present Southern Sudan'.<sup>995</sup> Garang saw utility in including Biblical Cush in his politics. Though a committed secularist at the beginning of the war, Hutchinson noted that Garang began combing the Bible 'in the hope of divining the future outcome of this war.' In a major address delivered before Southern Church leaders in 1998, for example, he surprised many audience members by including numerous Biblical quotations.<sup>996</sup> In a paper delivered on his behalf to the 17<sup>th</sup> All Africa Students Conference in Namibia in May 2005, Garang mentioned Cush in his attempt to link the SPLM project to Pan-Africanism's broader objectives. Connecting the Sudanese context to the Pan-African movement's struggle, he wrote that the Sudanese peoples' historical fights against oppression were each 'aimed and are aimed at regaining African dignity and nationhood that has been mutilated over the centuries.' He contextualized the Southern liberation struggle by referencing a variety of civilizations that had appeared and disappeared in Southern Sudan over time (including Cush), and for him such precedents not only spoke to Sudan's critical role in history but also provided a counterargument for those wishing to remove the Sudanese from history: 'If we visit the

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<sup>995</sup> Samson L. Kwaje, 'Vision, Perspective, and Position of the SPLM'. In *The Sudan at War In Search of Peace*. Report of a Consultation Convened by Church and Christian Councils of the Great Lakes-Horn of Africa Region April 7-8, 1998. Karen, Nairobi; p. 19.

<sup>996</sup> Hutchinson, 'Spiritual Fragments of an Unfinished War', 148-149.

corridors of history from the biblical Kush to the present, you will find that the Sudan and the Sudanese have always been there’ he noted. ‘It is necessary to affirm and for the Sudanese to remind themselves that we are a historical People, because there are persistent and concerted efforts to push us off the rails of history’.<sup>997</sup>

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In these ways the SPLM/A adopted Cush as a means with which to add a sense of heritage and prophetic destiny to its cause. And yet, according to my research participant ‘Faith’, the decision to borrow the name Cush may have been related to the SPLA’s heavily Dinka membership. Just like many Northern Sudanese like to trace their genealogy back to Muhammed, she explained, the Dinka have a particular affinity for tracing ‘their ancestry to ancient Cush and therefore Jewish ancestry’.<sup>998</sup> This association between the Dinka and the ancient Israelites dates back to at least the early twentieth century, when Dinka evangelist Salim Wilson noted that the possible relationship between the Dinka and the Lost Tribes of Israel had already been questioned (it had been surmised that some Israelites escaped Egyptian slavery before the Exodus and migrated south to areas that, at the time of Wilson’s writing, were inhabited by Dinkas). Wilson added that if this was the case the Dinka would have retained Jewish ideas and customs, and as proof of a possible connection noted that ‘the words of invocation employed in their worship were on the lines of the ancient Jewish idioms—“the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.” Then the Chief of the Tribe was usually

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<sup>997</sup> See Albino Deng Ajuok, ‘Response of Southern Sudanese Intellectuals to African Nationalism’, University of Juba; Juba, Southern Sudan. May 24, 2008. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol. 2 no.5 (July 2008): 133-134, where he discusses John Garang’s paper to the AASC.

<sup>998</sup> ‘Faith’ Questionnaire, 23 June 2015. With respect to connections between ancient Cush and Jewish ancestry, it is worth noting that in the Old Testament the Prophet Zephaniah is described as the son of “Cushi” or the Cushite in Zephaniah 1:1 (NIV). See Michael Gomez, *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora (New Approaches to African History)*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005; 20.

the Priest also, who offered sacrifices on behalf of the people in times of great trouble...'<sup>999</sup> Aside from possible Dinka connections with the ancient Israelites, it is beyond dispute that Cushites were part of the Old Testament narrative of Biblical Israel. Reputed in ancient art and literature as soldiers, Cush and the Cushites are referenced fifty-four times in the Bible and were noted for serving in the Israelite army and against Judah.<sup>1000</sup> Perhaps it was against these historical and Biblical backdrops that the Dinka, according to 'Faith', conceptualized themselves as being like the ancient Cushites, a strong group of warriors who likely dreamed of creating a Kingdom like their envisioned ancient predecessors.<sup>1001</sup>

In addition to this possible ethnic underpinning, Elhag Paul argued that Cush invocations were intended to justify the organization's objective of a united Sudan. 'It was supposed to be evidence to support the argument why the people of South Sudan should not give up their vast lands which starts from Egypt through secession of the now small geographical South Sudan.' To this end he opined that it may not have had anything to do with South Sudan but was instead Garang's attempt to sell his united objective to Sudanese people in the North and the South.<sup>1002</sup> Such usage of the Cushite idiom during the Second Civil War contradicts myriad references to Cush and Isaiah 18 leading up to and through independence, when it was linked to Southern Sudanese

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<sup>999</sup> Quotation and other information from Wilson taken from Hatashil Masha Kathish, "*Jehovah-Nissi*": the life-story of Hatashil-Masha-Kathish, of the Dinka tribe, Soudan. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Birmingham, [1901?]; 17. For additional information on Wilson—namely his name change from Kathish to Wilson—see BBC 'A slave in Pavenham'

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/content/articles/2007/03/01/abolition\\_pavenham\\_feature.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/content/articles/2007/03/01/abolition_pavenham_feature.shtml). Last updated 16 March 2007, consulted 24 June 2015.

<sup>1000</sup> J. Daniel Hays, 'From the Land of the Bow: Black soldiers in the ancient Near East' *Bible Review* Vol. 14 No. 4 (August 1998), as taken from Biblical Archaeology Society Online Archive, [<http://www.basarchive.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/bswbBrowse.asp?PubID=BSBR&Volume=14&Issue=4&ArticleID=20&UserID=7652>]. Consulted 24 June 2015.

<sup>1001</sup> 'Faith' Questionnaire

<sup>1002</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>) [direct quote comes from here as well]

independence. Additional analysis and commentary on more recent uses of Cush can be found in the Conclusion, which investigates the contours of religious thought following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

### Conclusion

The preponderance of Biblical references in the *SPLM/SPLA Update* reinforces the notion that its editors were eager to use Scripture to broadcast a narrative trajectory of the SPLM/A project—one in which a downcast people suffering under the weight of oppression obtains victory and liberation. Facing the reality of organizational and ethnic division, Cush and framings of John Garang as ‘Moses’ provided a common heritage and reading of history for people divided by culture and politics. The Cushites from Isaiah 18 had suffered like the Sudanese. The Sudanese, in turn, would ultimately be liberated like the Cushites before them. David defeated the taller, stronger, heavily-armored and better-equipped Goliath on the battlefield. The collection of ‘Davids’ comprising the SPLA would likewise defeat ‘Lucifer’ Beshir’s forces. Moses had to lead a complaining, multi-tribal people from slavery to freedom. John Garang would, in turn, lead a collection of feuding ethnic groups from their common oppressor into the Promised Land of ‘New Sudan’. Each example invited readers to turn their gaze from the realities of the situation to a narrative of assured victory in the face of great challenges. The same God present in those Biblical narratives would ensure a similar outcome for the Sudanese in theirs.

Theology performed the political work of addressing organizational difficulties, defining enemies, and reinterpreting events into Biblical templates so that a historical trajectory ending with SPLM/A victory could be established and disseminated. Each of these elements bears similarity to Khartoum use of Islam and its intention behind framing the war as a *jihad*. As Abdel Salam Sidahmed has explained, the government’s framing



of jihad became a vehicle to mobilize public support for the war. Indeed, the aim of mobilization was to reel in Popular Defense Force recruits willing to fight for home and Islam.<sup>1003</sup> Sidahmed argued that the theme of martyrdom disguised and obscured the war's bitter realities—namely the facts that the ill-trained PDF increasingly became ‘cannon fodder’ when deployed on the frontlines, the material and human cost, causes and prospects for peace, and so forth. Families of killed PDF recruits, amidst televised celebrations and frequent reminders of their sons’ divine mission, found it difficult to gather information about what had actually happened.<sup>1004</sup> To be sure, I am not arguing that the SPLA’s use of Christianity in its propaganda was comparable in scale to the NIF’s use of Islam. Nor have I found evidence to support the notion that the SPLA attempted to recruit soldiers on the basis of participating in a modern religious Crusade. Rather, I am suggesting that the *Update*’s demonization of the government as spiritually evil and its Scripturally-based content was intended to transform the SPLA’s war effort into a spiritual contest. If the NIF tried to frame the war as holy and its fallen soldiers as martyrs, the *Update* painted for its readers a neo-Biblical narrative that was being carried out within the Sudan.

Given the use of Moses and Joshua going into independence—something that the SPLM/A during the *Update*’s circulation did not actually adopt as a goal—there is certainly room to question the organization’s use of the Mosaic theme during the war. In Elhag Paul’s view the purpose of framing Garang as ‘Moses’ and successor Salva Kiir as ‘Joshua’ illustrates the way in which Biblical references were perhaps motivated principally by politics rather than religious sentiment. The Moses-Joshua trope, Paul

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<sup>1003</sup> Abdel Salam Sidahmed, ‘The Unholy War: Jihad and the Conflict in Sudan’ in *Religion and Conflict in Sudan*, 83, 91, 92.

<sup>1004</sup> *Ibid*, 94.

opined, ‘was a well choreographed propaganda for these communist leaders to re-baptise themselves as harmless socialists in the eyes of the West especially after the collapse of...the Derge regime’. As the SPLM/A could not survive unless new ideologies were adopted, they decided to present themselves with Christian labels—namely as people fighting for the survival of Christianity in the Sudan—in order to curry Western support (like evangelicals from the American right).<sup>1005</sup> The adoption of Moses, then, can be read as the organization’s attempt to tap into international Christian sensibilities. For those like Paul, comparisons to Salva Kiir as Joshua covered up the reality that the organization was pro-unity, not pro-secession. In his 2011 article ‘SPLM and mass media: Promoting history on falsity’, he noted the glaring disparity between Garang’s promotion as South Sudan’s independence hero with the reality of his unionist politics. ‘This story’, opined Paul, ‘is a fabricated lie and had Garang been alive, he certainly would have objected to it.’ He continued that this fabrication was reinforced by a poster displayed around Juba that featured Salva Kiir—donning a *jalabiya*—sitting among a group of SPLA officers with writing on the poster congratulating him for liberating the nation.<sup>1006</sup> ‘When I saw that poster’, he related to me,

‘I immediately realized that the image...was tied to the new label attached to President Kiir as Joshua. This Biblical name was beginning to gain currency. The display of the poster and the name Joshua to me appeared to indicate manipulation of the South Sudanese people to cultivate the myth that the SPLM and its leaders were the saviours of South Sudan at a time when the country was in euphoria of independence’<sup>1007</sup>

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<sup>1005</sup> Both quotes and information come from Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>)

<sup>1006</sup> Elhag Paul, ‘SPLM and mass media: Promoting history on falsity’ *Sudan Tribune* 28 September 2011 (posted 29 September 2011) [http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id\\_article=40272](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id_article=40272). Consulted 16 April 2015.

<sup>1007</sup> Elhag Paul Questionnaire (1<sup>st</sup>)

‘Faith’ shed further light on implications of the Moses-Joshua comparison. Once it became clear that Sudan’s liberation was going to be a long process, she stated, Southerners started to build up romanticism about the process and linked it with Biblical stories as a basis for inspiration. Rather than focusing on the long process, they could focus on the ultimate end; after all, if it had taken the Children of Israel 400 years to be liberated from Egypt, it would not matter how long it took Sudan.<sup>1008</sup> Within this paradigm ‘Promised Land’ changed meanings. While it initially meant the democratic transformation from Old Sudan to New Sudan, Garang’s death transformed ‘the Promised Land...to [mean] an independent South Sudan, in line with the overwhelming political aspirations of the majority of South Sudanese including members of the SPLM who for fear of challenging John Garang became his passive followers.’<sup>1009</sup> This line of thought supports Paul’s belief that framing Garang as South Sudan’s father at independence was misplaced, considering the fact that the ‘Promised Land’ that he fought for was not in fact an independent Southern state.

Finally, ‘Faith’ made two observations about the Moses-Joshua appropriation’s salience in the situation that South Sudan now finds itself. The first entails the legitimacy and authority that comes with framing Garang and Kiir in Biblical mantles. If God appointed Moses and Joshua to lead His people into the Promised Land, ‘it follows that no one should challenge the anointed of God. Hence...Riek must be denied the chance to become president of the Promised Land since this will negate the ideology of the so-called anointed leader-Salva Kiir’. In this vein the political work of scripting Kiir into the role of Joshua did not end upon the attainment of independence (or ‘crossing the Jordan’,

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<sup>1008</sup> ‘Faith’ questionnaire

<sup>1009</sup> Ibid

if you will)—rather, it would seem that the Joshua title serves to justify Kiir’s grip of the Presidency while illegitimizing those who hope to unseat him, whether Machar or anyone else.<sup>1010</sup> For ‘Faith’ the comparisons of Moses, Joshua, Cush, and the Promised Land have had a generally harmful impact:

‘these Biblical comparisons have been used to mask organisational weaknesses and difficulties during the second war which might have spilled over into the 3<sup>rd</sup> war that erupted in December 2013. These misrepresentations act as distracters to prevent organisations like the SPLA/M from making the necessary structural, institutional and democratic reforms they need to make. It also encourages impunity as citizens are prevented from seeing the whole truth, behind these fallacies.’<sup>1011</sup>

The Conclusion begins with the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and examines the ways in which the Bible has continued to be used for political purposes in the sovereign, evolving, and warring South Sudan.

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<sup>1010</sup> Ibid

<sup>1011</sup> Ibid

## **Conclusion**

### **The Troubled Promised Land: 2005 to the Present Day**

‘In the space of seven desperate days, the UN base has been transformed from a logistics hub for an aid operation into a squalid sanctuary for more than 10,000 people... a handmade sign hangs from the rolls of razor wire. “The lord is our best defender,” it reads.’<sup>1012</sup> –*The Guardian* (23 December 2013)

The Book of Exodus chronicles the story of the Hebrew leader Moses, who as a boy was placed in a basket and sent down the Nile after all Jewish baby boys were ordered to be killed. Seen by Pharaoh’s daughter and retrieved by her slave, he was subsequently reared in luxury. One day Moses—now a grown man—became incensed at the sight of an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. He kills him. Fleeing to Midian to presumably spend the rest of his days in obscurity, God appears to him from a burning bush and commissions Moses to lead His people out of bondage. After a series of plagues and the Providential killing every firstborn son in Egypt (including Pharaoh’s son), Pharaoh conceded to Moses’s request. After Pharaoh experienced a change of heart and pursues the Israelites, God parts the Red Sea to allow them to escape over dry land. When God unleashes the floodgates, Pharaoh’s army was annihilated.<sup>1013</sup> After forty years in the wilderness, Moses’ successor Joshua leads the Chosen People into their Promised Land. The Exodus is one of history’s endearing sagas—indeed, Ridley Scott’s 2014 Hollywood adaptation *Exodus: Gods and Kings* debuted in the latter stages of this project. ‘Chosen

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<sup>1012</sup> Daniel Howden, ‘South Sudan: the state that fell apart in a week’ *The Guardian* (23 December 2013) [<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/23/south-sudan-state-that-fell-apart-in-a-week>] Consulted 18 February 2015.

<sup>1013</sup> See Exodus 1-14 for complete story.

People’ and ‘Promised Land’ motifs have been adopted by people the world over for centuries.<sup>1014</sup> Despite the romance of it all, the story is incomplete without acknowledging the fact that the Pentateuch frames the Israelites as a grumbling, unfaithful people throughout their journey. At the sight of the Egyptian pursuit, for example, the Israelites derisively ask Moses if he had led them out to the desert because there were no graves in Egypt (Ex. 14:11). After entering the Promised Land the Israelites experienced the period of the Judges, arguably the darkest era of their history before the Babylonian Exile. Numerous reminders throughout the Old Testament for the Israelites to remember God’s liberating acts during the Exodus were not enough to make or keep them obedient.

Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda and former schoolmate of John Garang, was the Chief Guest at the first anniversary of independence celebrations in Juba in July 2012. Briefly recounting the history of the fight for independence and paying tribute to the SPLM, Museveni lamented the tendency among Black people to be prone to division. He urged President Salva Kiir to reach a deal with the Sudanese government and used the Israelite example as a cautionary tale for Southern Sudanese:

‘Museveni has called on the people of South Sudan not to be like the Biblical children of Israel who were about to back-track to Egypt when faced with challenges. “You should stand firm and make sure that judgment is attained. Be strong, the modern world doesn’t have a place for the weak hearted”, he said.’<sup>1015</sup>

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<sup>1014</sup> See Bruce Feller, *America’s Prophet: Moses and the American Story* (New York: William Morrow, 2009) for such an examination.

<sup>1015</sup> State House of Uganda, ‘President Museveni Calls for Unity Deal Based on Justice for the Two Sudans’ (9 July 2012) <http://www.statehouse.go.ug/media/news/2012/07/09/president-museveni-calls-unity-deal-based-justice-two-sudans>. Consulted 3 March 2015.

This dissertation has examined the foundational role that religious thought has played in the ideological construction of the Southern Sudanese nation-state. The Condominium period was critical for the institutionalization of mission work in the South, administrative attempts to insulate the South from Arab-Islamic influences, and the cultivation of an English-speaking, Biblically-literate elite. That period was followed by the First Civil War, which witnessed the emergence of a black liberation theology that buttressed arguments for Southern liberation. Foundational to this theology was the sense that Southerners were God's people and that He was concerned with liberating them from their 'oppressors' from the North. The stream of thought was revived during the Second Civil War in the SPLM/A's official newspaper to contribute a sense of spiritual destiny to the war effort and serve as a unifying mechanism in the face of internal division. Thus, the religious nationalism running rampant upon independence in 2011 did not emerge out of a vacuum; rather, it was latest development in an enduring genealogy of political theology. This religious thought is noteworthy for its endurance and racialized nature (with Black 'chosen' and 'oppressed' and Arab 'oppressors'). While apartheid South Africa has been identified as a context in which American Black Theology could exist (given its racial dynamics), this study proposes another African context in which a religious ideology was heavily informed by racialized political realities. Unlike South Africa—and a host of other African contexts—the populace framed as 'oppressive' were not white and Christian but Arab and Muslim. Far from being isolated from or insensitive to the sociopolitical realities of the times, religious thought in Southern Sudan has historically served as an arena for intellectuals to define and respond to their circumstances. Rather than the historical North-South conflict being whittled down to

either race or religion, my study shows that religious thought became an important space in which racial differences and behaviors were defined. Fashioned in the crucible of two civil wars, this racialized political theology served as a powerful undercurrent to the liberation movement that culminated in independence.

And yet, less than a year and a half after Museveni's charge, South Sudan found itself at war again. This conflict was not predicated on racial antagonism, however, nor was it aimed against the 'Arabs' or 'the North'. Rather, in December 2013 the Southern Sudanese found themselves warring against each other in a conflict drawn heavily by ethnic lines (primarily Nuer vs. Dinka). What, then, became of all the rhetoric of being led by the 'Joshua' Kiir into the Promised Land? What of all the flowery invocations of Cush and claims that Isaiah's ancient prophecy had finally been realized? What became of the long history of religiously-infused politics and the liberation theology was supposed to reach its poetic, climactic conclusion with political sovereignty and independence?

It would be incorrect to treat this current explosion of ethnic politics as a sudden event, a cataclysmic shift from the history I have outlined in this study. While religious thought was used to define and fuel resistance against Arab 'oppression', I have also explained the ways in which the Nuer and Dinka—in both recent and distant history—have had an antagonistic relationship even while Southerners came to see themselves as a subject race. As I have shown in this study, the missionary enterprise, Condominium political life, and Second Civil War reinforced ethnic identities and divisions in a number of ways. There was the system of Native Administration under the 'Southern Policy'. Mission schools encouraged ethnic identities through vernacular language instruction and



football matches. Equatorial soldiers initially thought that the Torit Mutiny was rooted in a problem between the Latuko and Arabs, and every soldier did not initially join (undermining the notion that the Mutiny was a pan-Southern idea). Anti-government efforts in the South during that conflict were for a long time sectional and ethnic, with some ethnicities even fighting one another with arms from Khartoum. During the Second Civil War ethnicity drove the creation of sundry rebel groups—including the Anyanya II and the SPLM-Nasir faction—and some Southern groups seized the occasion to fight other ethnicities with resources provided by Khartoum. Rather than being accepted universally, some understood the Cush invocations as a ploy to boost Dinka identity and legitimate its official authority. In these ways, then, the condition of shared racial ‘oppression’ has never trumped the importance of ethnic identities nor eliminated enmity between ethnic communities. The emergence and development of ‘Southern’ into an idiom denoting national consciousness has at every stage been accompanied by ardent, even violent reinforcements of ethnic identity as well.

Thus, despite the temptation to marvel at the fact that an internal war erupted less than three years after South Sudan entered the Promised Land of independence, the current conflict did not occur spontaneously. Nor does the violence signify a total failure of the national project, a turning away from the longstanding racial and cultural identifications of ‘Blackness’ and ‘Africanness’. Rather, because racial and ethnic identities have co-existed in the region, the contemporary crisis reflects more historical tensions between Christianity’s project in the construction of nationalism in Southern Sudan. My dissertation shows how race, in response primarily to conflicts with Northern Sudanese, came to dominate identifications of self and community. Changing times call

for changing responses, however, and race in the current milieu has simply become less salient than ethnicity. Self-identifying as ‘Nuer’ or ‘Dinka’ outweighs being ‘Black’ or ‘African’. Rather than presenting the conflict as the failure of Southern Sudanese nationalism, the conclusion seeks to ask how the violence reflects the historical strengths and limitations of political theology in the Southern national project—a religious thought that, in many ways, capitalized on racial antagonism between North and South. In addition to this religious question, what does the conflict reveal about racial thinking’s usefulness in promoting effective government? Can a people who knew themselves as an oppressed race by reading themselves into the Old Testament also look to the Bible to describe and define the present state?

The conclusion begins with a description of developments since the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Division and enmity between Southern factions persisted during the postwar years, and the referendum and independence were not sufficient to keep some from recognizing serious challenges facing the country. Matters came to a head in December 2013 when violence broke out between members of the Presidential Guard in Juba, precipitating violence throughout the country between forces led by the Dinka Salva Kiir and the Nuer Riek Machar. Though several attempts to reach peace have failed, efforts at peace continue.<sup>1016</sup> I consider the ebbs and flows of religious thought and the ways in which the Bible continues to be used to respond to, describe, and critique political developments. In what ways has religious thought responded to the sweeping political and socioeconomic changes that have swept through Southern Sudan

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<sup>1016</sup> On 10 March 2015 the Ethiopian foreign ministry announced that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) planned to resume peace talks between the South Sudanese warring parties in April 2016. See ‘IGAD unveils new process to end South Sudan crisis’, *Sudan Tribune* (dated 11 March 2015, posted 10 March 2015) [<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54254>] Consulted 12 March 2015.

in the last ten years? I offer insights on the ways in which the ongoing war reinforces and/or complicates findings from my study and those of my historiographical interlocutors, and I conclude with an anecdote and note on the theme of ‘Suffering and Glory’ that I received from interview participant Joseph Taban. The idea that glory will come after suffering, I argue, is the groundwork from which Southern Sudanese religious nationalism is founded. This glory, however, is not limited to the spiritual, metaphysical realm but in tangible nationhood. This idea is perhaps the foundational ideology needed to sustain the nation moving forward.

#### Interbellum: Comprehensive Peace to Civil War

On 9 January 2005 the SPLM and Sudanese Government signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. With John Garang and Vice President ‘Ali Osman Muhammad Taha serving as the main negotiators, the CPA ended the Second Civil War. The Agreement’s main features included separate governance for the South, an even split of oil revenues between North and South, and a six-year transitional period to unity or separation. A Southern referendum for unity or secession was mandated to take place in 2011. The issue of religion—which was, during the negotiations, the most contentious issue—was addressed with Sharia law withdrawn from the South and non-Muslims in the North exempted from its enforcement. Though the boundary of the oil-rich Abyei region was unresolved, the National Assembly approved the Agreement.<sup>1017</sup> Like the process leading up to the Addis Ababa Agreement, the Church played an influential role in reaching peace. ECS Archbishop Daniel Deng served as an architect and the Sudan

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<sup>1017</sup> See ‘Comprehensive Peace Agreement’, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*, Fourth Edition, 115-116; Steve Paterno questionnaire (2013).

Council of Churches advocated for peace and reconciliation.<sup>1018</sup> The Comprehensive Peace Agreement catapulted ‘Moses’ Garang to further heights of adoration. The feeling in Khartoum when Garang was sworn in as Sudan’s First Vice President (and President of South Sudan) was triumphant. Millions came to see him. Christian elements imbued his swearing-in ceremony; he placed his left hand on a Bible and cries of Alleluia accompanied his booming English oath. Field Marshal Omer Bashir and Mohammed Taha were sworn in in Arabic, with their hands on a Koran and accompanied by shouts of Allahu Akbar. One commentator noted that ‘The Southern Sudanese in the crowd went wild, perhaps at the substance of the words, more likely at the contrasts John evoked.’<sup>1019</sup> It is, indeed, difficult to ignore the cultural overtones of that moment.

The manner in which Garang’s life ended cemented the Mosaic narrative. Despite the intimate relationship that Moses enjoyed with God, he was prohibited from entering the Promised Land after an act of disobedience (Num. 20:6-12). In Deuteronomy 31 Moses speaks before Israel and tells them that Joshua would cross the Jordan River with them, and he dies three chapters later on Mount Nebo. After being sworn in Garang returned from Khartoum and called all of the important cabinet members. Salva Kiir was one of the people present. Born in 1951, Kiir was an early follower of Garang and participated in the First Civil War. Amid the factionalism of the Southern movement he stayed with Garang and was, after Arok Thon Arok, the SPLA’s third in command. Kiir participated at the failed 1994 peace negotiations and the successful Navaiaasha

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<sup>1018</sup> Ezekiel Kondo questionnaire (2013) and Interview with Rugaya Richard on 6 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>1019</sup> Job Jabiro, ‘Ode to GARANG’ *Sudan Church Review* (Autumn 2005), 10. My description of the swearing in also comes from his article.

negotiations which led to the CPA.<sup>1020</sup> Bishop Ezekiel Diing recounted to me that Garang took Kiir by the arm and brought him aside. They talked for roughly two hours, with no one aware of what they were discussing. When they returned Garang told the people that Kiir was their leader and charged him with the task of taking care of them: ‘That is why some people now...say Salva is Joshua, because of what they heard when Garang said...many people have read the Bible stories in the schools, so people say oh, this is Joshua.’<sup>1021</sup> Garang decided to go to Uganda and was about to leave for Kampala with his wife Rebecca. She refused to accompany him. After meeting with President Museveni the Ugandan presidential helicopter carrying Garang back to Sudan encountered inclement weather and crashed into a mountain in the Amatong range. He was killed along with six associates and seven Ugandan crew members.<sup>1022</sup> ‘the way that Garang gave them his life,’ Diing said,

‘was the way Moses gave up his life...Moses end up his life on the mountain...Garang also end up his life on the mountain...one thing amazing is when Moses...knew that he was living but that he was not going to continue...and he looked beyond at the land that the people had, but he will not cross, go back and talk to Joshua.’<sup>1023</sup>

His funeral was held at Juba’s All Saints’ Cathedral. Given suspicion over the cause of his death, organizers went great lengths to convey a message of unity. Thousands of Sudanese soldiers patrolled the streets, a UN helicopter buzzed overhead, and President

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<sup>1020</sup> ‘Kiir Mayardit, Salva (1951-)’ in Robert S. Kramer, Richard A. Lobban, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Sudan*. Fourth Edition. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013; 252-253 and Interview with Ezekiel Diing, 11 July 2012 (Juba, South Sudan).

<sup>1021</sup> Interview with Ezekiel Diing

<sup>1022</sup> ‘Q & A: The Impact of John Garang’s Death’ *New York Times* (2 August 2005) [http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/international/slot2\\_080205.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/international/slot2_080205.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0). Consulted 6 October 2014. To be sure, the events leading up to his death have been hotly debated. See, for example, ‘The Death of John Garang’ *The Economist* (4 August 2005), <http://www.economist.com/node/4257462>. Consulted 7 October 2014.

<sup>1023</sup> Interview with Ezekiel Diing

Beshir pledged that Khartoum would not back away from the peace agreement. Despite this showing of solidarity anti-Arab sentiment was violently tangible. Much of Juba's Arab community fled the city after clashes resulted in the deaths of at least fifteen people. Many Muslim-owned shops were burned down. One man in Juba was quoted as saying, "The northerners hate us, we hate them, so we demand our own country".<sup>1024</sup>

The end of the Second Civil War did not mask the realities of internal divisions and simmering problems. Since its founding the SPLM struggled to maintain legitimate internal democratic practices and was forced to rely upon tenuous alliances to maintain stability.<sup>1025</sup> The CPA was negotiated between the SPLM/A and Sudan's ruling National Congress Party while other opposition groups were excluded. Many Southern groups were absorbed into the SPLM/A in the years that followed, but a joint platform reflecting the interests of an increasingly diverse membership was never adopted. Furthermore, divisions between combatants and communities following the 1991 SPLM/A split were not reconciled during the CPA period; the massive Nuer South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF), for example, was illegalized by the Agreement and violent conflict between the SPLA and other Southern armed groups continued. The 2006 Juba Declaration, announced by Kiir in his attempt to manage divisions, led to the SSDF's incorporation into the SPLA and other security services, as well as the creation of a more unified military front leading up to the referendum. While these years were intended to allow the

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<sup>1024</sup> 'Sudan's Garang laid to rest as grieving crowds mourn him' *Sudan Tribune* 6 July 2005 (taken from AFP) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article11031>

<sup>1025</sup> International Crisis Group, 'South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name' *Africa Report* No. 217 (10 April 2014) [<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/south%20sudan/217-south-sudan-a-civil-war-by-any-other-name.pdf>] Consulted 3 March 2015; p. 4.

SPLM/A to transform from a liberation movement to a unified, properly-governing political party, this had not been fully achieved by independence.<sup>1026</sup>

In 2007 Rebecca Garang—widow of John Garang and Minister of Roads and Transport for the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS)—called on people to support the CPA, calling it “the Bible of the marginalized communities”.<sup>1027</sup> Despite accusations against senior government ministers (herself included), she encouraged the people to have confidence in the GoSS’s capacity to deliver expected services and emphasized the need for construction, public works, and the development of mass media to improve communication.<sup>1028</sup> The following year, continued frustration at corruption and lack of development led *Sudan Tribune* (ST)<sup>1029</sup> journalist Roba Gibia to write a scathing editorial comparing GoSS members to the Jewish scribes during the time of Christ. Gibia wrote that the GoSS officials and leaders were behaving like the scribes and priests who claimed to be pure ‘but are the very people responsible for the suffering of their people, because they have cut off themselves from their own people and do not know their...day-to-day problems.’<sup>1030</sup> To this she questioned how one could offer basic services to their own people if they were cut off from their real problems and noted that some Southern ethnicities saw themselves as superior to those of other groups; ‘tribalism and nepotism

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<sup>1026</sup> ‘South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name’, 3.

<sup>1027</sup> ‘Sudan’s CPA is the bible of marginalized people-Rebecca Garang’ *Sudan Tribune* (from *New Sudan Vision*) 1 February 2007 (posted 2 February 2007) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article20064>. Consulted 19 March 2015.

<sup>1028</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1029</sup> The Sudan Tribune is a non-profit website that was started in 2003. Based in Paris, the site is run by a collection of independent Sudanese and international journalists and editors. Its stated goal is to ‘promote plural information, democratic and free debate on Sudan.’ See *Sudan Tribune*, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=about>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

<sup>1030</sup> Roba Gibia, ‘Who is really virtuous in the Government of Southern Sudan!’ *Sudan Tribune* 24 October 2008 (posted 27 October 2008) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article29053>. Consulted 19 March 2015.

has infested GoSS which breeds corruption, and has become the definite enemy of South Sudanese.’<sup>1031</sup>

Mawut Guarak provided another example of Biblical references used to strengthen activist arguments. Guarak had spent time as a child soldier and several years in a refugee camp before coming to Syracuse, New York as a Lost Boy in 2001. After attending Onondaga Community College he earned a Master’s degree in public administration from the State University of New York at Binghamton.<sup>1032</sup> In February 2009 the *ST* published Guarak’s piece ‘Conflict of Interest,’ in which he questioned whether the GoSS understood that conflict of interest was emblematic of corruption. He cited, for example, the fact that top government officials had been taking jobs as executives in oil and other mining companies. Many of these politicians, he claimed, condemned corruption in the media. Guarak noted that Jesus, as a teacher in Jerusalem and Judea, asked His disciples how Satan could cast out Satan. Just as a house divided against itself cannot stand, a divided Satan cannot stand either (Mark 3:23-26). ‘Based on interpretation of the above verses,’ he argued, ‘it is hard...for a government official to serve public purposes in Juba and be executive in major oil companies and expect to not be corrupted. How can regional officials in the GOSS fight corruption when they are lobbying against government (as executive in the oil companies)?’<sup>1033</sup> Guarak returned to Sudan to vote in the independence referendum. Seeing that much work needed to be

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<sup>1031</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1032</sup> Sarah Moses, ‘Former Lost Boy gives back to his native community in Sudan through education’ *Syracuse.com* 1 June 2011 [http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2011/06/former\\_lost\\_boy\\_gives\\_back\\_to.html](http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2011/06/former_lost_boy_gives_back_to.html). Consulted 19 March 2015.

<sup>1033</sup> Mawut Guarak, ‘Conflict of Interest? The most dangerous form of corruption’ *Sudan Tribune* 11 February 2009 (posted 12 February 2009), <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article30137>. Consulted 20 March 2015.



done, he became Director for Resolutions in the State Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and an Associate Professor at John Garang University in Bor.<sup>1034</sup>

Amid frustration at the national leadership and overall state of affairs, the composition of the national anthem illustrated that Christian symbolism continued to be viewed as a useful unifying element. At the same, however, it became a bone of contention with respect to the government's approach to and use of the Bible. By late summer 2010 the government, along with some individuals, began to brainstorm ideas for the national anthem. The task was officially entrusted to the Machar-chaired 2011 Taskforce, and after conducting an anthem workshop Col. Malaak Ayuen—who led the information and public relations desk at the SPLA's General Headquarters—appeared on Southern Sudan TV to report the outcome of his group's efforts. Ayuen explained that the group preferred to refer to Southern Sudan as the "Land of Cush".<sup>1035</sup> An early draft of the anthem—written by forty-nine poets—followed guidelines set by the government and army and included the following lyrics:

‘Oh God! We praise and glorify you For your grace upon  
Cush, The land of great warriors...Lord bless South Sudan!  
Oh black warriors! Let's stand up in silence and respect,  
Saluting millions of martyrs whose Blood cemented our  
national foundation...Oh Eden! Land of milk and honey  
and hard-working people, Uphold us united in peace and  
harmony.’<sup>1036</sup>

The seven elements to be considered in the anthem would include History, Land, People, Struggle, Sacrifices, Destination, and Flag. The religious components dealt most specifically with History, People, and Land. According to Col. Ayuen, God was the

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<sup>1034</sup> ‘Former Lost Boy’

<sup>1035</sup> ‘South Sudan Institutions Brainstorm on Future National Anthem’ *Sudan Tribune* 7 August 2010 (posted 8 August 2010) [http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id\\_article=35889](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id_article=35889)

<sup>1036</sup> Lyrics to ‘South Sudan Oyee!’ as taken from Peter Martell, ‘A song for south Sudan: Writing a new national anthem’ *BBC News* [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12164171>]. 12 January 2011. Consulted 8 September 2014. Information on its composition was also taken from this article.

architect of ancient world civilization and the glory, ethics, and values of Southern Sudanese history. The Land was the Garden of Eden blessed with riches like oil, abundant water, mountains, and the people who loved their land. The Southern Sudanese, furthermore, ‘are Biblical Africans as revealed in Isaiah 18; have unity in diversity, peace-loving and people with determination, commitment to hard work and nation building.’<sup>1037</sup>

The anthem was met with criticism over what was perceived to be a flawed, even dangerous, use of religious idioms. Gordon Buay, a signatory of the 2008 Washington Declaration that merged the SPLM and South Sudan Defence Forces, wrote an editorial arguing for the removal of military officers from the anthem committee. Buay noted that neither Major General Kuol Deim Kuol nor Col. Malaak (the two men who came up with the idea of use “Land of Cush”) were Biblical historians who could defend the claim that Southern ethnic groups were the only Cushitic people in the Horn of Africa. The question in the minds of educated Southerners, Buay continued, was why those officers would title the anthem “Land of Cush” if Southern Sudanese were not Africa’s only Cushitic people. He argued that the idea to use Cush was rooted in John Garang, who used the Good News Bible (which references Cush as ‘Sudan’ in its translation of Isaiah 18) as propaganda to support his argument for the creation of a New Sudan. Noting Garang’s suggestion that a location in Rumbek could have been a Garden of Eden, Buay asserted that since ‘the SPLA officers do not read books on biblical history, they think Dr. John Garang was a religious expert although most educated Southerners know that John Garang was [an]

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<sup>1037</sup> ‘South Sudan Institutions Brainstorm on Future National Anthem’

Agro-economist, not biblical historian.’<sup>1038</sup> Buay’s sentiments were echoed by Deng Riak Khoryoam, who in his contribution to the *ST* argued that South Sudan, rather than Kush, was the best name for the new nation. Khoryoam argued against the use of the term because of its ambiguities: ‘Kush’ simply meant Black like ‘Sudan’ meant Black, and Southerners were certainly not the only Black peoples in the Sudan or Africa. He also noted that Kush was not appropriate because people had historically taken up arms to liberate Sudan, not ‘Kush’; ‘when it became apparent that the whole Sudan was too big to be liberated by just a small portion of it - the South, the wise ones realized that Sudan was too deformed to be reformed; thus they started championing for the right of self-determination for the people of Southern Sudan.’<sup>1039</sup> It appears that the lines of thought maintained by Buay and Khoryoam won victory in the end. Cush, quite obviously, was not chosen as the country’s official name, and much of the religious idioms in the anthem’s early draft form—namely Cush, Eden, and land of milk and honey—were removed. Only the mention of ‘God’ remained in the anthem’s first and last lines.<sup>1040</sup> In these ways, then, the Bible was used to critique official corruption and the government—which in turn tried to use the Bible to frame the country in Scriptural terms—was criticized for its perceived misuse of Biblical idioms.

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<sup>1038</sup> Gordon Buay, ‘Kiir Should Remove Army Officers from National Anthem Committee’ *Sudan Tribune* 15 August 2010 (posted 16 August 2010) [http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id\\_article=35951](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id_article=35951)

<sup>1039</sup> Deng Riak Khoryoam, ‘The New Nation Should Retain the Name ‘South Sudan!’’ *Sudan Tribune* 30 January 2011 (posted 31 January 2011) [http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id\\_article=37824](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id_article=37824).

<sup>1040</sup> Xan Rice, ‘South Sudan’s new national anthem’ *The Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/08/south-sudan-national-anthem>. 8 July 2011. Consulted 8 September 2014.

The independence referendum took place between 9 and 15 January 2011.<sup>1041</sup> On Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup> in Bentiu, empty seats at Mass could be explained by the line around the corner to vote. Rev. Samuel Akoch of St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church acknowledged the competing interests of that day: ‘I know that each of you came here to pray. I also know that each one of us is carrying our voting card in our pocket.’ Following service he joined hundreds who were already at a polling center. The possibility of independence spurred comments about the potential for people to have freedom of religion and an end to the long history of slavery and exploitation. One man remarked that ‘The Northerners have made us their slaves for a long time, and we are ready to show them that we can lead ourselves.’<sup>1042</sup> Towards the end of the referendum Benjamin Mkapa, Chair of the UN Secretary-General’s Panel on the Referenda in the Sudan, stated that it had gone quite smoothly and even exceeded expectations. His briefing was followed by Haile Menkerios, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN’s Mission in the Sudan, who reported that the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission would announce final results on 7 February and any appeals a week later.<sup>1043</sup> 98.3% of participants voted for independence.<sup>1044</sup>

The Republic of South Sudan became independent on Saturday, 9 July 2011. Despite the changes made to the national anthem that eliminated any mention of Cush, the Isaiah 18 prophecy continued to hold great weight. In February 2012 the *ST* reported

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<sup>1041</sup> United Nations Security Council Meetings Coverage. ‘Southern Sudan Referendum Was Timely, Fair, Peaceful, Credible, Chair of Monitoring Panel Tells Security Council’ [<http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10155.doc.htm>]. Posted 18 January 2011. Consulted 23 March 2013.

<sup>1042</sup> ‘Sudan Referendum’ *PBS Religion and Ethics Newsweekly* 14 January 2011 <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2011/01/14/january-14-2011-sudan-referendum/7886/>.

Consulted 23 March 2015. [used for the above overview and two quotations]

<sup>1043</sup> ‘Southern Sudan Referendum Was Timely, Fair, Peaceful, Credible’

<sup>1044</sup> United Nations Mission in the Sudan, ‘Independence of South Sudan’ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unmis/referendum.shtml>. Consulted 23 March 2013.

that Southern Christians were planning a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and present gifts on Mount Zion. Vice President Machar's Press Secretary conveyed that Church leaders had explained to him that the pilgrimage had been promised by God in Isaiah's prophecy three millennia ago.<sup>1045</sup> Despite the thrill of independence dissatisfaction increased, with many blaming the national leadership for failing to deliver on important services.<sup>1046</sup> On the first independence anniversary the *ST* published a piece by Jacob K. Lupai that listed corruption, illiteracy, insecurity, and tribalism/nepotism as the country's five categories of challenges. Tribalism and nepotism received the lion's share of his attention, with Lupai noting that one ethnic group controlled about 43% of ministerial positions despite the fact that more than fifty may have participated in the liberation struggle. He concluded that 'it is an open question whether it is tribalism/nepotism that influences appointments or [whether] they are made on merit.'<sup>1047</sup> In a disagreement with Khartoum over how much the new nation should pay to export oil—its only source of revenue—using Sudan's infrastructure and port, South Sudan decided to shut off its oil production six months after independence. Allegations of corruption were legitimated when President Kiir admitted that \$4 billion had been stolen by over seventy past and current officials. When Southern Sudanese troops entered a contested oil field, clashes began that spurred fear that war would commence. After threats from the United States, perhaps

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<sup>1045</sup> 'South Sudanese Christians plan 'prophesied' pilgrimage to Israel' *Sudan Tribune* (posted February 25, 2012) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article41707> [accessed March 21, 2014 and on earlier occasions] Quote taken from Isaiah 18:7 (NIV)

<sup>1046</sup> 'South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name', p. 3

<sup>1047</sup> Jacob K. Lupai, 'First anniversary of independence of South Sudan' *Sudan Tribune* (9 July 2012) [<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article43197>] Consulted 10 March 2015.

South Sudan's greatest Western ally, troops pulled out and oil turned back on eighteen months later.<sup>1048</sup>

In October 2012 Zechariah Manyok Biar heard a message in his church that 'sent chilly air' through his bones, something which made him fearful about the country's future.<sup>1049</sup> Educated at Abilene Christian University, Biar served as an SPLA chaplain during the Second Civil War and worked as a government official before moving to Uganda. On the last Sunday of the month he heard that his pastor had been called by many people asking him to advise other preachers to refrain from criticizing the government from the pulpit.<sup>1050</sup> Most recently he had been called by the President's Office, which asked him to do the same. Earlier that month Biar himself had been told by a journalist from a popular Juba radio program that he had been repeatedly called by security officials and told that discussion topics must first be licensed by National Security. This led Biar to state his belief that

'[Kiir] would be the last person to do this. However, I could be wrong if his Office can call pastors to stop them from preaching biblical chapters which criticize leaders. The Bible... talks about good and bad leadership... why are preachers prevented from talking about good governance today when we know they were encouraged by the same leaders to talk about it during the North-South civil war? Or is it because the leaders then were in Khartoum and not in Juba?'<sup>1051</sup>

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<sup>1048</sup> Hannah McNeish, 'South Sudan teeters on the brink' *Al Jazeera* (17 December 2013) [<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/12/south-sudan-teeters-brink-20131217131843385823.html>] Consulted 17 February 2015.

<sup>1049</sup> Zechariah Manyok Biar, 'Is Juba going back to Khartoum?' *Sudan Tribune* 28 October 2012 (posted 29 October 2012) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article44356> Consulted 20 March 2015.

<sup>1050</sup> Erik Tryggstad, 'So you want to attend Christian college in Africa' *Christian Chronicle* (19 January 2015) <http://www.christianchronicle.org/article/so-you-want-to-attend-christian-college-in-africa>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

<sup>1051</sup> Biar, 'Is Juba going back to Khartoum?'

During the CPA period the Church had indeed collaborated with the South Sudanese government. Pulpits were used to encourage people to participate in the 2008 census, the 2010 elections, and the 2011 referendum, while the Church attempted to maintain neutrality by not telling Christians how to vote. Indeed, Biar's anecdote did not represent the first time that the government had had direct contact with the Church regarding the nature of disseminated messages; in 2009 a government minister asked churches to assist the government in preaching a message of peace and in holding reconciliation initiatives to foster unity in the lead-up to the referendum.<sup>1052</sup> Yet, this particular attempt to influence pulpit messages appeared to compel Biar to make the poignant lament that 'I am now [more] afraid than before that Juba is going back to Khartoum.'<sup>1053</sup> That the government's attempt to manipulate clerical messages could, for Biar, transform Juba into the historical archenemy suggested the importance of free expression and the Bible's position as an important means of holding authorities accountable.

In time Kiir's actions became increasingly sweeping and authoritarian. He reshuffled the army, retired many generals, and in July 2013 stripped Machar of his Vice Presidential powers. Kiir replaced most of the cabinet, dissolved some key party institutions, and suspended SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum pending a corruption investigation. Three of ten elected governors were removed, and many senior SPLM ministers were replaced by outsiders. Contentious reshuffling of state-level party and national leadership even led in one instance to an armed confrontation between SPLM members in the Upper Nile parliament.<sup>1054</sup> Sacked officials tried to fight back. On 6

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<sup>1052</sup> Anthony Poggo, *Come Let Us Rebuild: Lessons from Nehemiah*. Ed. Tim Flatman. Hertford: Millipede Books, 2013; 207.

<sup>1053</sup> Biar, 'Is Juba going back to Khartoum'

<sup>1054</sup> See 'Teeters' and 'A Civil War', 4.

December 2013 Rebecca Garang, Pagan Amum, and many dismissed cabinet members held a press conference in Juba denouncing the SPLM's lack of direction. In addition, Kiir was accused of exhibiting dictatorial behavior. On 14 December, at a meeting of the SPLM's National Liberation Council, Kiir gained approval for Amum's removal and for future votes to be done by show of hands rather than secret balloting. The next day's session was boycotted by the dismissed officials and their supporters.<sup>1055</sup> The civil war that continues to wrack the country began that evening.

### Civil War

On the evening of 15 December 2013, a fight broke out between Dinka and Nuer soldiers of the Presidential Guard in a military barracks near Juba's city center. The clash reportedly included the use of heavy machine guns and mortars. Sporadic fighting continued throughout the night before order was restored the following morning. While the government blamed Riek Machar for planning a coup attempt, he responded with the charge that the violence had begun when Dinka (Kiir's ethnic group) soldiers tried to disarm Nuer (Machar's ethnic group) soldiers.<sup>1056</sup> That the conflict had as its epicenter the Presidential Guard presented a saddening irony. Known to Jubans as the "Tigers", the Guard was considered to be a success story due to its diversity. A multi-ethnic unit meant to bind members of various ethnic groups, conflict within its ranks illustrated the degree

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<sup>1055</sup> 'A Civil War', 4-5.

<sup>1056</sup> See Howden, 'South Sudan: the state that fell apart in a week'; 'South Sudan: "White Army" militia marches to fight' *USA Today* (28 December 2013) [<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/12/28/south-sudan-white-army-militia/4231213/>] Consulted 16 February 2015 [Rodney Muhumuza contributed to report]; Nicholas Kulish, 'New Estimate Sharply Raises Death Toll in South Sudan' *The New York Times* (9 January 2014) [[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/world/africa/new-estimate-sharply-raises-death-toll-in-south-sudan.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/world/africa/new-estimate-sharply-raises-death-toll-in-south-sudan.html?_r=1)] Consulted 18 February 2015 [Somini Sengupta contributed reporting from United Nations]; AFP, 'Attempted coup in South Sudan' *The Sydney Morning Herald* (16 December 2013) [<http://www.smh.com.au/world/attempted-coup-in-south-sudan-20131216-hv5z9.html#ixzz2nfEsbGNO>] Consulted 16 February 2015.



to which divisiveness persisted years after the CPA.<sup>1057</sup> ‘Riek W’ was not openly known as a Nuer to his colleagues within the Guard and does not wear the traditional “Gaar” scarring that many Nuer have on their faces. In sharing how the fighting between Nuer and Dinka Tigers that night developed into anti-Nuer civilian violence throughout the city, he stated that “They took people who were not soldiers and tied their hands and shot them. I saw this with my own eyes, I was there wearing the same uniform as them.”<sup>1058</sup> Machar’s house was bombarded and surrounded. Jickson Gatjang, a distant relative of Machar’s who was in the compound that night, stated that the buildings had been destroyed and that members of Machar’s bodyguard executed before more general bloodletting commenced.<sup>1059</sup> “When they know you are Nuer they don’t have any more questions,’ he said. ‘It’s just a bullet to your head.’”<sup>1060</sup>

The following day, Kiir—dressed in Tiger Battalion uniform—announced on national television that Machar had attempted a coup, that the government was in full control of the security situation in Juba, and that forces were pursuing the attackers. He also stated that an overnight curfew would be imposed from Monday night until Tuesday morning and would remain in effect indefinitely. State forces began rounding up people and surrounded the homes of Kiir’s critics, and within two weeks eleven senior figures were arrested for their alleged involvement. While Machar escaped and refuted any involvement in a coup or fighting, he soon declared himself leader of the armed opposition movement “SPLM/A in Opposition” (SPLM/A-O). The SPLM/A-O quickly seized control of significant parts of Jonglei (where fighting between Dinka and Nuer

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<sup>1057</sup> See McNeish, ‘South Sudan teeters on the brink’ and Howden, ‘South Sudan’

<sup>1058</sup> Howden, ‘South Sudan’

<sup>1059</sup> See McNeish, ‘South Sudan teeters on the brink’ and D.H., ‘The descent into civil war’ *The Economist* (27 December 2013) [<http://www.economist.com/blogs/baobab/2013/12/south-sudan>] Consulted 19 February 2015.

<sup>1060</sup> D.H., ‘The descent into civil war’

also broke out in a military barracks), Upper Nile, and Unity states. Fighting also spread to other areas.<sup>1061</sup> ‘Riek W,’ afraid of his life and frightened by the murder of civilians, abandoned his post in the presidential compound the weekend after violence first broke out. Stating that the curfew was being used as a period to remove bodies, ‘Riek’ claimed to have seen “large trucks” towing bodies. Fishermen reportedly saw corpses on the river bank. “The numbers they are saying are completely wrong, people have been killed everywhere,” he said.<sup>1062</sup>

The violence spread out from Juba with alarming speed, moving to five of the country’s ten states. Concomitant with the spread of violence was the increasingly apparent ethnic tenor of the maelstrom. With reports of ethnically-targeting killings filtering out from Juba and reaching areas like the Nuer-dominated Unity State, copycat mayhems occurred in areas that independent investigators could not yet access.<sup>1063</sup> The White Army (WA) emerged as one of the prominent organizational faces of the anti-Dinka violence.<sup>1064</sup> When in 1991 Machar and Lam Akol (a Shilluk) broke from the SPLM/A and formed their own armed group, the White Army was involved in the “Bor Massacre” that year which claimed the lives of roughly two thousand Dinka civilians. This event led to some of the most ferocious fighting of the Second Civil War, the increasingly ethnic division of Southern forces, and the targeting of civilian populations based on ethnicity.<sup>1065</sup> In 2011 the WA stated that Nuer youths would fight until the Murle ethnic group was wiped out and included in its statement a warning for the

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<sup>1061</sup> ‘South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name’, p. 1, ‘Attempted coup in South Sudan’, ‘South Sudan teeters on the brink’, and ‘Full Statement by President Salva Kiir on attempted coup’ *Gurtong* [<http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/14151/Full-Statement-by-President-Salva-Kiir-on-Attempted-Coup.aspx>] 16 December 2013. Consulted 4 July 2015.

<sup>1062</sup> ‘South Sudan: the state that fell apart in a week’

<sup>1063</sup> ‘The descent into civil war’ and ‘South Sudan’s army advances on rebels in Bentiu and Bor’.

<sup>1064</sup> ‘South Sudan: “White Army”

<sup>1065</sup> ‘South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name’, 5.

national military ‘to stay out of the way.’<sup>1066</sup> In response to the systematic violence levied upon Nuer by Dinka elements in the Presidential Guard and other security forces, the White Army targeted Dinka in more than twelve locations. In one instance a force of two thousand Lou Nuer youths—WA elements—overran a UN base in Jonglei, killing at least twenty people (mainly Dinka government officials and two UN peacekeepers), and by late December an estimated twenty-five thousand WA members were reported to be marching towards a contested state capital. This news dimmed hopes for a cease fire.<sup>1067</sup> On 18 February the war’s second chapter began when the White Army announced its return to Malakal, capital of the oil-producing Upper Nile State, ‘with the wholesale slaughter of civilians. Shocked aid workers reported marauding gunmen raping and murdering the patients at the town's only functioning hospital.’<sup>1068</sup>

‘Simon K’ was a student living in Juba when men in military dress arrested him. He was asked what his name was (in Dinka), to which he was unable to respond. Those who similarly could not answer risked being identified as Nuer. Taken to a police station in the Gudele market district, he was marched past dead bodies and locked in a room full of Nuer young men. He told the *Guardian* that “We counted ourselves and found we were 252...they put guns in through the windows and started to shoot us.” The slaughter continued for two more days, with Simon becoming one of twelve men to survive by covering themselves with the bodies of the dead and dying.<sup>1069</sup> Mass graves were reported in Jebel-Kujur, Newside, [Bor](#), and [Bentiu](#).<sup>1070</sup> One reporter in Juba quoted

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<sup>1066</sup> ‘South Sudan: “White Army”

<sup>1067</sup> See ‘South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name’, i; ‘The descent into civil war’; and ‘South Sudan: “White Army”’.

<sup>1068</sup> ‘Back with a vengeance; Conflict in South Sudan’ *The Economist* Vol. 410 Iss. 8876 (1 March 2014): 42.

<sup>1069</sup> ‘South Sudan: the state that fell apart in a week’

<sup>1070</sup> See ‘South Sudan sees “mass ethnic killings”’, ‘Back with a vengeance,’ ‘Can ethnic differences’.

witnesses saying that more than two hundred people—mostly Nuer—had been shot by security forces, while the UN discovered a mass grave in Bentiu with approximately seventy-five bodies. The ethnicity of those killed in Bentiu—the capital of the oil-producing Unity State seized by pro-Machar rebels—was reportedly Dinka.<sup>1071</sup> Ethnically-driven fighting has extended to the very UN sites purposed for refuge. Fighting broke out between members of different ethnic groups in the Malakal camp, and another camp in Rumbek UN trucks were used to surround the fence and prevent locals from throwing rocks to those inside. In early January 2014 the Bentiu base was split into three sections (Dinka, Nuer, and foreign nationals), an action taken after Dinkas took refuge there after a rebel seizure and Nuer civilians subsequently entered the base.<sup>1072</sup>

The violence at Bentiu typifies the macabre dimensions of the conflict. When rebels overran the city they hunted down civilians who had sought refuge at a hospital, the Kali-Ballee Mosque, a Catholic church, and an empty World Food Program compound. After determining their ethnicity and nationality, hundreds were slaughtered. A particularly unnerving feature of violence there was local agitators' use of radio to spur killers on. The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) condemned the use of Radio Bentiu FM to broadcast hate speech declaring that certain ethnic groups should not stay in Bentiu and calling on men to commit vengeful sex violence against women of the other community. Nuer men, women, and children at the local hospital were killed for hiding and not joining the rebels as they entered the town.<sup>1073</sup> The bloodbath at Bentiu provides a key analytic lens into the grotesque nature of the conflict. The use of radio to

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<sup>1071</sup> 'South Sudan sees "mass ethnic killings" *BBC News Africa* (24 December 2013) [<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25502457>] Consulted 23 February 2015.

<sup>1072</sup> 'Back with a vengeance', 42 and 'Advances on rebels'

<sup>1073</sup> See 'Can ethnic differences' and Michelle Nichols, 'Hundreds of civilians killed in South Sudan ethnic massacre: U.N.' *Reuters*, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/21/us-southsudan-un-idUSBREA3K0UL20140421>. 21 April 2014 (Consulted 16 March 2015).

provoke the killing of members of other communities is eerily similar to Rwanda, where hardliners spread racist ideology through radio, print, and political speeches prior to the 1994 genocide.<sup>1074</sup> In this way the nature of the conflict has illustrated that beyond any tangible political goals and objectives, some participants have far more insidious aims.

Just weeks after the Bor incident people flocked to churches to celebrate Easter. Kiir—a Catholic—marked Good Friday at Juba’s Kator Cathedral, where a prayer service was conducted by Archbishop Paulino Loro. Loro had urged thousands of Mass attendees on Christmas Day 2010 (days before the referendum) that Southern voters should opt for secession.<sup>1075</sup> At the Easter 2014 service, which was attended by several government ministers and foreign diplomats, Kiir called for forgiveness and the burying of political differences. The Archbishop applied elements of the resurrection story to the contemporary situation:

“The message of Easter is a message of man finally returning to the love and care that he used to enjoy with his Father before he sinned. If all of us can remember that the Lord has freed us, being reconciled with God and with one another but as long as we are missing out on that fact, we will continue being alienated from each other and from our God.”<sup>1076</sup>

Claiming that politicians seemed to be losing sight of the fact that they only had one country, Loro observed that the conflict evinced the fact that politicians lacked tolerance

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<sup>1074</sup> Scot Straus, ‘The Promise and Limits of Comparison: The Holocaust and the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,’ in Alan Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique?: Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*. Third Edition. Boulder: Westview Press, 2009; 249.

<sup>1075</sup> See ‘South Sudan President Celebrates Good Friday with Calls to Bury Differences’ *Sudan Tribune*, 21 April 2014 (posted 22 April 2014) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article50726>. Consulted 18 March 2015. Interview with Caesar Lukudu, 30 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan); Catholic-Hierarchy.org, ‘Archbishop Paulino Lukudu Loro, F.S.C.J.’ 30 January 2015 <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/blulo.html>. Consulted 31 March 2015; and ‘Roman Catholic bishop of Juba calls for separation of south Sudan’ *Sudan Tribune* (25 December 2010; posted 26 December 2010) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article37405>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

<sup>1076</sup> ‘South Sudan President Celebrates Good Friday with Calls to Bury Differences’

and respect for human rights; “there are some selfish individuals in our midst...[who] have got power and money...young people, unfortunately, who are not having anything to do, are easily bought and they start to engage in violence...if we blow it [the country] up...we will have no place to run to.”<sup>1077</sup>

The war’s statistics tell a sordid tale. Less than two weeks after the initial violence UN Special Representative for South Sudan Hilde Johnson stated that more than one thousand people had been killed. By early July 2014 the *Economist* reported that this number had risen to at least ten thousand dead.<sup>1078</sup> Added to the number of those killed are those who have sustained violent wounds. By early January 2014 the World Health Organization had documented 2,566 cases of gunshot wounds across six of the country’s ten states, and by early February the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) counted 4,895 patients treated for gunshot wounds since 15 December.<sup>1079</sup> The numbers of those displaced are staggering as well. By early January more than two thousand people were fleeing to Uganda *per day*, while more than 30,000 refugees had fled to neighboring countries like Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and the Sudan. This number was dwarfed by the more than 200,000 internally displaced within South Sudan, including 60,000 at various UN compounds. In mid-July 2014 one million were said to have fled their homes, with the number housed at UN compounds having risen to 100,000.<sup>1080</sup>

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<sup>1077</sup> ‘South Sudan President Celebrates Good Friday with Calls to Bury Differences’

<sup>1078</sup> See ‘New Estimate’; ‘Can ethnic differences be overcome?’

<sup>1079</sup> See ‘New Estimate’ and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) South Sudan, ‘South Sudan Crisis: Situation report as of 3 February 2014, Report number 16’ [[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South%20Sudan%20crisis%20-%20situation%20update%2016\\_as%20of%203%20February.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South%20Sudan%20crisis%20-%20situation%20update%2016_as%20of%203%20February.pdf)] Consulted 3 March 2015.

<sup>1080</sup> See ‘South Sudan’s army advances on rebels in Bentiu and Bor’ *BBC News Africa* (10 January 2014) [<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25671847>] Consulted 23 February 2015; ‘New Estimate’; ‘Can ethnic differences’

Added to the human toll are other consequences of war. By July both sides were running short on money and oil production—the government’s main source of revenue—had dropped by between 33-50%. Despite Kiir’s being said to have borrowed \$200 million from oil firms, he still could not meet his wage bill.<sup>1081</sup> Journalists within the country have faced increasing suppression. Renowned Southern columnist Isaiah Abraham was gunned down in Juba in 2012, and journalists routinely face harassment, threats, and arrest. Catholic-run Radio Bakhita—whose employees were particularly resourceful for me during my 2013 trip to Juba—was forced to go off the air for a month after security officials arrested four staff members. According to government officials the station ‘had broadcast news reports blaming pro-government forces for instigating a military offensive in the restive capital of Unity state, Bentiu.’ As of late 2014 Oliver Modi, Chairman of the Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS), said that with assistance from UNESCO and other advocacy groups gains had been made in improving working conditions for journalists in the country.<sup>1082</sup>

While there have been multiple efforts to achieve peace, no attempt has proven effective in securing a lasting cessation of hostilities. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been perhaps the leading entity involved in the attempt to broker peace.<sup>1083</sup> Responding quickly to the conflict, three envoys (Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin of Ethiopia, General Lazarus Sumbeiywo of Kenya, and Sudan’s General Mohammad Ahmed Mustafa al-Dhabi) shuttled between Juba, opposition-controlled territory, and Addis Ababa, where peace talks were held. Negotiations produced a

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<sup>1081</sup> ‘Can ethnic differences’

<sup>1082</sup> ‘S. Sudan urged to end harassment of journalists’ *Sudan Tribune* 5 November 2014 (posted 6 November 2014) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52948>. Consulted 17 March 2015.

<sup>1083</sup> John Chol Dauu [Good Shepherd College & Seminary], ‘South Sudan peace talks update’ (13 March 2015).

ceasefire in January 2014 that was violated almost immediately with the partial recapture of Malakal, an action that confirmed observers' fears that the ceasefire was merely used as a break to regroup and rearm. Mediation efforts were handicapped by the presence of Ugandan troops supporting Salva Kiir's side. The US chastised Uganda for their participation in the conflict and Machar demanded their withdrawal.<sup>1084</sup> Peace deals continued to materialize and evaporate, with Kiir and Machar reaching four agreements by early July 2014 that each fell through in a matter of days. 5 March 2015 was set as a deadline for Kiir and Machar to sign a comprehensive peace agreement, but they could not agree on issues like power sharing and security arrangement.<sup>1085</sup> Meanwhile the 2015 national elections have been postponed, and in late March 2015 MPs passed Constitutional Amendment Bill 2015 extending Kiir's term until 2018. Of the 270 lawmakers in attendance at the decisive session, 264 voted for the extension.<sup>1086</sup>

Hope and suggestions of possible solutions have emerged from the tumult. Some have argued that South Sudan is not ready for self-government, and that like other post-conflict sites like Kosovo, East Timor, and Sierra Leone, foreign trustees should takeover. The International Crisis Group has called for significant state restructuring, arguing that "Power sharing will not end the conflict".<sup>1087</sup> It has also been suggested that South Sudan's East African neighbors Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya should be responsible for working out a power-sharing deal not just between the two principal warring parties and their associated ethnic groups but one that includes myriad smaller groups. This would have to be done, according to this train of logic, in order to prevent a

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<sup>1084</sup> 'Back with a vengeance' and 'A Civil War,' i and 2.

<sup>1085</sup> Daau, 'South Sudan peace talks update', 'Can ethnic differences', 41.

<sup>1086</sup> 'S. Sudanese MPs extend president Kiir's term until 2018' *Sudan Tribune* (24 March 2015; posted 25 March 2015) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54378>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

<sup>1087</sup> 'Can ethnic differences';



prolonged warlordism-like conflict that continues to wrack Somalia.<sup>1088</sup> And yet, amid the thought that international actors need to take the reins and guide the country into its future are Southern efforts to right the ship. In June 2014 the Ministry of Postal Services opened its new headquarters, mobile telephone network and internet access are improving, and there are signs that younger people are turning away from the ethnic culture that has encouraged the traditional rivalry between the Dinka and Nuer. One teacher reported that fewer of his Dinka pupils sport their ethnic group's cut-marks, while William Bol Gatkuoth—a rural Nuer who speaks both Nuer and Dinka—rejected his father's demand to receive the horizontal forehead cuts that would traditionally mark his manhood. He instead has insisted that he can work anywhere in the country unharmed without the scars.<sup>1089</sup> The matter of physical cutting appears to be salient to the question of what South Sudan wants to be moving forward. Do public displays of 'Dinka-ness' or 'Nuer-ness' undermine or preclude one's identity as a South Sudanese? Is the maintenance and celebration of ethnic loyalty inimical to the national project? What role, if any, has religious thought played in the contemporary milieu of ethnic politics, division and violence?

Those supporting Nuer and Dinka sides have continued to use the Bible to advance their claims since the conflict began. In March 2015 the *Sudan Tribune* reported that Akol Madhan Akol, rebel-appointed governor of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, alleged that Kiir lacked the right vision to steer the nation out of its economic doldrums. Akol used Proverbs 29:18 to express his dismay for Kiir and understanding of the contemporary situation:

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<sup>1088</sup> 'The descent into civil war'

<sup>1089</sup> 'Can ethnic differences', 41

‘The Bible says very clearly that where there is no vision, people perish. This is what is happening in South Sudan. Salva Kiir has indicated that he had no vision and that the vision he had was that of the late John Garang... Our people should rise up and remove that man otherwise there is nothing [that will] continue to stop our people from dying...’<sup>1090</sup>

In December 2014 Akol was joined in his anti-Kiir sentiment by Kong Tut, who in his *Nyamilepedia*<sup>1091</sup> article ‘Theological Reflections On Juba Nuer Massacre’ used Scripture to more deeply levy displeasure with the President. Published shortly after Christmas, Tut cited Herod’s killing of infant boys as an occasion to draw a direct parallel to the ethnic killings in Juba that had initiated the conflict. While Herod order the infanticides in order to kill Jesus, Kiir—according to Tut—ordered the killing of innocent Nuer out of hatred and as a means to hunt down ‘the democratic reformer’ Machar. Tut added that the Book of Revelation stated that while Christ was in the desert, the beast attempted to destroy Jesus with his messenger but to no avail. Machar, according to his logic, represented the baby Jesus while Kiir was the beast and Museveni the messenger. To this end the Egyptian desert was analogous to Unity, Jonglei, and Upper Nile. Writing that the Gospels state that the Child would be taken to Egypt and equipped there until the beast and messenger were dead or arrested, Tut maintained that ‘Egypt’ referred to Ethiopia (where Machar was allowed to tell the world his opinion of the conflict’s root causes).

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<sup>1090</sup> ‘S. Sudan rebel-appointed governor claims Kiir “lacks” vision’, *Talk of Sudan* <http://talkofsudan.com/s-sudan-rebel-appointed-governor-claims-kiir-lacks-vision/>. 23 March 2015 (Posted 24 March 2015). Consulted 23 April 2015. For aforementioned information on Akol see same website.

<sup>1091</sup> *Nyamilepedia* is an online news and media outlet consisting of Southern Sudanese and ‘friends’ living within the country and throughout the Diaspora. Founded by executive moderator Deng Elijah as his e-portfolio, ‘Nyamilepedia was transformed and translated into a news outlet to serve the needs of the South Sudanese people after the government curtails[ed] the freedom of expression with hopes to decipher the information to suit the interests of the ruling elites without necessarily conveying the tangible information as perceived by the intellectual communities.’ For stated information see ‘About’ *Nnyamilepedia* <http://nyamile.com/reports-and-analysis/now-to-the-international-criminal-court-icc-in-the-hague/about/>. 2014. Consulted 18 May 2015.

While Jesus began His ministry in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke by proclaiming the nearness of God's Kingdom and removing all oppression, 'reflections have it that Riek Machar's address of Pagak Conference marks the road forward to the end.'<sup>1092</sup> There are moments, to be sure, where the accuracy of Tut's Biblical references must be seriously called into question (namely Christ in the desert in Revelation and the beast and messenger in the Nativity story). Nevertheless, what is most important to glean from his piece is his attempt to provide spiritual strength behind his castings of Machar in a benevolent light and Kiir as a villain.

Pro-rebel supporters like Akol and Tut are here countered by anti-Machar documents written by Joseph de Tuombuk and Elhag Paul. Both men have been published in online venues including *Sudan Tribune*, *Pachodo.org*, *Gurtong*, and *South Sudan News Agency*.<sup>1093</sup> Tuombuk, who as of last year was living in Minneapolis,<sup>1094</sup>

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<sup>1092</sup> Ibid. The Pagak Conference was held in the rebel-controlled town of Pagak from 19-23 April 2015. There the Machar-led rebel faction declared Kiir's presidency illegitimate upon the expiration of his elected term in May 2015. In March, however, the Parliament agreed to extend his term three years (until 9 July 2018). Conference resolutions stated that the presidential term will have expired on 21 May 2015 and that the national legislature's tenure had expired on 8 March 2015. See 'Pagak meeting: South Sudanese rebels declare president Kiir illegitimate' *Sudan Tribune* 28 April 2015 (posted 29 April 2015) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54771>. Consulted 19 May 2015 and Denis Dumo, 'South Sudan parliament extends president's term by 3 years' *Reuters* 24 March 2015 <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/24/us-southsudan-unrest-idUSKBN0MK1Z320150324>. Consulted 19 May 2015.

<sup>1093</sup> For examples from Joseph de Tuombuk see 'Is South Sudan Peace Process Doomed To Fail?' *Gurtong* 13 October 2014 <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/15728/Is-South-Sudan-Peace-Process-Doomed-to-Fail.aspx>. Consulted 19 May 2015; 'Tribalism in South Sudan: Let's Read From Matthew 7:1-5' *Gurtong* <http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/16058/Tribalism-In-South-Sudan-Lets-Read-From-Matthew-7-1-5.aspx>. Posted 20 January 2015, Consulted 23 April 2015; and 'Potential politicization of SPLA' *Sudan Tribune* 25 October 2009 (posted 26 October 2009) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article32910>. For Elhag Paul pieces 'SPLM and mass media: Promoting history on falsity' *Sudan Tribune* 28 September 2011 (posted 29 September 2011) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article40272> and [http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id\\_article=40272](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id_article=40272). Consulted 16 April 2015; 'To Achieve Peace in South Sudan, SPLM/A must be scrapped.' *South Sudan News Agency* [distributed by AllAfrica; he cites this article in his first completed questionnaire] 29 December 2013 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201312300037.html>. Consulted 19 May 2015; and 'Like a leopard can not change its spots, Machar can not change' *Pachodo.org* 8 August 2014. <http://pachodo.org/latest-news->

wrote a piece entitled ‘Tribalism in South Sudan: Let’s Read From Matthew 7:1-5’ that was published on *Gurtong* in January 2015. Written in response to an article by Machar spokesperson James Gatdet Dak, Tuombuk opened by quoting Matthew 7:1-5 (where Christ warns against judging because it will be given back in the same measure and the command to remove the log from your own eye before taking out the speck in your brother’s). After stating that tribalism in South Sudan was a fact of life and that everyone hailed from some tribe—indeed, ‘Even the Israelites had twelve tribes’—the problem, according to Tuombuk, begins ‘when highly educated people like Riek Machar and other opportunists try to use our cherished diversity as a way to short-circuit the democratic process and access power through illegal means.’ He cited the fact that the rebellion’s top command was 92% Nuer and that Machar had relied heavily on anti-Dinka sentiment to rally a Nuer section ‘to his unholy cause.’ On the other hand Kiir had an administration which was, in its diversity, unprecedented in Southern history (with Nuer cabinet members, leading SPLA commanders, and prominent foreign policy figure Barnaba Marial Benjamin). As Machar and his supporters had killed Nuer who stood up for their country rather than their ethnic group, Tuombuk returned to the Scripture and charged that ‘Riek has lost the moral high ground to call Kiir’s administration some kind of a tribal entity led by corrupt “Dinka clan”. Riek has demonstrated that he can use tribal politics as a means to an end: destroying our nascent democracy.’<sup>1095</sup>

Tuombuk was joined in his anti-Machar criticism by Elhag Paul. In a piece posted in August 2014 Paul accused Machar of wearing layers of disguise which were gradually

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articles/pachodo-english-articles/9155-like-a-leopard-can-not-change-its-spots,-machar-can-not-change.  
Consulted 23 April 2015.

<sup>1094</sup> ‘Is South Sudan Peace Process Doomed To Fail?’

<sup>1095</sup> All quotes and information from this article come from Tuombuk, ‘Tribalism in South Sudan: Let’s Read From Matthew 7:1-5’

being peeled off to reveal his true character. Though Machar offered hope by embracing democracy and federalism, Paul noted that Machar was now out for his own personal gain, begun using dictatorial approaches, and had no intention to deliver on promises to some of the country's oppressed people;

‘The saying that a leopard can not change its spots seems to be true in the case of Machar and the SPLM leaders...Machar can not change...He has once again squandered a golden opportunity for him to wash himself clean from his controversial past to emerge as a true leader in South Sudan.’<sup>1096</sup>

To be sure, Paul informed me that ‘a leopard cannot change its spots’ was a common phrase that was suitable for his article and not necessarily used because of any Biblical roots.<sup>1097</sup> Nevertheless—as illustrated by the conclusion of Chapter Five—the idiom about a leopard and its spots can be found in the Book of Jeremiah and was used in one instance at the end of the First Civil War to describe one man’s skepticism regarding the North. Intent notwithstanding, it is useful to note that the idiom was used again in this instance not against the traditional Northern foe but instead against Machar...and, not to be unrecognized, ‘the SPLM leaders’. Paul’s piece can therefore be read as a critique against both sides and, perhaps, suggests that Machar, Kiir, or both are so entrenched in their positions and enmity that viable solutions are impossible.

In these ways the contemporary situation has illustrated the malleable uses of the Bible in Southern Sudan’s political milieu. Its use in the current civil war reveals that Scripture has also entered discussions that are infused with the salience of ethnicity rather than race. In this paradigm the ‘Joshua’ Kiir can be transformed into a Biblical villain like Omer Beshir was in the *SPLM/A Update*. Southerners can be framed as leopards with

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<sup>1096</sup> Elhag Paul, ‘Like a leopard can not change its spots, Machar can not change’

<sup>1097</sup> Elhag Paul, e-mail message to author, April 27, 2015.

unchangeable spots like the Arabs described by William Levi's father after the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement.

### Closing Thoughts

It has been a particularly singular time in which to produce a dissertation on Southern Sudanese history. Since entering graduate school in 2009, Southern Sudan has transitioned from being a constituent part of the Republic of the Sudan to its own sovereign nation (South Sudan) to a country now mired in a civil conflict that threatens to tear it apart. While I must naturally draw some conclusions it is painfully evident that the history of Southern Sudanese nationalism—indeed, of the very nation itself—is still evolving. Nevertheless, I believe that there are ways in which the history I have presented in this study problematizes and will continue to complicate our understanding of the role of religious thought in the construction of South Sudan.

Adrian Hastings suggested that the most important factor for nationhood to emerge out of multiple ethnicities is a widely-used vernacular literature. Furthermore, the more ethnicities have advanced towards an identity of language or religion, the more likely they are to respond to intrusion with what he termed 'the option of nationalism.'<sup>1098</sup> Southern Sudanese have long appropriated Biblical Israel's national story during seminal points in their political history—namely periods of strife with the Khartoum—and the vast majority of Southerners self-identify as Christians. Combined with the past attempts to instill English as a *lingua franca*, one might conclude that shared religion (Christianity) and language (English) should encourage national feeling among Dinka, Nuer, and those of other sundry ethnicities. And yet, the appalling ferocity of ethnic violence since 2013 raises some legitimate questions. How effective was Christianity's

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<sup>1098</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; 2-3, 31 (quote taken from 31).

contribution in encouraging a sense of cross-ethnic nationalism? How should one assess the sundry Biblical idioms buttressed political theology before and after the CPA Agreement? In a liberation theology that placed such importance on race in defining oppressor and oppressed, how does the current narrative of ethnic division complicate understandings of the formation and substance of the South Sudanese nation state? Was the crumbling nature of South Sudanese democracy in some ways foreshadowed by architects' decisions to appropriate royalist imagery like ancient Israel, "crown", and Cush as building-blocks for national community?

While opinions abound and may only grow in number and intensity, perhaps it is too early to confidently answer these questions. With respect to the last question in the aforementioned listing, it is tempting to read the Old Testament as a narrative in which God does not authorize democratic assemblies, minority rights, or gender equality. And yet, during Israel's history as a Kingdom, Yusufu Turaki has noted that political dissent and accountability existed in the form of prophets who stressed the importance of rulers upholding God's justice, kindness, humility, and righteousness. Indeed, from a Biblical perspective the basis of humankind's dignity—a foundational element of democracy—can be found at the beginning of the Old Testament, when God created humans in His own image (Gen. 1:26).<sup>1099</sup> Rather than looking to Scripture to define the nation's identity along royalist lines, this chapter has shown that citizens of South Sudan have used the Bible in this turbulent time to lend a prophetic, critical voice for those in authority. While there is room to debate the utility of royalist, Old Testament examples as building-blocks for a modern nation-state, perhaps the developments and discursive

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<sup>1099</sup> Yusufu Turaki, 'Democracy' in *Africa Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary Written by 70 African Scholars*. Ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo. Zondervan, 2010: 811.

practices illustrated in this chapter have also shown that South Sudanese have found increased utility in using the Bible to fashion critiques of those in power; a practice that can be found in the Old Testament history with the prophets Micah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Amos (among others).<sup>1100</sup>

One conclusion that can be drawn with conviction is the reality that South Sudan is not a singular case. Almost every nation has had to contend with internal disputes, problems, and civil wars that threatened their principles and existences. The Biblical Israel so salient to Southern Sudanese popular and political culture is a prime example, as the Old Testament recounts that after being delivered from Egyptian slavery and reaching the Promised Land the Chosen People were not immune from civil war.<sup>1101</sup> One needs to look no further than the Republic of the Sudan, which had to deal with the consequences of the Torit Mutiny months before it became an independent nation. In addition to its wars against Southern Sudan, furthermore, it has had to deal with opposition from the Nuba Mountains, Darfur, and the Blue Nile. Thus, in a rather fascinating way, Southern Sudan could be read to be following Biblical Israel's model in even its not-so-glamorous facets; not just in liberation, national independence, and perpetual chosenness but also in its sins and internal strife. Others might argue that South Sudan's current trauma proves that Franz Fanon wrote with prophetic accuracy when he argued that

‘nationalism, that magnificent hymn which roused the masses against the oppressor, disintegrates in the aftermath of independence. Nationalism is not a political doctrine...If we really want to safeguard our countries from regression, paralysis, or collapse, we must rapidly switch from a national consciousness to a social and political

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<sup>1100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1101</sup> S.K. Mosiman, "Entry for 'Rehoboam'". "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia". Gen. Ed. James Orr, 1915. [public domain] *BibleStudyTools.com*, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/rehoboam.html>. Consulted 19 February 2015.



consciousness. The nation can only come into being in a program elaborated by a revolutionary leadership and enthusiastically and lucidly appropriated by the masses.’<sup>1102</sup>

It is, admittedly, tempting to conclude that South Sudan proves Fanon correct. Accepting this sentiment would lead one to say that the objectives of religious nationalism and liberation theology in Southern Sudan were completed upon independence and essentially emptied of power in constructing and preserving national peace and unity. Buay’s critique of government attempts to push the ‘Cush’ moniker upon the new nation illustrates the tenuousness of Biblical insertions in the construction of national identity. He raised legitimate questions about South Sudan’s exclusive claims to being the Land of Cush and the educational and theological backgrounds of the military officers who tried to insert Cush into the national anthem. What value, according to his line of thinking, is the infusion of religious idioms into national identity if those connections are thin or even wholly inaccurate? Is it mere propaganda (as he termed Garang’s actions) or does it serve a constructive purpose? Combined with Mbiti’s doubts about the point when one reaches the ‘liberation’ pursued by Black Theology, the veracity of the claim that nationalism—religious or otherwise—is not fit to sustain the nation-state may also be proven by the number of Southern dead, refugees, rebels, factions, and shattered dreams.

And yet, the utility of religious thought in Southern Sudan’s political spectrum historically or moving forward cannot and should not be rejected wholesale. On the contrary, recent years have shown that the Bible’s continued appropriation in political claims-making is an outgrowth of longer, historical politics. As I have illustrated in this conclusion, Biblical borrowings since the CPA have been used to celebrate, discuss, and

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<sup>1102</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated from the French by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 1963. [English translation copyright 2004 by Richard Philcox, 1963 copyright by Présence Africaine], 142-143.

critique Southern Sudanese authority and nationhood. One of my interview participants, Bishop Anthony Poggo, has recently published a book entitled *Come Let Us Rebuild: Lessons from Nehemiah*, which looks to the Book of Nehemiah to provide lessons for the construction of South Sudan. While he was still in the writing process he shared with me his reasoning behind the project;

‘I’m looking at...the lessons that we learn from Nehemiah on building the nation, and so a number of things that are in my view are relevant to (the) South Sudan context...we need to be Nehemiahs to be able to build this nation...Nehemiah was patriotic...a pray-er...a planner...patient in the face of the challenges that he faced...we are talking of lessons and principles that we can learn from the word of God that can be useful and important’<sup>1103</sup>

Just a couple of months before the war began I was taken aback by the way that two students from the Juba Diocesan Model Secondary School used the Old Testament to express their hopes and wishes for the government. One of the students, Grace, called upon ministers to come to Church, pray, and ask God to give them wisdom so that they could rule wisely. For this she referenced the Proverb that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). If they went to church and feared the Lord, she concluded, ‘they’ll do good.’ The other student, Diana, mentioned the fact that when God asked Solomon what he desired the king responded with wisdom (2 Chron. 1:10) and that the king’s heart is in the Lord’s hands (Prov. 21:1). With these thoughts in mind she expressed her wish for the authorities to come to the Lord; ‘if they did not call on the Lord to come and guide our country it will be in vain...they should call on the Lord and then they can be in control. God will be the one guiding them...just following His

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<sup>1103</sup> Interview with Anthony Poggo, 2 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan)

footsteps.<sup>1104</sup> In February 2015, over a year into the conflict, the *ST* published a poem by Jimmy Onge Aremo entitled ‘Lamentation’. Aremo contrasts South Sudan’s glorious past with notes on the shameful point to which it has regressed. Asking for God to come to their rescue, he asked his reading audience a pointed question: ‘When are we going to stop this Stone Age behaviour so that once again South Sudan becomes a place of milk and honey and not multiple grave yards?’<sup>1105</sup> Each of these examples appears to illustrate the fact that political theology in Southern Sudan has developed from using Scripture to define identity and action in the face of externally-imposed oppression to looking to the Bible for models of productive nation-making. According to this paradigm the nation needs Nehemiah-like leaders, wise leaders like Solomon, and a general return to a state of ‘milk and honey’. It is not that Southern Christians are looking to the Bible to provide literal models of behavior (i.e. becoming a theocracy or effectuating God’s Biblical commandments into law). Rather, it is the spirit of the men and women who participated in the narratives of holy writ that is viewed as being critical to the nation’s political success moving forward.

Therefore, it is evident that religious thought continues to be an important arena of political expression and critique in South Sudan. Even the anthem-critic Buay himself illustrated the continued potency of Biblical borrowings when he responded to claims concerning his loyalty to the Kiir regime. Appointed by President Kiir as an ambassador in 2014, he was recently alleged to be involved in a coup plot. Buay dismissed the charge and was quoted in early January 2015 as likening his relationship with the President to

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<sup>1104</sup> Interview with Grace Ropani and Diana Juan Joseph, 7 August 2013 (Juba, South Sudan); for full name of school see *Juba Diocesan Model Secondary School Update*, Iss. 20 (September 2014) <http://www.jdmss.co.uk/sites/default/files/Juba%20newsletter%20Sep%202014.pdf>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

<sup>1105</sup> Jimmy Onge Aremo, ‘Lamentation’ *Sudan Tribune* (19 February 2015) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54046>. Consulted 31 March 2015.

that between ‘Jesus Christ and Jehovah’.<sup>1106</sup> At a moment when he felt obliged to defend himself and his loyalty to the nation’s controversial leader, he thought it apt to compare their rapport with the synergy between Christ and Jehovah to diffuse any thoughts of sedition. He did not believe that Kiir was Jehovah or himself Christ, and that was quite obviously not the point; rather, the parallel was useful for conveying a more practical message. The reality that Buay used Christ and Jehovah to defend his loyalty illustrates a foundational element of my argument: *that the literalness of Biblical insertions and adoptions matter little in comparison to their social and political power and utility.* Whether the Biblical Cush was limited to the boundaries of modern South Sudan means little in comparison to the socially-binding and politically galvanizing power of being able to claim that one’s tribulations and liberation were prophetically foretold. It does not matter that there are elements of the Biblical Moses-Joshua narrative that are consistent with John Garang and Salva Kiir; rather, it is the script that allows Southerners to envision themselves as moving towards and reaching the Promised Land, whatever that term might be. The Bible, in Southern Sudan as elsewhere, has provided a script for action, a lexicon for resistance, a vehicle for defining and discerning ‘us’ and ‘them’, and ways to understand and respond to sundry circumstances. Its mutability in Southern history has been rivaled only by its endurance.

I maintain that the continued appropriations of Biblical symbolisms and themes in Southern Sudanese political discourse warrant not only study on the meanings of such invocations historically but also their significance moving forward. Rather than symbolizing the failure of religious thought in the national project, this period of conflict

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<sup>1106</sup> ‘Juba dismisses ambassador’s role in alleged coup plot’ *Sudan Tribune* (5 January 2015) <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article53561>. Consulted 3 March 2015.

could prove to be yet another in a list of chapters in which political theology is appropriated to fit an era of unrest, uncertainty, and war. Rather than the traditional Arab enemy and Black African oppressed, new heroes and villains are bound to emerge to fit a new type of theology. Regardless of what the future may hold, the history presented in this study and the continued use of Biblical appropriations suggests that the Bible—with its characters, narratives, themes, and symbols—will continue to be a source of political inspiration, argument, and vocabulary to address and define issues facing the nation.

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A few days after the ECS Independence Service described in the introduction, I had the pleasure of meeting Rev. Joseph Taban, then-principal of Juba's Bishop Gwynne College (BGC). An affable man, Rev. Taban shared stories from his remarkable life—which included a stop at my alma mater, Duke University—and a variety of compelling thoughts and insights. I was looking forward to meeting with him again on my return trip to Juba in 2013 until I read the news of his death.<sup>1107</sup> Though some of my interview participants were extremely elderly and frail upon our interaction, Taban appeared to be in the prime of his life when we had met on a sweltering summer day in 2012. Far from home and exhausted from the dictates of the archival project, I will never forget the day that I was able to meet with him in his dark, cool office at BGC. I can think of no better way to conclude this dissertation than with thoughts he shared with me in our only interview, which took place nearly a year and a half before the war began.

Taban talked about his family, his time in Khartoum, insights on historical mission work in the Sudan, and offered comments relating to religion and politics in

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<sup>1107</sup> Trevor Stubbs, 'Joseph Taban Lasuba' Bishop Gwynne College, <http://www.bishopgwynne.juba.anglican.org/index.php?PageID=taban>. 2015. Consulted 19 February 2015.

Sudan and South Sudan. When asked his opinion about the relationship between Christian theology and South Sudanese politics, he offered perhaps the most compelling insight I can think of at the present moment:

‘If there’s a book the South Sudanese cannot remove from their lives, it’s the Bible...there are books that are very close to the heart of South Sudanese because of our suffering. So if the Bible then is made up of stories of suffering, 50 percent of it, the other 50 percent of the stories is the glory that follows suffering. That’s our story. Maybe we are not enjoying the glory now, but we know it’s coming.’<sup>1108</sup>

In the midst of suffering, what could be more empowering, comforting, and liberating than the confidence that glory will come? Southern Sudanese have for decades had to contend with the legacy of enslavement, developmental inequalities, forced cultural assimilation, two of the deadliest conflicts since the Second World War, and a civil war less than three years into its independence. And yet, in the midst of these travails, the association between suffering and glory is one which most people in the country would be able to speak on. It is the ideological cornerstone on which South Sudan—however shaky it might be—was founded. Perhaps it is the only hope on which it can stand.

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<sup>1108</sup> Interview with Joseph Taban, 12 July 2012 (Juba, South Sudan).

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